

# University of Louisiana at Lafayette

## Detailed Assessment Report

### 2015-2016 French MA

As of: 11/10/2016 04:32 PM CENTRAL

(Includes those Action Plans with Budget Amounts marked *One-Time, Recurring, No Request.*)

## Mission / Purpose

---

The French and Francophone Studies Program at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, in accordance with the University's mission, is dedicated to achieving excellence in graduate education, in research, and in public service. Our graduate program seeks to develop scholars who will variously advance knowledge, cultivate aesthetic sensibility, and improve the material conditions of humankind. Further, our program is committed to diversity and integration, and seeks to promote regional, economic, and cultural development. In addition, students are encouraged to explore solutions to national and world issues, as well as advance scholarship in French and Francophone Studies. Overall, the program strives to introduce and further expose students to the diversity of the Francophone world, through literary, cultural, and cinematographic approaches.

The program aims to develop interdisciplinary perspectives on the variety of issues pertaining to the Francophone world, through broad exposure to different areas and theories. Our goal is to provide students with effective tools to succeed both within and without academia, as well as become global, critical citizens.

For students admitted with an assistantship, the program also provides guidance in preparing them for their future teaching profession. We also aim to show the transferability of their newly acquired skills.

## Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

---

### SLO 1: Language Competency

Students in the M.A. Program in French should demonstrate competence in at least three languages relevant to their research.

#### Connected Documents

[ACTFL Language Proficiency Standards](#)

[MA Research Portfolio Rubric](#)

[MA Thesis Rubric](#)

#### Related Measures

### M 1: Language Competency

(a) Competency in written French will be evaluated by a committee (either comprehensive exam committee or thesis committee) using the student's completed but not yet defended thesis or a portfolio of three term papers and will be based on ACTFL guidelines.

(b) Competency in oral French will be determined by the oral examination committee during comprehensive exams and based on ACTFL guidelines.

(c) Competency in English for non-native speakers will be determined during an exit interview and based on ACTFL guidelines. (d) Language competency will be measured either through an exam administered by faculty with expertise in the language or through coursework in the language.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

#### Connected Documents

[ACTFL Language Proficiency Standards](#)

[MA Research Portfolio Rubric](#)

[MA Thesis Rubric](#)

#### Target:

Beginning in Fall 2010, we will consider the following as successful attainment of results:

**(a)** 75% of our M.A. students will attain a rating of Superior in written French, according to ACTFL guidelines on their comprehensive examinations.

**(b)** 75% of our M.A. students will attain a rating of Superior in spoken French, according to ACTFL guidelines on their comprehensive examinations.

**(c)** 75% of our M.A. students who are non-native speakers of English will attain a rating of Advanced High in spoken English, according to ACTFL guidelines, during an exit interview.

**(d)** 100% of our M.A. students will pass a written exam proving advanced competency in a third language, will successfully complete 202 in a third language, or will prove advanced or 202-level competency through prior coursework as attested on a transcript.

#### Connected Documents

[ACTFL Language Proficiency Standards](#)

[MA Research Portfolio Rubric](#)

[MA Thesis Rubric](#)

#### **Finding (2015-2016) - Target: Not Met**

a) 100% of our M.A. students (one student) attained a rating of Advanced-High in written French. (b) 100% of our M.A. students attained a rating of Advanced-High in spoken French. (c) 100% of our M.A. students proved competency in a third foreign language.

#### **Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**

##### **Assessment Language Competency**

Previously success was measured only through coursework for competency in French, through the initial TOEFL score for

competency in English (for non-native speakers), and through the Graduate Reading Examination for the third language. We realized that we needed to assess students' capacity in French in a more consistent way, and we chose to use the ACTFL standards, which are nationally accepted standards, to categorize the results more effectively. For non-native speakers of English, we realized that the TOEFL score, required for admission, did not reflect students' current competency in English, which ideally improves during the program. We elected to require M.A. students completing the degree to be interviewed, and those results will be categorized according to ACTFL standards. We will be collecting this new data beginning in Spring 2010. We now will define our criteria for success as a percentage (75%) of M.A. students who achieve the ACTFL designation of "Superior" in spoken and written French, and for non-native speakers of English, a percentage (75%) who achieve an ACTFL rating of "Advanced High" in spoken English.

