

## Marketing French through a French for the Professions Course

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### Marketing French through a French for the Professions Course

**Abstract:** This article details a team-based marketing capstone project in a French for the Professions course at the low-advanced level based on ACTFL proficiency guidelines. The capstone project focuses on marketing and branding strategies, advertising campaigns, teamwork skills, and presentational communication skills. Rather than marketing a traditional product or service, however, students in this fifth-semester course were tasked with developing a marketing campaign specifically for the French language. By capturing and applying market data about attitudes toward language learning, students applied their coursework to real-world issues and then learned to become advocates for the study of the French language. Overall, students and faculty members rated this project positively: Students noted its real-world applications and faculty members reported the utility of the project in assessing content knowledge. What we have learned from the implementation of the capstone project has ultimately informed departmental marketing strategies that may be useful for attracting students to language programs.

*Keywords:* Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP), French for Specific Purposes, marketing, project-based work

Marketing campaigns and sales pitches are a component of many business and marketing courses, whether they take place in an entrepreneurship program or an undergraduate business language course (Bliemel, 2014). To complete these projects, students work in teams to develop a marketing strategy for a product or service that they pitch to their classmates, or another audience. In the French for Business course, in order for students to study cultural and linguistic differences, they may research merchandise (e.g., flip-flop sandals) or services (e.g., food trucks) that present new business ideas that have not yet been adopted widely in the target market. French for Business textbooks often present this kind of activity. For example, in *Quartier d’Affaires* (Jégou & Rosillo, 2014), students develop marketing techniques for launching a new product (p. 44). In *Objectif Express 2* (Dubois & Tauzin, 2016), students are tasked with identifying a new product and preparing a marketing strategy presentation (p. 67). In *Affaires globales* (Reisinger et al., 2021), a semester-long marketing project guides students through the steps of creating a marketing survey and developing a sales pitch. Faculty who create their own materials for business language instruction often include projects where students pitch existing products or new business ideas.<sup>1</sup>

Experiential activities like marketing pitch projects give students important practice with key advertising concepts. According to DeSimone (2016), “integrating experiential learning components into course design enhances learning and provides students with a preview of issues they will encounter in the working world” (p. 170). As Patel (2003) notes, this type of group project work supports a student-centered classroom by creating active learning experiences. Pitches also allow instructors to assess student learning outcomes related to the fundamentals of marketing and branding, such as the development of specialized discourse competence, cultural

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<sup>1</sup> The following website contains sample syllabi from Business French courses at key institutions across the United States: <https://businessfrench.weebly.com/syllabi.html>.

competencies, and teamwork skills (Parker, 2000). For these reasons, these team-based projects are especially useful as end-of-semester capstone activities.

This current article presents a variation of the marketing capstone project for an advanced French for the Professions course at the post-secondary level. Rather than pitching tangible products to their classmates, however, students in the advanced French for the Professions course are instead tasked with selling the French language to an invested audience of peers, faculty, and administrators. With language proficiency positioned as the product to promote (or, “sell”), the goal is for teams to convince others that learning French is worthy of their time and investment. Through scaffolded learning activities that draw from interdisciplinary fields, such as history, linguistics, and psychology, this revised version of the capstone project prepares students to reach the course’s student learning outcomes while also preparing them to be knowledgeable and articulate advocates for language learning. This article explores the project’s development in the context of national enrollment declines in the United States with the goal of demonstrating that intentionally designed capstone projects can contribute to a larger understanding of our discipline.

### **Background**

I have taught the advanced French for the Professions course for twelve years at a highly selective, private post-secondary institution in the Southeastern United States. The course, titled “Business and Culture in the Francophone World,” is designed to provide students with the linguistic and cultural skills necessary to work in a French-speaking professional environment. The learning outcomes on the syllabus specify that, at the end of the course, students should be able to employ business-related vocabulary and concepts in interpersonal and presentational tasks; interpret infographics and case studies to understand professional trends and business models; synthesize and analyze business reports in written form; deliver a convincing marketing pitch; interact in a culturally appropriate manner in a professional setting; and demonstrate the personal and intercultural competencies (e.g., leadership, risk-taking, creativity, relationship-building, and innovation) that are a prelude to working with diverse populations. The student learning outcomes reflect the three modes of communication (interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational) as defined by the National Standards for Foreign Language Education (*Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century*, 1999), and offer students varied opportunities to make gains in language proficiency, cultural competencies, and content knowledge throughout the semester.

