<u>**Assessment 2:**</u> **Cultural Portfolio**

1. Description

The Cultural Portfolio assessment is designed to provide a single, uniform assessment of the cultural and linguistic proficiency of teacher licensure candidates across all five foreign-language licensure programs (in Chinese, French, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish) and at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Foreign-language licensure candidates at the University of Massachusetts Amherst are already extensively assessed on their cultural and linguistic proficiency through substantial content-area coursework requirements at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in all five language programs, through comprehensive examinations at the end of the graduate-level licensure programs, and through the synthetic content work undertaken in the capstone integrative experience course that is now required of all undergraduate majors at the university. Given the differences in graduate and undergraduate program requirements and the variety of program structures across all five languages, however, it would be cumbersome and impractical to design a content knowledge assessment directly based on course grades, comprehensive examinations or capstone projects. Instead, the Cultural Portfolio is designed to provide a single, robust and summative cultural and linguistic assessment that is closely derived from the candidates' content-area coursework and that is practicable at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and across all the language programs. The Cultural Portfolio, in combination with the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (Assessment 1) and the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (Assessment 6), provides sufficient evidence of proficiency with respect to ACTFL Standards 1 and 2, and it complements our other measures of these standards to provide us with rich information on the capabilities of our candidates in the area of their subject matter knowledge, skills and dispositions.

The Cultural Portfolio, which is completed at or near the end of the candidates' content-area coursework, consists of the following elements:

1) <u>Three substantial pieces of written work</u> submitted and previously assessed in advanced-level literary and cultural courses required for the candidates' program. The written work must have originated in three different courses, and the courses must have been held in the target language. The work should represent assessments done by at least two different instructors, and it should focus on at least two different time periods and two different forms/genres of cultural product. Ideally, the work should present analyses of three substantially different areas of the target culture. For undergraduate licensure candidates, written work from courses numbered 400 or higher is generally acceptable, while for graduate licensure candidates, written work from courses numbered 500 or higher is acceptable. Candidates typically select what they feel is their best work and should explain their selection in writing (as part of the narrative reflection), keeping in mind that the work will serve to document proficiency in the relevant standards. Candidates should consult on the choice of written work to be included both with their teacher licensure program director and with appropriate faculty, such as their undergraduate or graduate program director.

2) A <u>substantial written reflection</u> on the three writing samples included in the portfolio. The reflection gives the candidates the opportunity to synthesize the material they have learned and to demonstrate their overall mastery of the target language and cultures. In their reflection the candidates discuss why they selected the evidence included in the portfolio and then examine in detail how that evidence documents that they are meeting the relevant standards. The reflection may be written either in English or the target language and will typically be in the range of 15 to 20 pages, but in any case, it should be of sufficient length to discuss the required points comprehensively. The assessment tool provides the candidates with a detailed list of these required points, which closely track the elements of ACTFL Standard 1 (Language, Linguistics, Comparisons) and Standard 2 (Cultures, Literatures, Cross-Disciplinary Concepts). The scoring rubric provides further indications to the candidates concerning topics to be addressed.

The portfolio is evaluated by a committee composed of the teacher licensure program director and another faculty member with appropriate linguistic and cultural expertise, such as the undergraduate or graduate program director in the candidate's field. Candidates must receive a minimum score of "2" (indicating "meets standard / acceptable") on 90% of the 13 scoring areas on the rubric, with a total score of not less than 25. If the candidates receive an unacceptable score, they are required to draw up a remediation plan in consultation with their evaluation committee, which typically consists of additional content-area coursework tailored to address specific deficiencies.

2. Alignment with specific ACTFL/NCATE standards:

> **Standard 1a: Demonstrating Language Proficiency**
> **Standard 1b: Understanding Linguistics**
> **Standard 1c: Identifying Language Comparisons**
> **Standard 2a: Demonstrating Cultural Understandings**
> **Standard 2b: Demonstrating Understandings of Literary and Cultural Texts and Traditions**
> **Standard 2c: Integrating Other Disciplines in Instruction**

The Cultural Portfolio aligns with ACTFL standards in addressing candidates' skills, knowledge and dispositions in the following areas:

1) Proficiency in writing the target language *(Standard 1a)*
2) The linguistic elements of the target language *(Standard 1b)*
3) Similarities and differences of the target language and other languages *(Standard 1c)*
4) Connections among the perspectives of a culture and its practices and products *(Standard 2a)*
5) The recognition of the value and role literary and cultural texts play in the interpretation of the target culture *(Standard 2b)*
6) The integration of knowledge of other disciplines and viewpoints accessed through the target language *(Standard 2c)*

