

## APR Response

### Department of Spanish and Portuguese

November 17, 2017

- APR Response Team: Jeremy Lehn (Chair) Eva Rodriguez, Anna Nogar, Leila Lehn, Miguel López
- Approved unanimously by the quorum of faculty present at the November 17, 2017 faculty meeting
- Submitted to entire faculty November 17, 2017 for approval since not all voting faculty members were present at the meeting.

The Academic Program Review (APR) self study was submitted by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese to the Provost's Office for review on December 15, 2016. We the Faculty of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese express our gratitude toward the External Evaluation Review Team who on 6-8 March 2017 reviewed our program: David William Foster (Arizona State University), Carol A. Klee (University of Minnesota), Anita Obermeier (Department of English, University of New Mexico). The Department received their exit report on 14 April 2017. Interim Chair, Miguel López, was informed in August 2017 that the Unit Response Report had not been completed and S&P was given a Fall 2017 deadline for its completion. The following is the Unit's Response regarding the series of recommendations and suggestions and the plan of action to address these concerns.

Overall we are very pleased with the positive review from the APR team and we appreciate the helpful comments and suggestions to enhance the teaching mission of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. The nine areas addressed by the External Reviewers met expectations: 1) Program Goals; 2) Teaching and Learning Curriculum; 3) Teaching and Learning: Continuous Improvement; 4) Students; 5) Faculty; 6) Resources and Planning; 7) Facilities; 8) Program Comparisons; and 9) Future Directions.

Two areas, Teaching and Learning: Continuous Improvement (3) and Faculty (5), were characterized as surpassing expectations. Only Resources and Planning (6) was characterized as “Met with Concerns.” Areas in which Considerations/Challenges remained were: Teaching and Learning Curriculum (2), Teaching and Learning: Continuous Improvement (3), Students (4) and Resources and Planning (6).

This response addresses the 2016 Academic Program Review and notes changes in the program enacted since the time of the External Review including a series of actions focused on addressing the concerns. Instead of summarizing the APR assessment, this response document focuses on addressing the areas of concern and detailing actions already taken and future actions planned.

The APR Report closed with specific recommendations as follows:

A. A series of retreats to address, among other things, the improved integration of components across the department.

Action: due to the fact that a large portion of our faculty was away during Fall 2017, Interim Chair Miguel López in consultation with the faculty decided not to have the first post-APR retreat during that semester. Retreats will resume when Chair Anthony Cárdenas-Rotunno returns in Spring 2018. At these retreats we will examine ways to connect teaching and research within the department and between units, particularly paying attention to ways that we can promote collaboration between the various units and areas of study.

B. The pursuit of cross-campus connections, especially in the Brazilian Studies and Iberian Studies components of the program in order to contribute to increasing enrollment.

Action: In Fall 2017, Portuguese coordinators and faculty met with faculty from Anderson Business School to discuss the creation of a new Portuguese for Business course. The PORT 275 course is now transitioning to Portuguese for Business to be launched in the Fall of 2018. The Portuguese section and the department as a whole will continue to look for more opportunities for collaboration with other units at UNM.

C. Given the dearth of Full professors in the Department, the evaluators recommended a senior hire in one of the three pillars of strength in the program

which they noted: Hispanic Southwest Studies, Spanish as a Heritage Language, or Hispanic Linguistics.

Action: The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences has provided the department assurances that we will be able to fill our Southwest specialist position in ethnopoetics, previously occupied by Distinguished Professor Enrique Lamadrid, who retired in Fall 2014. According to our most recent hiring plan, our next priority would be to fill the Portuguese position left vacant following Professor Margo Milleret upon her retirement in Spring 2015, the Spanish American position previously occupied by Professor Judy Maloof who retired in 2008, and in the next 3 to 10 years an Iberianist position. Once the department has filled the Southwest specialist position, preferably as a senior hire, we will revisit the department's hiring plan. Taking into account the APR's recommendations regarding a senior hire in Hispanic Southwest Studies, Spanish as a Heritage Language, or Hispanic Linguistics we will consider how to integrate this into our hiring plan in conjunction with continuing needs of the department based on student needs, course coverage and diversification of the faculty.

Along with these specific recommendations the report highlighted other areas of improvement that need to be addressed.