In the first part of the semester, the course focuses on building spoken and written communication skills, from leading an online meeting to writing a professional email. As the semester progresses, we focus on case studies that showcase the diversity of the francophone working world and that examine environmental studies, global health, and entrepreneurship. For the capstone project in the course, students undertake a research-based marketing project that culminates in a marketing pitch designed to persuade someone to buy a product or service. This final group presentation was designed to give students the opportunity to develop a culturally appropriate marketing campaign, to work effectively in teams, and to deliver a successful marketing pitch. I have used this model for 10 years, and end-of-semester evaluations have reported consistently high satisfaction with this assignment. While students sometimes lament the time-consuming nature of the project, they also note that the multiple steps of the project led them to be successful, since it is impossible to create a last-minute pitch when there are frequent

deadlines forcing them to organize their work. Students also report that the assignment allows them to apply learned concepts in a way that represents a meaningful culmination of their work in the course; as one student wrote, “while it was challenging to work on this project with my group, the project was perfect because it allowed me to put everything I learned into practice.” Indeed, the project’s tasks offer the opportunity to practice marketing and advertising strategies (e.g., writing a marketing survey, researching and creating visual and written components of a campaign, and devising a convincing pitch). Finally, students often comment on the creative aspects of the project that allow them to showcase skills that are not always easily visible to others, such as graphic design, video-production, and a sense of humor.

Creativity can play an important role in advertising. Job titles in the field requiring creativity include account executive, creative director, art director, social media creative strategist, copywriter, and media planner. Working through project-based learning assignments allows students to better understand these positions and their roles within an agency. In addition, employing creative group projects such as the pitch may also help cement student learning. Researchers have found that adopting a creative approach improves student outcomes. Bramwell et al. (2011) found that teachers improved outcomes in four areas by adopting a creative approach: observable products, motivation, interpersonal connections, and personal development. Further, creative assignments can motivate and engage students. Television shows like *Shark Tank* and *The Pitch* have popularized the pitch model, making it a familiar model for students to emulate.

In early versions of the capstone project for this course, students selected products from *SkyMall* magazine to pitch to their targeted French audience. For that project, they branded giant cake molds using Marie Antoinette as their spokesperson and pitched portable pet bathrooms for small Parisian apartments. In other semesters, when we have focused on franchising, students pitched food truck concepts, smoothie chains, and vaping products designed for smoking cessation programs. These cultural aspects added a light-hearted and sometimes humorous aspect to the product pitches, and the class would often break into laughter when they heard a clever slogan or watched a funny advertisement starring their classmates. While these projects reflected careful planning and produced creative results, I sometimes felt that the content students created was inconsistent with the course objective of developing intercultural competence. The marketing surveys that students so painstakingly designed landed in the hands of just a few native speakers, their target clientele. Unable to survey a significant cross-section of native speakers, students worked with thin data sets, rarely gathering enough statistical evidence to build a realistic branding campaign that reflected their target audience. Accordingly, the campaigns often relied on stereotypes about French consumers to market their products. Resulting campaigns cleverly referenced French stereotypes that American students had often noted while studying abroad, such as high rates of youth smoking, appreciation of wine and food, and importance of social codes (Kinging, 2008). These allusions produced laughs from the class, but they often reflected students’ stereotypes about French culture, rather than sharing any knowledge of France or the French. In other words, they were not data driven. These problematic cultural representations added to my existing unease with incomplete survey data, leading me to change the focus of this project.