**Established in Cycle:** 2009-2010

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Language Competency | **Outcome/Objective:**

Language Competency

**Projected Completion Date:** 05/2011

**Connected Documents**

[ACTFL Language Proficiency Standards](#)

[MA Research Portfolio Rubric](#)

[MA Thesis Rubric](#)

### **Capstone MA Presentation for Non-Thesis Option MA**

We are exploring the possibility of having non-thesis make a capstone presentation on a research topic of their choosing for evaluation of research skills and language competency.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Language Competency | **Outcome/Objective:**

Language Competency

**Measure:** MA Thesis or Portfolio | **Outcome/Objective:**

Original Research

### **Offer graduate-level French grammar and stylistics course**

We will explore the possibility of offering at a more regular interval the graduate-level French grammar and stylistics course to address deficiencies in M.A. students.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** Medium

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Language Competency | **Outcome/Objective:**  
Language Competency

**Projected Completion Date:** 05/2016

**Reassessment of Fren 541**

We intend to reevaluate course Fren 541 and see if we want to keep it as it is. We need to reassess how this course fits into our curriculum or how its content can be covered in other classes.

**Established in Cycle:** 2014-2015

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Language Competency | **Outcome/Objective:**  
Language Competency

**Implementation Description:** Determine if Fren 541 should be redesigned and articulated in a different way.

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/2016

**Responsible Person/Group:** Graduate Faculty

**New course on academic writing**

The course is still being designed and assessed. Meanwhile, writing workshops are being offered regularly by Dr. Loic Bourdeau to graduate students. A graduate-level writing course open to all should be offered in 2017-2018.

**Established in Cycle:** 2015-2016

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Language Competency | **Outcome/Objective:**  
Language Competency

**NEW FREN 541**

The course was not offered in 2015-2016 but will be offered in the Fall 2016 by Dr. Gaetan Brulotte.

**Established in Cycle:** 2015-2016

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Language Competency | **Outcome/Objective:**  
Language Competency

**SLO 2: Breadth and Depth of Knowledge**

M.A. students should demonstrate both breadth and depth of knowledge in multiple areas of French and Francophone Studies.

**Connected Document**

[MA Comprehensive Exam Rubric](#)

**Related Measures**

## **M 2: Comprehensive Examination**

Students will take comprehensive exams in three areas of French and Francophone Studies which include a written exam on each area and an oral exam with the examination committee consisting of members of ULL graduate faculty. All members of the examination committee rate the students' performance on the exams using the M.A. in French Comprehensive Exam Rubric.

Source of Evidence: Comprehensive/end-of-program subject matter exam

### **Connected Documents**

[ACTFL Language Proficiency Standards](#)

[MA Comprehensive Exam Rubric](#)

### **Target:**

Beginning in Fall 2010, we will consider successful attainment of results when 75% of our M.A. students achieve an average score of 3.10 or higher on the M.A. in French Comprehensive Examination Rubric.

### **Connected Documents**

[ACTFL Language Proficiency Standards](#)

[MA Comprehensive Exam Rubric](#)

### **Finding (2015-2016) - Target: Met**

100% of our M.A. students achieved an average score of 3.10 or higher on the M.A. in French Comprehensive Examination Rubric.

### **Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**

#### **Change of timing and policies concerning comprehensive exams**

In Spring 2010, we implemented new policies concerning comprehensive examinations, which cover the timing of the exam relative to coursework in fields, evaluation of exams, procedures when students fail a portion or all of the written exams, timing of retake exams, and ineligibility to continue in the program due to failure of exams.

**Established in Cycle:** 2009-2010

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** High

#### **Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Comprehensive Examination |

**Outcome/Objective:** Breadth and Depth of Knowledge

**Projected Completion Date:** 05/2010

#### **Implementation of Comprehensive Exam Rubric**

Previously, we assessed the M.A. comprehensive exams only as pass, pass on second try, or fail. We will begin in Fall 2010 to use a rubric to evaluate each M.A. comprehensive examination that measures 8 dimensions of the written exam and 5 dimensions of the oral exam. Beginning in Fall 2010, we will redefine our criteria for success as a percentage of students (75%) who attain a score of 40/52 or higher on the comprehensive exam.

**Established in Cycle:** 2009-2010

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Comprehensive Examination |

**Outcome/Objective:** Breadth and Depth of Knowledge

**Projected Completion Date:** 05/2011

**Connected Documents**

[ACTFL Language Proficiency Standards](#)

[MA Comprehensive Exam Rubric](#)

### **New FREN 505**

After redesigning FREN 421(G), implementing the course, and offering it for four years, we sought to address issues that we observed in the design of the course. The main issue was that FREN 421(G) was offered at both the undergraduate and graduate level, and we found that the two groups of students demonstrated different needs with regard to pacing, depth, and breadth. Assignments appropriate for each level also presented challenges, to the teachers as well as to the students. In order to resolve these issues but with the intention of fulfilling the same goals, we decided to break the course into an undergraduate class and a graduate one, creating FREN 505 at the graduate level.

