Action Plan: Response to Report of the Review Committee on 
Department in Chicana and Chicano Studies 
University of New Mexico

Review committee: (1) Reynaldo F. Macias, Professor of Chicana/o Studies, University of California, Los Angeles; (2) Mary Pardo, Professor of Chicana and Chicano Studies, California State University, Northridge; (3) Greg Cajete, Associate Professor of Native American Studies, University of New Mexico.

Site Visit: March 3-4, 2016
Committee Report: April 25, 2016
Date of this Response: August 21, 2016
Compiled by Professor Irene Vásquez, Chair of Chicana and Chicano Studies

Department Response
The external reviewers found that the Chicana and Chicano Studies Department at UNM offers high quality student centered curriculum, teaching, research and scholarship. The following statement provides a broad representative assessment offered by the reviewers of the department’s past five-year history and strikes a tenor of optimism for CCS’s future:

The Chican@ Studies program is attracting attention from Chicano Studies scholars across North America because of the geographic location of the University, its rich and unique archival resources and collections in Chican@ studies, and its incipient affirming growth and success. (p. 3)

The APR process assesses departments based on nine criteria. The guidelines for the new Academic Program Review process do not stipulate that reviewers offer recommendations for improvement. However, the process does ask reviewers to identify program strengths and lacunae. The following narrative will briefly summarize the strengths and attend to any identified lacunae. In response to the lacunae, CCS has developed responses that form the bases for its action plan. This document presents information on each of the APR criterion.

**Criterion 1: Program Goals: Evaluation**

While the review team noted no lacunae in Criteria1, they did offer two suggestions.

A. The reviewers noted that the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies should work more closely with El Centro de la Raza: Student Services Center. They wrote that greater collaboration between the two units would “offer opportunities for the campus community and local community to maintain ties and develop mutual support” (p.3).

In response to above noted suggestion by the external reviewers, CCS faculty will look to expand co-sponsorship opportunities with El Centro de la Raza building on past successes. For example, the two units co-sponsored presentations by Las Cafeteras, a popular Son Jarocho group, and the U.S. Poet Laureate, Juan Felipe Herrera. In years prior to the APR, CCS cooperated with El
Centro de La Raza. However, during the 2015-2016 year while CCS was engaged in planning efforts related to the Academic Program review and a hiring process for an Assistant Professor, collaboration lessened. In order to explore cooperation, CCS will request time during the CCS Advisory Board meetings to discuss partnerships with El Centro de la Raza.

B. The reviewers noted that the lack of graduate programs forecloses opportunities for undergraduate students to continue graduate studies at UNM; instead, students look to other universities in Arizona, Texas, or California (UCLA and UC Davis) to enroll in graduate professional educational opportunities.

Chicana and Chicano Studies is currently developing a draft proposal for an MA/PhD program. Preliminarily, we envision a unique graduate component offering graduate students academic and professional opportunities in Chicana and Chicano Studies in the state of New Mexico. Implementation of graduate programs will necessitate an increase of faculty to 8 full-time.

Criterion 2: Teaching and Learning: Curriculum

The reviewers speak to several strengths and one lacuna in the area of Teaching and Learning: Curriculum. The report indicates recognition for the department’s ability to create “a student centered learning community that occurs through completion of logically sequenced and cohesive curricular components as well as through an array of extracurricular activities and high impact practices. (p.6)” The latter was noted as a strategic strength that portends to insure growth.

A. The reviewers raised a concern that was noted twice in the report regarding the acknowledgment of Affiliated Faculty contributions to CCS department growth and implementation. Specifically, they reported that currently Affiliated faculty members are not formally recognized for their contributions to CCS, i.e. cross listed courses, by their home departments. As such, the review team recommended “more explicit guidelines for disciplinary ‘boundary crossers’” or those that contribute service outside of their department or field. (p. 8)

Since the review date, CCS scheduled a meeting with Affiliated faculty to discuss their involvement in CCS planning initiatives specific to graduate programs. Beginning in fall 2016, CCS will convene a second meeting of Affiliate faculty to discuss their continuing involvement in the department and how best to determine a course of action. The valuing and recognition of Affiliated faculty lies primarily with the home department. CCS will work with the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences to raise the possibility for discussions among Chairs to support interdisciplinary cooperation and collaboration.

Criterion 3: Teaching and Learning: Continuous Improvement

The reviewers speak to several strengths and no lacunae in the area of Teaching and Learning: Continuous Improvement. CCS will continue assessment efforts of the major and begin a plan for assessment of the online degree. In spring 2016, Dr. Patricia Rosas Lopátegui and Levi
Romero collected data to assess the Transnational Latino Studies certificate program and the New Mexico Cultural landscapes certificate program. The findings of the assessment will be reported to the College.