During this same time period, as I was considering revising the project, news outlets began featuring stories about declining language study in the United States. High schools, for instance, were shifting their policies for language requirements. In 2015, the state of Georgia agreed to allow computer science to count for the college world language admission

requirement; calls to accept courses in computer coding for language requirements began to gain steam around the country (Jaschik, 2017). This trend stirred post-secondary concerns about declining enrollments at their institutions. In 2013, the Modern Language Association (MLA) presented a dismal report on the state of foreign language education in colleges and universities, showing that even well-enrolled languages, like Spanish, were losing students at a rate of 8% (Goldberg, Looney, & Lusin, 2015, p. 27). These plummeting numbers intensified in subsequent years. The MLA report spanning 2013-2016 showed an even more precipitous drop, with enrollments in languages other than English decreasing by 9.2% across all languages, and 11.1% in French (Looney & Lusin, 2019). *The Chronicle of Education* and *Inside Higher Ed* published a number of articles focusing on department closures; universities seemed to be terminating degree programs in languages at increasing rates (Flaherty, 2018).

In 2016, the US political climate began to shift, so that politicians publicly denigrated language study as an unnecessary pursuit. Specifically, Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin proclaimed in an interview: “All the people in the world that want to study French literature can do so, they are just not going to be subsidized by the taxpayer” (Beam, 2016). The following year, a new US president took office, having run on an anti-immigrant and anti-refugee platform that ushered in policies that penalized individuals from countries with majority Muslim populations (Trump, 2017). Immigration policies became increasingly restrictive, with asylum seekers being separated from their children at the border (*Family Separation*). Anti-immigrant sentiment began to rise in the United States, as did the rate of hate crimes against people in marginalized groups (*Hate crimes*).

The increasingly nativist US political climate is of relevance to our students, and as language faculty members, we have both an opportunity and a responsibility: Not only do we want to teach students to develop linguistic and cultural proficiencies, but we want them to become advocates for the languages that we teach, perhaps even spokespersons for cross-cultural and global understanding. The current state of language learning in the United States is woeful at best, and proficiency in a second language (L2) is rarely attained by US students. While over 20% of Americans can speak another language, this is largely due to their heritage (Zeigler & Camarota, 2018). According to a recent study, less than 1% of US adults are proficient in the L2 that they studied in a US classroom (Friedman, 2015). Still, while American adults may not have been successful in L2 learning, language study has changed considerably since the days of memorized dialogues and fill-in-the-blank grammar exercises. Approaches grounded in communicative language teaching encourage language learning in authentic contexts that focus on meaning making. By the early 2000s, multiliteracy approaches had begun to help bridge bifurcated departments that were once divided into pragmatic programs of language and scholarly approaches to literature (Kern, 2002). While change is slow, research shows that 40% of departments have attempted to bring about curricular change (Lomicka & Lord, 2018). Content-based instruction, such as those found in Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP), advances contemporary approaches and offers students specific applications for the acquisition of language and culture. Still, considerable skepticism remains. According to a 2013 Gallup poll, only 19% of Americans believe it is essential to speak a second language, and 28% believe it is not too important or not important at all (Jones, 2013). These responses have changed little since the same survey was conducted in 2001.

As a result, today’s students may feel the need to explain their choice to study a second language—or their choice of language—to parents or advisors, defending their decision to pursue a minor in French instead of another so-called “more practical” or “career-focused”

minor. Viewed from another perspective, however, these students have the opportunity to explain to their families, to their peers, and to their future colleagues why it is indeed useful to study French, or any language for that matter. In some ways, students enrolled in LSP courses are best poised to take on this role. At my own institution, for example, the students who enroll in French for Professional Purposes courses do so because they want to use French in their career. They focus on spoken proficiency and on market utility. Such students may also take courses in medieval literature, but they are more likely to be pursuing a major in economics with a minor in French, than they are to be pursuing a language and culture major in our department. Often, the goal of these students is to find work in consulting, business, or finance, and because of that positionality, they are arguably the ones with the greatest potential for shifting attitudes and ideas about L2 study. It is meaningful that not only would LSP students be interested in the data and trends that describe the decline of L2 study in the United States, but that they would also be well-positioned to offer solutions.