Considerations/Challenges:

1.-Program Goals: Met

## 2. Teaching and Learning Curriculum: Met

- a. an “imperious need for integration of Medical Spanish in the curriculum of the Department”

Action: The APR recommendations regarding the pressing need of integrating Medical Spanish curriculum have begun to be addressed with the formation in Spring 2017 of a Committee to oversee the Medical Spanish section. In Fall 2017, this committee proposed several new courses and the faculty approved the creation of three new Medical Spanish course numbers: Spanish 305 Medical Spanish and Public Health; Spanish 306: Health and Healing in Hispanic Literature; and Spanish 329 Topics in Medical Spanish. All the courses were sent to the UNM Curriculum Committee for approval in October 2017. Additionally, Spanish 306 has also been approved by the department to fulfill the same requirement as Spanish 307 Introduction to Hispanic Literature in terms of comparable student learning outcomes and comparable structuring of the course in the Spanish minor and major. These courses directly address the need for integration as outlined in the APR recommendation. During our next retreat, the Department will discuss in more detail a sustainable plan for a potential medical humanities curriculum within the Department.

- b. Structural issues as regards lower division Portuguese

Action: The Portuguese 100-200 language teaching program is currently in transition following a recent change to the structure of lower division coordination

leadership. The program is working on some structural and curricular issues that need to be addressed. In Spring 2017, a committee was formed to oversee Portuguese coordination to address these issues. The committee works on, among other things, overseeing and implementing curriculum changes, promoting the study of Portuguese to increase enrollments, and ensuring fair distribution of duties among the TAs.

c. Improving Portuguese Lower Division enrollments

Action: To improve enrollments, since Spring 2017, PORT 101 is now offered as a fully online course in addition to traditional course offerings. PORT 275 and PORT 276 are also being offered in hybrid formats. The PORT 101 online course in Fall 2017 has reached maximum enrollment capacity indicating a solid projection of enrollment with online course delivery. The Department has also approved in Fall 2017 the inclusion of PORT 276 or PORT 277 for the third language requirement in the undergraduate Spanish major degree and has proceeded with UNM Curriculum paperwork to update existing language in the catalog.

d. Currently beyond the control of the department is the matter of students enrolling in lower ranking courses when they have sufficient proficiency to place higher in the sequence. Another issue concerns more accurate placement of students in SHL and SSL.

Action: Placement issues in Spanish courses in 100-200-300 levels

Coordinators in the Spanish 100-200 language teaching in Heritage Language (SHL), Spanish as a Second Language (SSL) and Spanish 300 level will update the existing placement test and procedures as a way to address the strengths and needs of our student body in terms of language proficiency and identity. Collaborations with the College of Arts and Sciences, the Registrar and Academic Advising units will be sought in order to streamline a coherent and more efficient placement mechanism.

- e. A final issue is the underrepresentation of Hispanic linguistics in the upper division undergraduate curriculum

Action: Faculty in Hispanic Linguistics will work on a proposal for 400 level linguistics course offerings on a regular basis as a bridge between undergraduate 300 and graduate 500 level courses. The proposal will be submitted to the Department in Spring 2018.

### 3. Teaching and Learning: Continuous Improvement – MET+

- a. The Department notes that there have been some deficiencies in reporting assessments results for the B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. programs, but has proposed a new three-year cycle of assessment which should address this issue.

Action: The department is currently moving forward on assessment results for all programs. Currently, the lower division courses have implemented and are compliant with all assessment procedures. For the program assessments, BA data

was submitted for the 2015-2016 AY and we will submit assessments for the 2016-17AY on December 1, 2017. The MA and PhD program assessments will be submitted for the first time for the 2016-2017 AY and this will bring the department into compliance. The current assessment cycle for BA, MA and PhD programs is proposed as a three-year cycle (writing, oral and performance) with annual reporting on one of the three learning outcomes.

#### 4. Students—Met

- a. Graduate students presented structural challenges, among them heavy workloads, small stipends, lack of summer teaching support, and no support for students to attend national and international conferences which will help to expose them to the profession. A lack of startup funds for incoming doctoral students was also cited.

Action: The heavy workloads and relatively small stipends for graduate assistants make the program less competitive nationally than it has the potential to be. Limited Summer teaching support and funding for participation in scholarly conferences is available to graduate students on a competitive basis. Several of UNM's peer institutions provide travel funds for doctoral students. While stipend amounts are determined beyond the department, we hope that the University would consider raising stipend levels and providing funding for incoming doctoral students with modest startup funds that could serve as a recruiting tool appropriate for a R1 university.