**Criterion 4: Students**

The reviewers note several strengths and no lacunae in the area of Students. They commend the department for providing major and minors with “extensive services and support in meeting their academic goals.” (p. 11)

A. The review team noted a lag in updating the freshman and transfer applications to show the degree option in Chicana and Chicano Studies. Since the date of the review, Chicana and Chicano Studies has worked with Admissions staff to update the applications to include the Chicana and Chicano Studies degree option. Moreover, in order to both streamline and strengthen student advising, CCS plans to appoint a faculty advisor in the department to assume duties related to student support within the department unit. The faculty advisor will receive one course release from teaching.

B. The review team revealed a concern regarding the stretching of the Chair’s time in providing advisement to students. They recommend a greater distribution of duties to faculty. This recommendation recognizes the need for a growth in the number of FTE. Suggested faculty workload increases raise the question as to recognition of faculty and the exploring of this possible cooperation with prospective faculty. The Chair will note these points while drafting and submitting hiring plans to the College of Arts and Sciences explaining the need for new faculty.

**Criterion 5: Faculty**

The reviewers comment on several strengths and one lacuna. Despite the small number of faculty housed in the program, the review team commended the faculty on the quality of the instruction, their research productivity, professional development, students advising and service commitments.

A. The review team highlighted a challenge in “retaining the cooperation, service, participation, and teaching of faculty in other departments without institutional policy facilitation that recognizes these activities in workload, merit.” (p. 14)

While this concern is valid, the willingness to recognize faculty for their service commitments outside of their home departments is up to home departments. The Chair, Irene Vásquez, will speak to the Dean, Mark Peceny, about this concern. CCS will convene a meeting of Affiliated faculty in the fall to discuss the findings of the APR and the department’s action plan.

B. The review team also cited a lack of “seniority needed for coverage and leadership going forward” as a lacuna. In particular, they noted a concern for the incidence of faculty of color and women being “sidetracked by university service (like program building) from
the scholarship needed for merit and promotion advancements.”

The Chair has already begin a conversation with the Dean about the promotion of LM García y Griego and Irene Vásquez as major departmental priorities.

**Criterion 6: Resources and Planning**

The reviewers highlighted several strengths and three lacunae in the area of Resources and Planning. The review team praised the department for its ability to plan and allocate resources including departmental funds and staff, as well as working with other units to maximize the use of resources.

A. The review team noted several lacunae including the lack of adequate resources for future growth, faculty and staff positions and the lack of external fundraising. The review team underscored the importance of the UNM administration matching resources to department efforts and initiatives because growth is premised on apportioning resources. They recommended that CCS look to identify internal and external resources for capital development and program activities.

The Chair will convene a strategic meeting about finances and resource planning in the fall semester. However, the relatively small number of full-time faculty will impact the efforts to write large grants or seek outside funding. The Chair will request support from the UNM foundation in the fall semester to begin planning efforts in this area.

Alongside the launch of the online degree program, CCS is also inaugurating three dual enrollment courses at local high schools, including Albuquerque, Highland and Atrisco Heritage Academy. CCS is investing time and resources in order to introduce students to the CCS department and UNM. An outcome of this initiative involves increasing the number of interested students in the major and minor.

**Criterion 7: Facilities**

The external reviewers found the number of facilities adequate for the current department configuration. However, their report also conveyed the need for additional space for new faculty and a developing graduate program.

In order to enhance the teaching environment of the department, the Chair will submit a request for additional office space and a capital outlay grant to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

**Criterion 8: Program Comparisons**

The review team commended the department on its program building and institutionalization over the past five years. While they note that the administration has supported growth and expansion through the commitment of space and FTE, the review team raises the concern of departmental “burn out.” In addition, they strongly suggest that the university “catch up” to its peer institutions. Specifically, they advocate for the establishment of graduate programs so that UNM represents the excellence of a research 1 university in the area of Chicana and Chicano.
Studies. The report also emphasized the need for the administration to support the promotion of the senior level Associate faculty and departmental leaders.

**Criterion 9: Future Directions**
The review team complemented the department on its strategic planning.

A. The reviewers noted a lacuna in the institutional data currently available for departments. Specifically, they recommend that UNM collect information specific to second majors and minors.

In the fall, the Chair will invite staff from the Office of Institutional data to attend a department meeting to discuss the need for data on all students completing the certificates, minor, face-to-face major, and the online major.