Cultural Portfolio Assessment

Introduction

The Cultural Portfolio assessment is designed to give you the opportunity to showcase what you have learned and are able to do as a result of your work in the subject matter component of your teacher preparation program. It allows you to demonstrate both your proficiency in the target language (ACTFL Standard 1: Language, Linguistics, Comparisons) and your knowledge of the target cultures (ACTFL Standard 2: Cultures, Literatures, Cross-Disciplinary Concepts). More specifically, it gives you the opportunity to document your skills, knowledge and dispositions in the following areas:

1) Proficiency in writing the target language *(ACTFL Standard 1a)*
2) The linguistic elements of the target language *(ACTFL Standard 1b)*
3) Similarities and differences of the target language and other languages *(ACTFL Standard 1c)*
4) Connections among the perspectives of a culture and its practices and products *(ACTFL Standard 2a)*
5) The recognition of the value and role literary and cultural texts play in the interpretation of the target culture *(ACTFL Standard 2b)*
6) The integration of knowledge of other disciplines and viewpoints accessed through the target language *(ACTFL Standard 2c)*

The Cultural Portfolio provides the faculty with another comprehensive perspective from which to assess your proficiency in several ACTFL program standards. In this regard, the reflective narrative you will write as part of the portfolio will be crucial, since it is your opportunity to synthesize the material you have learned and to demonstrate your overall mastery of the target language and cultures. In your reflection you will discuss why you selected the evidence you have included in your portfolio and then examine in detail how that evidence documents that you are meeting the standards. The Cultural Portfolio should be assembled only after you have completed most, if not all, of the literary and cultural courses required for your program. The portfolio will be evaluated by a committee composed of your teacher licensure program director and another faculty member with appropriate linguistic and cultural expertise, such as the undergraduate or graduate program director in your field.

Instructions

The Cultural Portfolio must include the following items:

1) Three substantial pieces of written work submitted and previously assessed in advanced-level literary and cultural courses required for your program. The written work must have originated in three different courses, and the courses must have been held in the target language. The work should represent assessments done by at least two different instructors, and it should focus on at least two different time periods and two different forms/genres of cultural product. Ideally, the work should present analyses of three substantially different areas of the target culture. For undergraduate licensure candidates, written work from courses numbered 400 or higher is generally acceptable, while for graduate licensure candidates, written work from courses numbered 500 or higher is acceptable. Candidates typically select what they feel is their best

work and should explain their selection in writing (as part of the narrative reflection), keeping in mind that the work will serve to document proficiency in the relevant standards. Candidates should consult on the choice of written work to be included both with their teacher licensure program director and with appropriate faculty, such as their undergraduate or graduate program director.

2) A <u>substantial written reflection</u> on the three writing samples included in the portfolio, explaining how they document proficiency in the relevant standards. The reflection may be written either in English or the target language and will typically be in the range of 20 pages, but in any case, it should be of sufficient length to discuss the required points comprehensively. The reflection should address (but is not limited to) the following topics (candidates should consult the scoring rubric for further indications):

• The rationale behind the choice of the written work included in the portfolio

Language proficiency:

• A self-analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of your writing proficiency in the target language, including discussion of specific writing tasks and specific linguistic structures.
• A discussion of your approach to building and maintaining proficiency in the target language, as evidenced by the portfolio writing samples, as well as remedial steps taken to close gaps in your knowledge of the target language system.
• Evidence of your awareness of key differences between the target language and other languages (typically English), as well as awareness of different varieties of the target language and their causal factors, with an eye toward incorporating this knowledge into language instruction.

Cultural proficiency:

• Evidence of your ability to make connections between the perspectives of a culture and its practices and products.
• A discussion of your approach toward analyzing cultural materials, as well as evidence of your efforts to keep abreast of cultural developments and to build a large repertoire of cultural knowledge and experiences drawn from a variety of authentic sources.
• Evidence of your ability to interpret and synthesize ideas and critical issues from literary and other cultural texts <u>in significant depth and breadth</u>. Within the scope of this portfolio, it would be impossible to give a comprehensive report of all that you know about your subject matter; therefore, what we expect in this section are <u>several concrete examples, drawn from substantially different areas of the target culture</u>, that illustrate the depth of your understanding of the subject matter and your ability to create learning experiences that reflect this understanding.
• A discussion of your efforts to expand your repertoire of age-appropriate cultural materials to be used in instruction and drawn from a variety of literature, film and other media.
• Evidence of your knowledge of other disciplines and your ability to integrate that knowledge into a comprehensive cross-disciplinary, content-based approach to language instruction.