Action: Professionalization of graduate students is a departmental priority. Over the last several years the graduate committee and faculty have developed multiple professionalization workshops. Our graduate students have been receiving individual mentorship from faculty, which has resulted in students attending conferences, publishing, and being awarded grants. We will continue these endeavors. Furthermore, we propose reviving our department's graduate/faculty conference which helps the students to raise funds for their professionalization as well as for Department visibility.

b. Concerns from Portuguese Graduate students

The review team met with two dissatisfied graduate students in Portuguese. One alleged to have received poor advice from his/her mentor and the other mentioned the intimidation that stems from having only two faculty members in Portuguese who have a personal relationship that keeps students from being frank with one about problems with the other. Yet, one of these students was quite “dithyrambic” as regards his/her experiences in the Portuguese program.

Action: The nature of the concerns of the two Portuguese graduate students (of a cohort of ten students) appears to be related to the MA exam structure at the time of the APR. At that time, students were responsible for developing an abstract and individual reading list/research area. The rationale for this structure was to assist

Brazilian students' progress in a timely fashion toward their MA thesis (a requirement of the Brazilian government for recognition of the degree) and, in the case of students interested in pursuing a PhD, to allow them to explore research tracks. Nonetheless, while this structure served more focused students well, many of whom entered competitive PhD programs or assumed jobs at prestigious institutions, students that lacked said focus had difficulty completing the list. As a result, tensions that arose from configuring the list seeped into other areas. To accommodate all students, in Spring 2017 the department faculty voted to return the exam structure to a set reading list without the individual component.

Action: At a time of financial constraints, hiring limitations and falling enrollment in language classes, we currently cannot fill the position left vacant with the retirement of Prof. Milleret in Spring 2015. We hope that in the not too distant future it will be possible to diversify the faculty through hiring.

## 5. Faculty—Met+

- a. Currently within the department there is a marked imbalance in rank distribution with one full professor and fifteen associate professors. Such a model is untenable, both for immediate and future leadership, and it is therefore imperative that proactive efforts be made not only to mentor all associate professors along the due course to promotion, but also that those with exceptional promise be considered for so-called early promotion.

Action: We are considering how we can work as a department to promote our more advanced associate professors to the rank of full professors. In light of this, it has been proposed that the annual review process be overseen by an adapted Merit & Evaluation committee who will acknowledge the achievements of each faculty member, as well as offering guidance as concerns their overall progress toward advancement. The committee will assist each professor to map a path and create a timeline to advancement to full professor. Additionally, in our upcoming retreats the entire faculty will revise departmental guidelines for promotion to Full Professor as well as delineate the review process.

- b. the APR team recommends that the department consider future needs of medical Spanish courses.

Action: Currently, Sarah Peceny is in the second year of a three-year term as a visiting lecturer in Spanish and is assisting in covering these courses. As the department works to configure the medical humanities curriculum, we will consider what the faculty needs are, in conjunction with the budgetary constraints of the college and any future personnel needs and changes of the department.

## 6. Resources and Planning – Met with Concerns

- a. The department elaborates in the APR document on a structurally democratic governance practice. Nevertheless, administrative transparency,

communications, and decision making process were all areas of concern discussed with the external evaluators, and which must be addressed.

In an effort to improve administrative transparency, communication, and decision-making processes, the department is moving towards a more participatory model of governance in which faculty play a more active role in the administration and functioning of the department. In light of this, the department is considering areas in which we can more fully involve the broader faculty in the decision-making process. For example, we will consider the use of a participatory budgeting model in which a portion of the departmental funds that are used for, for example, faculty travel, acquisition of material resources (i.e. computers and other hardware) and the like, would be allocated by an elected advisory committee of faculty members according to the projected needs of the department for the specific AY in question.

Additionally, we will consider ways that we can promote and enhance faculty participation in shared governance, such as making important roles in the department (Associate Chair, Director of Graduate Studies, Director of Undergraduate Studies, and the like) elected rather than appointed, to promote all the faculty's involvement in administrative roles. At our retreat in the Spring of 2018 we will revisit our bylaws to make positive changes towards participatory governance.

- b. The department is woefully understaffed with only a Department Administrator, Administrative Assistant, and Graduate Academic Advisor.

Due to the confluence of hiring restrictions and the Administrative Assistant position have first been advertised as a temporary position, this Admin II position is being threatened with cancellation.

Action: Since the APR review we have lost a staff position with very little chance of replacement due to budgetary cuts. This position has affected our capacity to address the webpage needs and to reach potential graduate students among many other duties performed by this staff member.

#### 7.- Facilities: Met

- a. The restroom facilities should be updated to be compliant with recent regulations.

Action: The bathrooms need to be updated but this is beyond our control. We would ask that facilities improve the state of the only non-gender specific restroom in the building.

#### 8.- Program Comparisons: Met

No specific challenges mentioned in the exit report.

#### 9.-Future Directions: Met

No specific challenges mentioned in the exit report.