The course will continue to be team-taught but administered by a single faculty member and will continue to be a first-semester requirement. The content will focus more on developing high-level cultural knowledge in areas in which our faculty specializes, in addition to a more concentrated emphasis on conceptual issues and concerns in the field of Francophone Studies.

**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Comprehensive Examination |

**Outcome/Objective:** Breadth and Depth of Knowledge

**Implementation Description:** The course is projected to be offered for the first time in Fall 2014.

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/2014

### **Evaluate and redesign FREN 541**

We will evaluate the effectiveness of the new FREN 541 for effectiveness and redesign the course if necessary. The course was offered this past year in the new format and we will examine its effectiveness for preparation of comprehensive exams. Using the comprehensive exams and thesis/portfolio rubrics for the MA, we will determine if the course has been effective in preparing students in breadth and depth of knowledge and research design.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):****Measure:** Comprehensive Examination |**Outcome/Objective:** Breadth and Depth of Knowledge**Measure:** MA Thesis or Portfolio | **Outcome/Objective:** Original Research**Projected Completion Date:** 05/2015**Responsible Person/Group:** French Graduate Faculty**Further Development of FREN 505**

In addition to evaluating the effectiveness of FREN 541 and determining the proper course of action based on the assessment, we will be revisiting the implementation of the new course FREN 505, which was scheduled to be taught in Fall 2014, but due to changes in instructional staff, we need to reassess our plans. We will be revisiting the issues in Fall 2014 and formulating a plan to continue. The main goal will be to determine in what capacity we need to orientate our incoming students to the field of Francophone Studies.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014**Implementation Status:** Planned**Priority:** High**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):****Measure:** Comprehensive Examination |**Outcome/Objective:** Breadth and Depth of Knowledge**Measure:** MA Thesis or Portfolio | **Outcome/Objective:** Original Research**Projected Completion Date:** 05/2015**Responsible Person/Group:** French Graduate Faculty**SLO 3: Original Research**

M.A. students should demonstrate the ability to conduct original research.

**Connected Documents**[MA Research Portfolio Rubric](#)[MA Thesis Rubric](#)**Related Measures****M 3: MA Thesis or Portfolio**

Ability to conduct original research will be measured through the completion and defense of a Masters thesis, written and revised under the direction of a three-member committee of professors holding graduate faculty status, and evaluated using the M.A. Thesis Rubric, or through the submission of a research portfolio containing three research papers written for courses while in the M.A. program, using the M.A. Portfolio Rubric.

Source of Evidence: Senior thesis or culminating major project

**Connected Documents**[ACTFL Language Proficiency Standards](#)[MA Research Portfolio Rubric](#)[MA Thesis Rubric](#)**Target:**

We consider successful attainment of results when 75% of M.A. students achieve an average score of 3.10 or higher on the Masters Thesis Evaluation Rubric.

We consider successful attainment of results when 75% of M.A. students achieve an average score of 3.10 or higher on the Masters Portfolio Evaluation Rubric.

**Connected Documents**

[ACTFL Language Proficiency Standards](#)

[MA Research Portfolio Rubric](#)

[MA Thesis Rubric](#)

**Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):****Implementation of Rubrics for MA Thesis or Portfolio**

Previously, we assessed the success of this learning goal primarily through the satisfactory writing and defense of a Masters thesis, and for students who elected the non-thesis option, we had no measure of success other than completion of 36 hours of coursework.

In Spring 2010, we changed our criteria for success from a pass/fail thesis grade (thesis option) and 36 hours of coursework (non-thesis option) to attainment by a percentage of M.A. students (75%) who attain either a score 25/32 or higher on the Masters Thesis Evaluation Rubric, or a score of 56/72 or higher on the Masters Portfolio Evaluation Rubric. These quantitative results will allow us to gauge success more effectively.

In Spring 2010, we implemented the new policy that non-thesis track M.A. students submit a research portfolio of three term papers in order for the department to assess their attainment of learning objectives more effectively.