Assessment Rubric – Cultural Portfolio

ACTFL Standard	Element	1 Approaches Standard (Unacceptable)	2 Meets Standard (Acceptable)	3 Exceeds Standard (Target)	Score
1a: Candidates demonstrate a high level of proficiency in the target language, and they seek opportunities to strengthen their proficiency.	Written communication	Candidates write at the Intermediate-High level on the ACTFL scale: their writing meets the minimal practical requirements of the course assignment; they connect sentences into paragraphs using a limited number of cohesive devices that tend to be repeated; they write simple literary/cultural descriptions, narrations and analyses of paragraph length, although with some inaccuracies; their writing is generally comprehensible to natives not used to the writing of non-natives, but gaps in comprehension may occur.	Candidates write at the Advanced-Low level on the ACTFL scale: their writing goes beyond the minimal practical requirement of the course assignment by incorporating a limited range of more sophisticated linguistic structures; they can describe, narrate and analyze in some time frames with some control of aspect; they combine sentences in texts of paragraph length; they incorporate a limited number of cohesive devices; their writing demonstrates control of simple target-language sentence structures and partial control of more complex syntactic structures; their writing is understood by readers accustomed to the writing of second language learners although additional effort may be required in reading the text.	Candidates write at the Advanced-Mid level on the ACTFL scale (or higher): their writing incorporates a wide range of more sophisticated linguistic structures; they can describe, narrate and analyze in all major time frames with control of aspect; their writing includes some variety of cohesive devices in texts of several paragraphs in length; their writing demonstrates good control of the most frequently used syntactic structures; their writing is understood readily by natives not used to the writing of non-natives.	
	Dispositions for acquiring proficiency	Candidates make minimal use of resources such as readings and the internet in order to access the target language world beyond the classroom.	Candidates maintain and enhance their proficiency by interacting in the target language outside of the classroom, reading, and using technology to access target language communities.	Candidates have developed a systematic approach for enhancing their language proficiency on an ongoing basis by using a variety of effective materials, methodologies, and technologies.	
1b: Candidates know the linguistic elements of the target language system, recognize the changing nature of language, and accommodate for gaps in their own knowledge of the target language system by learning on their own.	Structure and evolution of language	In analyzing their own writing, candidates recognize (but have some difficulty in accurately identifying) the specificity of target-language linguistic structures: morphemes, basic syntactic patterns, the literal meaning of words, the basic rules of word and sentence formation. Candidates have some difficulty in diagnosing their own target-language writing problems. Candidates recognize that the target language changes over time.	In analyzing their own writing, candidates can accurately identify and describe the specificity of target-language linguistic structures: morphemes, syntactic patterns beyond a basic level, the literal and inferred meaning of words, rules of word and sentence formation beyond a basic level. Candidates can diagnose their own target-language writing difficulties. Candidates can identify key changes in the target language that have occurred over time.	In analyzing their own writing, candidates can accurately identify and describe the specificity of target-language linguistic structures with significant detail and sophistication: the manipulation of morphemes to create new words in the target language, the use of syntactic structures to create nuances of meaning, sophisticated and varied connective structures, the literal and inferred meaning of words and a wide range of idiomatic expressions, an understanding of the rules of word and sentence order to create nuances of meaning. Candidates can diagnose their own target-language writing difficulties with significant detail and sophistication. Candidates can describe the system of changes that have occurred in the target language over time.	
	Dispositions for closing gaps in knowledge of target language system	Candidates acknowledge when they lack knowledge of specific aspects of the target language system, but take only limited remedial steps.	Candidates investigate the target language system and examples on their own when faced with specific aspects of the system with which they are not familiar.	Candidates take courses and/or seek remedial help in order to accommodate for gaps in their knowledge of the target language system.	
1c: Candidates know the similarities and differences between the target language and other languages, identify the key differences in varieties of the target language, and seek opportunities to learn about varieties of the target language on their own.	Comparisons between target and other languages, and socio-linguistic variation	Candidates recognize that differences exist between the target and other languages. Candidates recognize that varieties of the target language exist.	Candidates identify key differences between the target and other languages and plan to include this information in language instruction. Candidates identify key features of varieties of the target language in terms of gender and dialectal differences and can provide examples.	Candidates use comparisons of target and other languages to systematically plan for language instruction. Candidates describe the system of rules that govern differences among varieties of the target language and explain the factors that affect these differences such as geography, culture, politics, level of education, gender, and social class. They are prepared to engage students in investigating target language varieties through a variety of means including technology.	