### **The Capstone Project: Marketing French**

In response to these challenges, and to what I perceived as a “call to action,” I elected to overhaul the marketing capstone project. Rather than pitching a *SkyMall* product to imaginary French consumers, students would now learn to sell a different product—the French language—to their US counterparts. They would be tasked with selling the study of French, L2 acquisition, and the rewards that proficiency offers. The benefits of learning another language include cognitive benefits, academic achievement, and cultural competencies (“What the Research Shows”, 2020). The section below outlines the remodeled version of the marketing capstone project, using a backwards design approach (Wiggins, Wiggins, & McTigue, 2005) that underscores student learning outcomes, assessment strategies and learning activities designed to reach the outcomes.

Changing the focus of the pitch project meant developing a revised set of measurable project outcomes (see rubric in Appendix A). The marketing survey was expanded to a minimum of 20 respondents, and the digital media component now included examples of social media marketing. The language of student learning outcomes was altered to reflect measurable outcomes and was aligned with the assessment rubric. The primary outcomes of the final capstone assignment, and their associated learning activities, required students to:

1. Devise a marketing and branding strategy for the French language:
  - a. write and administer a marketing survey to at least 20 individuals;
  - b. identify a data-driven target market;
  - c. develop a logical strategy for reaching that market.
2. Create an effective advertising campaign for the French language:
  - a. design a logo and slogan;
  - b. create an advertisement using 2D or visual media (flyer, newspaper, magazine, meme, Instagram);
  - c. create an advertisement using digital media with audio component (television or radio spot, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, etc.).
3. Demonstrate teamwork through an enthusiastic product pitch that reflected the work of all team members.
4. Communicate clearly and effectively using specialized vocabulary in a final pitch.

5. Clearly articulate the value of second language study and the pursuit of advanced language proficiency, through rigorous research.

Once the student learning outcomes and assessment rubrics were in place, a series of lesson plans and activities that would support student learning toward the final goal were created. To support learning as students moved through the project's steps toward the capstone project, I added a formative assessment at the six-week mark in the course. For this assignment, students delivered a short, 2-3-minute marketing pitch of a campus start-up. This activity offered practice in presentational speaking and teamwork, but without the level of detail required for the final capstone project. For the week 6 assignment, students first watched three short marketing pitches together. Students then worked in groups to brainstorm a product or service that they wanted to see at the university. Recent proposals include a homework delivery service, a valet parking service, and an on-campus dance club. For this assignment, students spent two in-class periods developing and pitching their ideas to the class. The activity helped students identify their strengths and weaknesses in presentational skills (e.g., some discovered that they became very nervous, some spoke too quickly, and some read their slides). Faculty feedback in the form of a rubric helped to pinpoint areas of improvement that could be targeted for the capstone presentation (see Appendix A). Peer feedback in the form of a brief in-class questionnaire offered additional opportunities for groups to reflect on their oral presentation skills and audience engagement.

To provide a knowledge base (or, background knowledge) for the capstone project, two class periods were devoted to the history and current state of the French language, both in North America and around the globe. In order to sell the French language, students needed to know why it was worth selling; students' answers involved interdisciplinary research into fields such as history, linguistics, and psychology. Such basic questions are often overlooked in our department's course offerings but are fundamental to building content knowledge. To address this perceived knowledge gap, I divided the class into three groups, each of which focused on one of the following questions that they would have to present to the class at the subsequent meeting:

1. What is the history of the French language in North America?
2. How many French speakers currently reside in the United States, and where do they live?
3. What is the current state of secondary and post-secondary French enrollments in the United States?

The first group examined French settlements in Quebec, the Louisiana purchase, and the westward expansion, using maps and data graphs to examine the resettlement of French speakers across North America. The second group used the MLA database ([mla.org](http://mla.org)) and US population statistics to explore (down to the zip code) where native and heritage speakers in their city and communities reside. Finally, a third group explored MLA enrollment data to uncover French enrollment trends across the United States.

Each of the three groups was also tasked with a second, larger question: What is the importance of studying, learning, and communicating in another language? To answer this, students examined information found on websites of national organizations such as the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF), the French Embassy, and French-American Chambers of Commerce. Each group presented its findings to our class, an activity that provided each student with a basic foundation on which to build their advertising campaign. Many students were surprised by what

they learned during their research; some were proud that they had already achieved an advanced level of proficiency, and others were alarmed by the grim enrollment statistics.