**Established in Cycle:** 2009-2010

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** MA Thesis or Portfolio | **Outcome/Objective:**  
Original Research

**Projected Completion Date:** 05/2011

**Connected Documents**

[ACTFL Language Proficiency Standards](#)

[MA Research Portfolio Rubric](#)

[MA Thesis Rubric](#)

**New FREN 500 and redesigned FREN 541**

Based on assessment of our graduate students' mastery of bibliographical, citation, and formatting styles, we determined that a new approach to how we teach methodology was necessary. To address the issue, we divided a three-hour, first-semester required course into two: a new one-hour, first-semester required course, FREN 500, and a redesigned, two-hour, second-semester required course, FREN 541.



FREN 500 will focus entirely on mastery of MLA Style and proper document formatting and orientation to graduate school. FREN 541 will focus on research methodology and formulation of an original and significant research question. The two courses together will provide the necessary tools for research, but the new sequence will present the material at the crucial points for, we hope, maximum acquisition of skills.

**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Citation and Bibliographic Style |

**Outcome/Objective:** Appropriate Citation and Bibliographic Style

**Measure:** MA Thesis or Portfolio | **Outcome/Objective:** Original Research

**Implementation Description:** FREN 500 will be offered the first time in Fall 2013, and the redesigned FREN 541 for the first time in Spring 2014.

**Projected Completion Date:** 05/2014

### **Capstone MA Presentation for Non-Thesis Option MA**

We are exploring the possibility of having non-thesis make a capstone presentation on a research topic of their choosing for evaluation of research skills and language competency.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Language Competency | **Outcome/Objective:** Language Competency

**Measure:** MA Thesis or Portfolio | **Outcome/Objective:** Original Research

### **Evaluate and redesign FREN 541**

We will evaluate the effectiveness of the new FREN 541 for effectiveness and redesign the course if necessary. The course was offered this past year in the new format and we will examine its effectiveness for preparation of comprehensive exams. Using the comprehensive exams and thesis/portfolio rubrics for the MA, we will determine if the course has been effective in preparing students in breadth and depth of knowledge and research design.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Comprehensive Examination |

**Outcome/Objective:** Breadth and Depth of Knowledge

**Measure:** MA Thesis or Portfolio | **Outcome/Objective:** Original Research

**Projected Completion Date:** 05/2015

**Responsible Person/Group:** French Graduate Faculty

### Further Development of FREN 505

In addition to evaluating the effectiveness of FREN 541 and determining the proper course of action based on the assessment, we will be revisiting the implementation of the new course FREN 505, which was scheduled to be taught in Fall 2014, but due to changes in instructional staff, we need to reassess our plans. We will be revisiting the issues in Fall 2014 and formulating a plan to continue. The main goal will be to determine in what capacity we need to orientate our incoming students to the field of Francophone Studies.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Comprehensive Examination |

**Outcome/Objective:** Breadth and Depth of Knowledge

**Measure:** MA Thesis or Portfolio | **Outcome/Objective:**  
Original Research

**Projected Completion Date:** 05/2015

**Responsible Person/Group:** French Graduate Faculty

### Develop a course on academic writing

Based on the assessment of M.A. theses written in French, we found that students need to be better equipped with academic writing skills. We intend to develop a course that will focus on academic writing in French. The course will be designed to address the fact that students are from various backgrounds (some are native French speakers, and some are not). The course will focus on the vocabulary and style appropriate to dissertation writing.

**Established in Cycle:** 2014-2015

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** MA Thesis or Portfolio | **Outcome/Objective:**  
Original Research

**Implementation Description:** Our Graduate Faculty will make a reflection on the new course and make suggestions about the content, materials to use, etc. Then, a faculty member will be selected to implement and teach the course. Some portions of the course could be team-taught.

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/2016

**Responsible Person/Group:** Graduate Faculty

### New course for grammar and stylistics

After discussions with faculty and results on exams and dissertations, the graduate faculty determined a course was necessary to address grammar and stylistic components.

**Established in Cycle:** 2014-2015

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Citation and Bibliographic Style |

**Outcome/Objective:** Appropriate Citation and Bibliographic Style

**Measure:** MA Thesis or Portfolio | **Outcome/Objective:** Original Research

**Implementation Description:** Graduate Faculty will determine the content of the course and the materials to use.

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/2016

**Responsible Person/Group:** Graduate Faculty

#### **SLO 4: Appropriate Citation and Bibliographic Style**

M.A. students should demonstrate proper use of citation and bibliographic style.

