

To: Su Swarat, Director of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness

From: Sheryl Fontaine, Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Subject: Dean's Evaluation: Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies Program Performance Review

The Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies completed a comprehensive Program Performance Review in AY 2014-15. The department's self-study, the report of the External Review Committee, and the Chair's Response are attached to this report.

The Program Performance Review process included a detailed self-analysis that examined the department's short and long-term goals, its staffing and operations, curricular structure and assessment program, support for student success and advising, and the resources and facilities available to support its key functions as a center for student and faculty scholarship. A thoughtful review by a team of highly qualified specialists with expertise in Chicano Studies and closely related fields provided valuable insight into the current state of the department as well as suggestions for future development. Review team members included Dr. Ernesto Chavez, Associate Professor of History, University of Texas, El Paso; Dr. Dionne Espinoza, Professor of Chicano Studies, Liberal Studies, and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, California State University, Los Angeles; and Dr. Eliza Noh, Associate Professor and Coordinator, Asian American Studies, CSUF.

Commendations

The Department has grown in both size and health since its last PPR. Several new faculty members were hired and others successfully received tenure and promotion. This provides a more stable footing to develop curricular, advising, collegial governance, and student-faculty research opportunities.

In collaboration with Asian American Studies and African American Studies, the Department has worked to develop a shared Ethnic Studies curriculum that offers a common foundation for students in all three of these majors.

The Department has recognized the need to develop more interdisciplinary courses with a stronger focus on the Humanities in order to balance its curriculum.

The Department has hired and retained a strong core of dedicated teacher-scholars who have been recognized by the College and the University for their teaching, scholarship, and service.

The Department has several innovative elements to its curriculum, including service-learning courses and student-faculty research collaborations, that support the campus' commitment to High Impact Practices.

The Department provides leadership to the College and the campus on issues of social justice and community engagement through its curriculum, its student organizations, and through faculty research and scholarly activities.

Recommendations

Revise the requirements for the Chicano Studies minor to include at least one required course. The minor is currently based entirely in electives, which reduces the sense of it being a coherent program for students.

Collaborate with the H&SS Student Success Team and the Academic Advisement Center to develop an advising model that works for the Department. Create more formal advising structures and practices that leverage existing opportunities (e.g. GE classes) to reach out to potential majors and minors, as well as current majors and minors. In collaboration with the H&SS Student Success Team, ensure that all faculty are well prepared to provide accurate advising to majors, minors, and double majors.

Develop a strategy to reach out to undeclared students and to community college partners to promote the major and minor. In particular, efforts should be made to increase the number of students for whom Chicano Studies is the primary/initial major. Currently, the Department is dependent on GE enrollment and double majors, who are able to “double count” courses between GE and their second major. This limits the ability of the Department to create more specialized courses at the 400 level for advanced undergraduates in the major and minor, or for graduate students in related fields, such as American Studies, History, and Sociology. In addition, the over-reliance on GE courses, including upper division GE courses, may limit the depth of student learning.

Develop a three-year course rotation plan for the Department to ensure that courses are taught on a schedule that meets the needs of majors, minors, and GE students. Use the course rotation plan as well to balance the teaching, service, and research responsibilities of faculty at different stages in their careers. Work to minimize the number of students enrolling in Independent Study courses, OR cluster these enrollments and formalize the mentoring of these students as a HIP and a regular component of a faculty member’s teaching responsibilities.

Seek assistance from the H&SS Assessment Liaisons and the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness to develop a sustainable assessment process that works within the constraints of a relatively small department.

Develop a five-year plan for the department that includes curricular revisions and hiring plans that would reduce the dependence on part-time faculty, who currently teach 70 percent of the Department’s courses. Consider providing qualified part-time faculty the opportunity to teach 300-level GE courses, while also asking tenured/tenure-track faculty to shoulder part of the

burden of teaching 100-level courses. Develop a hiring plan that complements, rather than duplicates, hires in other Departments (e.g. History).

The Department should look for opportunities to partner with the Faculty Development Center and the Center for Internships and Community Engagement to seek grant funding and campus support for its service-learning courses and other High Impact Practices. Similarly, by establishing partnerships with other H&SS departments, the Department could leverage existing resources, such as the Chicana/Chicano Studies film collection, to capture students' and the community's attention.

Revisit the goals identified in the self-study to identify potential partnerships and strategies by which they might be achieved. Given current budget constraints and the many competing demands for limited funds, the Department's requests for lowered SFR, 18 units of assigned time, \$12,000/year for student travel, \$5,000 for experiential learning, summer writing stipends for faculty, and \$3,000 travel funds per faculty member are not reasonable. The Department needs to make more effective use of its current resources by ensuring that it focuses its expenditures on critical needs and strategic priorities. By identifying clear priorities and appropriate campus partners, the Department should be able to develop a strategy that will allow it to pursue grants and on-campus and CSU-based funding opportunities to support its goals.