Now that students had a general sense of the state of the French language in the United States, the class then turned to examine the capstone assignment in more detail, including its intended outcomes, a timeline of deadlines for the multiple steps (see Appendix B), and a rubric of how the work would be evaluated. Preparation for this project included both in-class and out-of-class work by teams and individuals. Project deadlines were aligned with the study of marketing and advertising theories, including McCarthy's (1960) 4 Ps (product, price, place, promotion) and Kotler and Armstrong's (2009) 4 Cs (consumer, cost, convenience, communication). Students analyzed marketing strategies as well, examining case studies of famous (older) advertising campaigns via [culturepub.fr](http://culturepub.fr) (e.g., Evian, Le Parisien, Familiprix), as well as more recent ads presented at the Clio and Cannes Lions yearly advertising awards. Newer campaigns reflected updated advertising strategies, including guerilla marketing, data-driven personalization, and neuromarketing. The class also analyzed failed campaigns or "flops" (Renier & Haig, 2011), allowing students to see how poor cultural localization can negatively affect consumer purchases. Colgate's failed launch of "Cue" toothpaste in France clearly showed the importance of speaking the language and knowing the local culture.<sup>2</sup> The class also examined characteristics of successful logos (e.g., the color blue) and slogans (e.g., L'Oréal's "Parce que je le vaux bien") to guide them as they created their own.

The project assignment was presented in class just before spring break. The first step was to divide students into four teams of four students. For this project, student groups were created based on self-disclosed skillsets that would help ensure an effective distribution of competencies. Students were asked to identify areas in which they excelled (visual design, production skills, organizational skills, data collection, etc.), and then to select the job description with which they most identified. The following divisions are standard in most marketing agencies: strategy, creative, technology, and public relations. Based on their answers, students were assigned a job in one of the four divisions, and were split into four heterogeneous teams designed to best distribute resources. Each team was assigned at least one student with design skills, using tools such as Photoshop, iMovie, or Final Cut Pro.

Once teams were created, students received their first task: to identify their target market, based on either previous knowledge or predilection. Team A chose the parents of middle school students who influenced decisions about which language their child should pursue. Team B selected district administrators that had the decision-making power to support world language study or to shutter programs. Team C selected incoming college students who had to select a language to fulfill their graduation requirement. Team D focused on students working toward a French minor who might be convinced to change to the major instead. Teams were then tasked with creating a marketing survey to distribute to their target market.

Marketing surveys are a familiar task-type to students, but few students have actually created them. Working with authentic documents, students took four web-based surveys: two in French and two in English. This activity familiarized them with the types of questions they might need to ask, as well as the language structures they might wish to duplicate. In an activity in which students drew on a model text to replicate certain genre features, they adapted these surveys to create their own versions, in both French and in English. Task authenticity necessitated that surveys be conducted in English, but the exercise in translation was a useful one. Even when composed in English, this was a deceptively challenging task, as a high level of

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<sup>2</sup> Cue is the name of a pornographic magazine in France. The toothpaste brand was pulled immediately.

linguistic precision is needed to write clear questions that elicit useful data. Once surveys were reviewed and tested on a sample audience, the team administered them to their target market, either via email or social media. Team A's market was difficult to identify, because the students did not personally know 20 middle school parents; they were thus encouraged to use personal networks, and since one student had a sibling in middle school, she asked her parent to share the survey on Facebook. Most teams were able to work with much larger data sets; Team C posted their survey on the incoming class' Facebook page and received over 220 responses. Sample questions included yes/no questions (e.g., "Have you ever visited a country where the language you study is spoken?"), multiple choice questions (e.g., "What is the biggest barrier to learning a language?", "What factors did you consider when choosing to study a second language?"), and open-ended questions (e.g., "What do you associate with the French language?").

