

Native American Studies

NAS 101 Course Assessment for General Education

Spring/Summer/Fall 2024

Assessment data for the NAS 101 Očhéthi Šakówiŋ Language for Beginners course was gathered by the fulltime NAS faculty and analyzed by the department chair from courses offered during the Spring/Summer/Fall 2024 cycle. The NAS 101 course is part of the General Education course roster and is reported under the General Education outcomes.

Statistics:

Twenty-four students completed all of the assessment components associated with the NAS 101 course during the 2024 cycle. These assessment tools consist of an embedded checklist of questions administered during the course midterm and final exams as well as a pre- and post-assessment piece which is filled out by the students in the first and last weeks of the course. This final piece provides an indirect measure to the data as it is a self-assessment checklist of the goals covered during the course.

Course/Section	Registered	Withdrawn	Did not withdraw	Passed the Course	Percentage passed
Spring 2024 101 01	10	3	7	6	60%
Spring 2024 101 02	6	0	6	6	100%
Summer 2024	6	0	6	3	50%
Fall 2024 101 01	11	3	8	7	63.6%
Fall 2024 101 02	5	2	3	3	60%
Totals	38	8	30	25	65.7%

The overall percentage of students who passed the NAS 101 course during the 2024 cycle is 65.7%. Eight students withdrew from the course during the cycle

and five failed to pass the course (several of whom never attended the course at all but did not withdraw).

Review

The listening and comprehension components of the program outcomes as well as verbal response and pronunciation in the Dakota/Lakota Language are assessed in the NAS 101 course in thirty-one answers to questions asked the student as part of the midterm examination. The student is expected to listen to the questions (listening and comprehension) and response in Lakota with a goal of 80% accuracy (grammatical and pronunciation).

The reading and writing components of the program outcomes are assessed through a checklist of 25 sentences (testing reading comprehension) and a final writing assignment in which the students write a short story about themselves of at least ten sentences in length that must employ 8 out of the 16 specified course goals. This tool is embedded in the NAS 101 final exam. Students are expected to earn at least 60 out of 75 points in the reading assignment and 14.4 points out of 18 points in the writing assignment.

An indirect measure of growth in confidence and ability in the use and knowledge of the language is assessed through a self-assessment tool completed by the students at the beginning and end of the NAS 101 course. The students rate themselves on the 16 specific language-use goals using a five-point scale, with the expectation that a student will increase their rating by at least one point in each goal from pre- to post-assessment.

Actions

The recommendations from the 2023 cycle were addressed as follows:

The faculty recommended that the course instructor require students to take the final on-line exam in class rather than at home. This measure is to ensure that all students complete the exam which is beneficial to for the department to capture the data for assessing student progress in the course. The instructor also requires the students to complete the post-assessment tool for our indirect measure. In a

majority of cases, the instructor has been successful in following through with this requirement.

The faculty recommended the development of additional classroom activities and exercises focusing on the words identified (such as *ektá*, *él*, and *ktA*) as needing more attention as well as continued practice with verbal conjugations. The instructors did work to incorporate more in-class practice for these topics as well as verbal exercises requiring their use. Increase in the average scores in these areas overall suggest this added attention in exercise and activities is beginning to improve the students' comprehension and use of these words and conjugations.

The faculty recommended zeroing in on three specific goals identified on the student self-assessments for the 2023 cycle: Goals 6, 15, and 16. These were goals that a number of students (5, 5, and 6, respectively) rated themselves as not improving in on the pre- and post-assessments. The instructor did develop and implement several classroom activities in 2024 that addressed Goals 6 (use of active class 1 and y-stem verbs and their conjugations) and 15 specifically. Student pre- and post-assessments for the 2024 cycle showed some resulting improvement: 16.6% rated themselves with no increase in these goals in 2024 as opposed to 21.8% in 2023.

The instructor did not have the opportunity to develop an activity for Goal 16 yet; therefore, no improvement is shown on the student self-assessment: 25% showed no increase for the goal just as in 2023.

Recommendations

Based on evaluation of the student scores on the tool used for listening comprehension, verbal response, and pronunciation, the following is recommended for attention in this present 2025 cycle:

Students seemed to have most difficulty with remembering and using the Dakota/Lakota seasons and months as well as the kinship terms used for siblings. Therefore the faculty recommended developing more classroom exercises and activities for the use of those particular items to assist student comprehension, memory, and use of them.

In addition, faculty recommends building in more opportunities for pronunciation practice zeroing in on stress, glottal stops, velar fricatives, and distinguishing between the vowels oral a and nasal a.

Further, faculty will continue to discuss ways to further work on words identified in the reading and writing tools (such as *ektá*, *él*, and *ktA*) as needing more attention as well as continued practice with verbal conjugations, and will work to implement further exercises and practices focusing on those items.

Finally, faculty recommends discussing and developing classroom activities that focus on the specific goals identified on the student pre- and post-assessments where students rated themselves as not improving for 2024. These are specifically Goals 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, and 16. Activities and exercises should be developed and implemented to help students' comprehension and mastery of these topics.