ACTFL Standard	Element	1 Approaches Standard (Unacceptable)	2 Meets Standard (Acceptable)	3 Exceeds Standard (Target)	Score
1c (continued)	Dispositions for learning about target language varieties	Candidates learn target language varieties presented in formal educational contexts (e.g., course work).	Candidates learn about target language varieties through interaction with native speakers outside of class and by accessing authentic target language samples through a variety of means such as technology.	Candidates learn about target language varieties through experiences in immersion situations including study abroad.	
2a: Candidates demonstrate that they understand the connections among the perspectives of a culture and its practices and products.	Cultural knowledge	Candidates cite examples of cultural practices, products, perspectives, but the examples reflect a cultural knowledge base that is still developing.	Candidates cite key cultural perspectives and provide support through description of products and practices.	Candidates view the target culture as a system in which cultural perspectives are reflected through practices and products.	
	Process of analyzing cultures	Candidates rely on cultural analyses that are readily available (in instructional materials) or are learned (information they have acquired through study and/or personal experiences).	Candidates demonstrate that they can analyze and hypothesize about unfamiliar or unknown cultural issues. They use the framework of the foreign language standards or another cultural model to investigate hypotheses that arise from materials or events that contain cultural questions or assumptions.	Candidates collect and use instruction materials that pose significant cultural questions or that illustrate cultural changes. They use a cultural framework to keep abreast of the changing nature of culture and its cultural variations.	
	Dispositions for cultural learning	Candidates base their cultural work on familiar and factual cultural content.	Candidates integrate cultural insights with the target language in its communicative functions and content areas. They work to extend their knowledge of culture through independent work and interactions with native speakers.	Candidates emphasize cultural concepts in relation to their language teaching, analyze and synthesize cultural information from authentic sources in various media and in relation to specific communities or audiences. They work to build a large repertoire of cultural knowledge and experiences.	
2b: Candidates recognize the value and role of literary and cultural texts and use them to interpret and reflect upon the perspectives of the target cultures over time.	Knowledge of literary and cultural texts	Candidates are aware of major literary texts and have read excerpts, abridgments, or reviews of those works and authors.	Candidates interpret literary texts that represent defining works in the target cultures. They identify themes, authors, historical style, and text types in a variety of media that the cultures deem important in understanding the traditions of the cultures.	Candidates interpret and synthesize ideas and critical issues from literary and other cultural texts that represent the historical and contemporary works of a wide range of writers in a wide range of forms and media. They interpret from multiple viewpoints and approaches.	
	Dispositions toward exploring literatures and other texts and media	Candidates plan to use in their teaching a limited range of basic literary texts.	Candidates identify from their studies lists of texts they plan to use and adapt in their teaching. They plan to enrich classroom content with texts and topics valued by the culture. These texts are taken from literature and other media.	Candidates seek out age-appropriate materials valued by the culture that represent literature, film, and media to expand the repertoire of texts they use in instruction.	
2c: Candidates integrate knowledge of other disciplines into foreign language instruction and identify distinctive viewpoints accessible only through the target language.	Integration of other subject areas into language instruction	Candidates integrate discrete pieces of information from other subject areas, usually as they appear in instructional materials.	Candidates integrate concepts from other subject areas such as math, science, social studies, art, and music. They teach students strategies for learning this new content in the foreign language.	Candidates formulate a content-based approach to language instruction that is based on the integration of language and subject-area content.	
	Planning and dispositions for cross-disciplinary instruction	Candidates plan to integrate subject-area content with minimal attention to other content areas.	Candidates make connections between language and other subject areas. They locate authentic resources appropriate to the age, grade level, program goals, and interests of their students. Candidates devote time to finding ways to integrate subject-area content and to locating authentic resources. They are willing to learn new content.	Candidates systematically plan for instruction that incorporates content from other subject areas. They may plan to do team-teaching in order to fully integrate instruction. Candidates plan to work together with students to acquire new information and perspectives across disciplines.	