The next step was for groups to review the survey data in order to develop a cohesive marketing strategy. Team B's survey showed that administrators believed Spanish was a more useful language than French. The team had to decide whether their campaign should disparage another language in favor of French, extol the virtues of learning any and all languages, or instead focus on why French is particularly useful (they chose the latter). Team C's survey showed that incoming college students did not think that French was useful, but instead thought it was a romantic language. The team had to decide how to draw on these findings to best reach its consumers: Should it create a campaign based on romance, or should it try to inform these students about the usefulness of learning French? (it chose the former). Teams grappled with these questions during a class session, interpreting data in different ways to experiment with multiple strategies. During this period, I circulated among teams and offered feedback; teams sometimes consulted with one another as well. All class sessions took place in French. Once the teams defined a clear strategy that highlighted one characteristic of the French language (e.g., its romantic nature, its utility, its diversity), they tapped their creative talent to create a logo and a slogan that were both catchy and relevant for their audience (e.g., "La France est plus grande que l'hexagone"; "France is bigger than the Hexagon"), a slogan that evoked the greater French-speaking world in order to encourage a more diverse student enrollment.

Next, teams selected two advertising media that would best convey their message to their target market. One of their advertisements had to include an audio component. To make these choices, students needed an understanding of which populations frequented which media (print, social media, etc.). Some teams included this question in their marketing survey, asking their respondents their preferred method of receiving information; others researched user data. Facebook, for instance, is a more popular platform with parents than with students; 79% of 35–44-year-olds have an account, while 51% of 13–17-year-olds use the platform, preferring YouTube (85%), Instagram (78%), and Snapchat (69%) (Chen, 2020). In the campaign targeting middle school parents, then, team A shot a video that appeared on Facebook and also created a print brochure to hand out at a school fair. Snapchat is a useful method for reaching both high school and college students, but in our department's internal surveys, college students reported making course selection choices based on course flyers and peer-to-peer information, rather than by departmental social media and online course listings. Team D thus targeted students minoring in French with flyers, but also posted clever memes on a Snapchat. In this way, students incorporated user data to demonstrate how to target a campaign to a particular group.

Sometimes, however, a team's strategy determined its medium. Team B's goal was to persuade administrators that French was a worthwhile pursuit for their students. Students created a pamphlet and accompanying website titled "Studying French is a gateway to the future." The

team combatted assumptions about the French language (e.g., its difficulty) by citing facts and statistics, while pointing to the social mobility of children who study French. Team C decided to capitalize on students' love of travel and adventure (which was discerned via a Facebook survey), so they captured images of destinations in the francophone world with a simple slogan ("Unlock your world"). Instagram was an obvious choice for this strategy. Team D focused on pre-professional students minoring in French and thus wanted to highlight the utility of studying French in various careers. They thought that a symposium would be the best way to do this, and invited students to attend a live-streamed event with professionals who worked in various francophone countries. For their campaign, they created t-shirts and a YouTube channel that could be archived for future viewers.

The final part of the capstone project involved a 15-minute pitch to the class in French, followed by a brief question and answer. Pitches were not staged as directly competitive with one another, since each team chose a unique target market. Still, the nature of the reveal made the presentations exciting, as teams had not shared their internal strategies prior to this day. Additional invited audience members, which included department colleagues, used a simple rubric to evaluate teams on their strategy, positioning, use of data, and quality of ads, as well as on their effectiveness in communicating their ideas (see Appendix C). Faculty offered feedback following the question and response session. Each student followed up by writing a three to four-page analysis of their project, noting what aspects had worked well and what they would do differently, based on participant feedback.

### **Conclusion**

The capstone pitch project in an advanced French for the Professions course presents an innovative way of addressing student learning outcomes related to business content and language proficiency. While many marketing and entrepreneurship courses focus on selling a new product or service, this project, done within the context of a French for the Professions course, aims to market the French language. This unconventional approach to the marketing pitch meets traditional student learning outcomes while also providing students with information about the study of languages, and in particular, the French language. By arming students with knowledge about the language they have chosen to pursue, including historical information, demographics, and employment data, students were provided with the information necessary to become advocates for L2 study, potentially bringing more students into the French program at the university. Students, too, find meaning in this inquiry. My classes generally express great surprise when they learn that there are 62 French companies operating within 100 miles of our campus, and over 4000 heritage and native speakers within 10 miles of campus. In some ways, this surprise reveals mistaken generalized beliefs about the French language (e.g., that it is not useful, that it is not spoken widely in the United States, that it is not growing). In other ways, it points to how much more we can do to showcase the relevance of language study to our own students.