##### **Connected Document**

[MA Research Portfolio Rubric](#)

##### **Related Measures**

#### **M 4: Citation and Bibliographic Style**

Proper citation and bibliographic style will be measured in assignments in FREN 500 and in the Masters thesis or M.A. Portfolio.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

##### **Connected Documents**

[MA Research Portfolio Rubric](#)

[MA Thesis Rubric](#)

##### **Target:**

We will consider successful attainment of results when 75% of M.A. students achieve an average score of "Very Good" (i.e. 3/4 points) in Technical Skill on the Masters Thesis Evaluation Rubric or the Masters Portfolio Evaluation Rubric OR when 80% of M.A. students achieve a grade of A in FREN 500.

##### **Connected Documents**

[MA Research Portfolio Rubric](#)

[MA Thesis Rubric](#)

##### **Finding (2015-2016) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle**

No thesis to be reported.

##### **Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**

#### **Increased Focus on Citation and Bibliographic Style**

This is a newly articulated learning objective. We included this goal as part of our assessment as we became aware during Spring 2009 of a lack of skill among certain graduate students in the accepted bibliographic and citation style. Our inclusion of this criterion reflects our on-going assessment of how learning goals are met, or not met. We currently have no data but wish to collect quantitative data on use of bibliographic and citation style. We included on the M.A. Thesis Rubric and the M.A. Portfolio Rubric a category that will allow us to capture data in

this area. These rubrics are new measuring devices.

**Established in Cycle:** 2009-2010

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Citation and Bibliographic Style |

**Outcome/Objective:** Appropriate Citation and Bibliographic Style

**Projected Completion Date:** 05/2011

**Connected Documents**

[MA Research Portfolio Rubric](#)

[MA Thesis Rubric](#)

### **New FREN 500 and redesigned FREN 541**

Based on assessment of our graduate students' mastery of bibliographical, citation, and formatting styles, we determined that a new approach to how we teach methodology was necessary. To address the issue, we divided a three-hour, first-semester required course into two: a new one-hour, first-semester required course, FREN 500, and a redesigned, two-hour, second-semester required course, FREN 541. FREN 500 will focus entirely on mastery of MLA Style and proper document formatting and orientation to graduate school. FREN 541 will focus on research methodology and formulation of an original and significant research question. The two courses together will provide the necessary tools for research, but the new sequence will present the material at the crucial points for, we hope, maximum acquisition of skills.

**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Citation and Bibliographic Style |

**Outcome/Objective:** Appropriate Citation and Bibliographic Style

**Measure:** MA Thesis or Portfolio | **Outcome/Objective:** Original Research

**Implementation Description:** FREN 500 will be offered the first time in Fall 2013, and the redesigned FREN 541 for the first time in Spring 2014.

**Projected Completion Date:** 05/2014

### **New course for grammar and stylistics**

After discussions with faculty and results on exams and dissertations, the graduate faculty determined a course was necessary to address grammar and stylistic components.

**Established in Cycle:** 2014-2015

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Citation and Bibliographic Style |

**Outcome/Objective:** Appropriate Citation and Bibliographic Style

**Measure:** MA Thesis or Portfolio | **Outcome/Objective:**  
Original Research

**Implementation Description:** Graduate Faculty will determine the content of the course and the materials to use.

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/2016

**Responsible Person/Group:** Graduate Faculty

## Analysis Questions and Analysis Answers

---

### How were assessment results shared and evaluated within the unit?

Results are discussed during faculty meetings and shared with students in the form of a progress report sent to them once a year in the spring semester.

### Identify which action plans [created in prior cycle(s)] were implemented in this current cycle. For each of these implemented plans, were there any measurable or perceivable effects? How, if at all, did the findings appear to be affected by the implemented action plan?

We have a graduate course designed to help students with research and writing strategies. The course existed in our curriculum, but it was redesigned to better fit the needs of our current graduate students. It also includes training on various aspects of job search (cover letter, job interviews, CV, etc.). The purpose of this course is to better prepare our students for a competitive professional career. As a result of this course revamping, we could already see some successful outcome as some of our most recent graduates obtained faculty positions right after their graduation with us.

### What has the unit learned from the current assessment cycle? What is working well, and what is working less well in achieving desired outcomes?

We discovered that students need more customized and individual coaching throughout their progress towards graduation. In this respect, the individual progress report provided to each student is effective and useful as it helps track their progress and keep them focused on their work.

The letters provided to students prove to be very helpful, both for students and faculty in providing a realistic evaluation of students' progress.

The approach that we previously had was to offer students the freedom to plan their writing according to their own pace. This approach turned out to be a bit problematic with certain students who had a tendency not to be very structured and rigorous. They often had time management problems which resulted in delaying them in the defense of their theses. Therefore, the new approach ensures that they keep on track and complete their work in a timely manner.