The data that students uncovered in their market research has been useful for our department's marketing as well. We now have a better sense of how our university students perceive the French language, and the stereotypes that incoming students hold about France (that its primary purpose is to serve as a travel destination). The data collected has helped the department target messaging to students about courses, study abroad, and pursuing the minor or the major in French. While we continue to rely on traditional media (e.g., flyers, majors' fairs),

we have also tasked a student club to take on advertising, nominating student ambassadors to spread word about our courses and programs. We are considering a student-managed Instagram account as well.

In conclusion, the marketing capstone project offers ideas for deepening student knowledge, bettering communication among faculty members (by inviting colleagues to judge student work and discussing departmental messaging), and improving department-to-student communication. While this project focuses on a French program, it may be adapted to any language program or class at any institution. Departments that struggle to maintain enrollments in smaller language programs or less commonly taught languages may find a project like this especially beneficial for bolstering student interest in studying a given language. If an LSP course is not offered in that particular language, a project like the marketing capstone project could be easily adapted to an intermediate-level course. Finally, the marketing strategies can help increase student interest in language courses. Our own students are often our best spokespersons.

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**Appendix A. Assessment Rubric for Start-up Project** (translated from French)

<b>Assessment Criteria: Start-up Project Pitch</b>					
	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Content</b>	The product or service is clearly defined, logically developed, and responds to a real need for targeted clientele.	The product or service is well-defined and developed. Although it responds to a need, the target audience is not clearly defined.	The product or service is defined, but some ideas are not clearly communicated and leave lingering questions.	Ideas is not well-formed, and ideas are poorly articulated.	
<b>Strategy</b>	Convincing and energetic strategy to kick off start-up. Logical development, with a clear financial vision for future development.	Clear strategy with logical rollout. Realistic vision of finances and future development.	Adequate strategy. Financial vision and future of product/ service not well developed.	Problematic or unrealistic strategy. One of the elements is missing.	
<b>Language (clarity, precision)</b>	Clear presentation, with attractive visual elements. Language is clear and correct, with a precise vocabulary, no major errors. Intonation and pitch reinforce the presentation.	Clear presentation with visuals. Language is clear, and vocabulary is precise, with some mistakes that do not impede comprehension.	Visual aspects are not well-developed. Some errors impede comprehension.	Presentation lacks clarity. Few visuals. Numerous errors that impede comprehension.	
<b>Group cohesion</b>	Group dynamic gives off confidence. Each individual and their strengths are represented. Excellent group enthusiasm.	Cohesive group. Each participant brings their competencies. Good enthusiasm.	Unequal participation from group members. Low enthusiasm.	Unequal participation or one person dominates or does not participate.	

				Little to no enthusiasm.	
<b>Overall success</b>	A strong idea, presentation, and vision prove that the product or service is ready for launch!	All elements are present for a product or service to be successful. Needs more finesse or precision before launching idea.	While the concept is solid, the idea needs more research and/or a better strategy to be successful.	The idea does not inspire confidence and may leave questions about the group’s ability to work together.	

**Appendix B. Timeline for Capstone Project**

“Marketing French” Advertising Campaign

<b>In-class workshop</b>	<b>March 3</b>
Present project to class	
<b>Marketing survey due</b>	<b>March 10</b>
Distribute survey to >20 persons	
<b>Data analysis (in class)</b>	<b>March 25</b>
Understand your target market	
<b>Campaign creation</b>	<b>March 25–April 15</b>
Create slogan, print and audio ads	
<b>Product pitches (in class)</b>	<b>April 20 and 22</b>
15 min pitch and Q&A	

**Appendix C. In-class Evaluation for Final Pitch Project** (translated from French)

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Poor	Comments
Marketing survey					
Marketing strategy					
Product positioning					
Quality of logo + slogan					
Quality of 2D ad					
Quality of digital ad					
Organization and clarity					
Language + expression					
Group cohesion					
Overall campaign (Are you convinced ?)					

**Comments:**

What worked well? What did you like?  
 What aspects could have been improved?