

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Linguistics Program Performance Review

Dean's Summary Report and
Recommendations

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**Dean's Summary Report and Recommendations
Program Performance Review for the
Linguistics Program**

M.A., B.A. and Minor in Linguistics

April 2, 2012

During the 2011-12 academic year, the, Linguistics Program, under the leadership of Dr. Franz Mueller, Program Coordinator, engaged in the program performance review process by conducting a self-study that is summarized in the enclosed report. In February 2012, two external reviewers, Dr. Craig Melchert from University of California, Los Angeles, and Dr. Fred Fields from California State University, Northridge, and one on-campus reviewer, Dr. Kurt Kitselman from the CSUF Human Communications Studies Department, conducted a day long site visit. After reviewing the program's self-study report and interviewing the department chair, faculty members, the college dean, students and others, the reviewers prepared a joint report.

Typically I provide a 7-year history of the program enrollments and other benchmark statistics to provide a context for this summary and recommendations; however, for many years the Linguistics Program enrollments and budget have been rolled into the enrollments and budget for the Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics where the program is housed. Beginning in 2009-10, we began tracking FTES/FTEF/SFR for Linguistics separately from the rest of the department. Consequently, I can only present the following 3-year history:

Table 1.
Linguistics FTES, FTEF and Budgeted SFR

LING	FTES			FTEF Allocation*	SFR Budgeted*
	Target*	Actual*	% Target		
Year					
2004-2005	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2005-2006	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2006-2007	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2007-2008	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2008-2009	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2009-2010	63	45.6	72%	3.00	21.0
2010-2011	64	58	92%	2.75	23.2
2011-2012	79	60	77%	3.41	23.2

* Data Source: H&SS archives

These numbers differ from the data provided by the University's Office of Institutional Research and Analytical Studies, but I believe these numbers to be accurate. It has been useful to have a separate budget for the Linguistics Program for several reasons: 1) The

Program Coordinator has a clearer understanding of the program resources and the number of courses the program can afford to place on the schedule; 2) a separate target leads to greater accountability from the faculty with regard to enrollments; 3) it allows greater autonomy for the program within the larger department where it is housed.

Establishing a separate budget has allowed us to see that the Linguistics Program has not achieved its FTES target in the past three years. While this is troubling, I am not significantly concerned as I anticipate the 2011-12 academic year is the beginning of the renewal and revitalization of this program. The Linguistics Program has had only one tenured faculty member for several years; this year we have added two new tenure-track faculty with great promise. This small faculty of three has much work to do as they shape the future of this important program.

Table 2 presents the number of majors and degrees granted throughout the period under review. While the number of undergraduates has steadily increased over the past seven years, the number of students in the graduate program has declined. Interestingly, the number of degrees granted, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, has remained about the same.

Table 2.
 Number of Majors, Minors, and Degrees Awarded

LING	Majors AY Headcount			Minors AY Headcount	# of Degrees Awarded		
	1 st	2 nd	Grad		Primary Majors	2 nd Majors	Grad
2004-05	33.5	0	30.5	1	13	0	5
2005-06	29.5	0	30.0	3	10	0	8
2006-07	29.0	0	23.0	5.5	8	0	8
2007-08	30.5	1	22.0	4	8	0	9
2008-09	33.5	2	22.5	1	5	1	3
2009-10	39.0	4	26.5	2.5	8	0	8
2010-11	42.5	6	21.0	4.5	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available

*Source: IRAS website; annualized number of majors and minors

Program Mission, Goals and Environment

The Linguistics Program is housed in the Department of English, Comparative Literature and Linguistics and, at this time, does not have a separate mission statement. It is only this year, with the addition of two new assistant professors, that there is a core faculty to develop a mission and vision for the program, with strategic goals and strategies to accomplish those goals.

Per the self study, an immediate priority is to write learning goals and outcomes for the undergraduate degree program, having already developed goals and outcomes for the master's degree. I encourage the faculty to consult the current catalog (pp 409-410) where undergraduate student learning goals and outcomes are outlined. These may be a useful starting point as the faculty consider honing the goals and outcomes in advance of shaping the curriculum.

Program Description and Analysis

Program Changes and Degree Structure

There have been few changes in the curriculum or degree requirements over the course of the review period—largely because the program lacked a critical core of full-time, tenured/tenure-track faculty. As the end of the first academic year with three tenured/tenure-track faculty, there are already plans in place to strengthen the degree.

The current degree structure for the bachelor of arts in Linguistics is imbalanced with four of the five required courses numbered at the senior level. Further, students take six classes from a variety of departments other than linguistics. Per the self study, the faculty are making plans to require all Linguistics majors to take at least one lower division Linguistics course (LING 106 or 206). An additional proposed change is to require at least four upper division LING courses (instead of just two) while allowing students to take a maximum of two electives from other departments with an advisor's approval. I endorse these plans and urge the faculty to make it a priority to accomplish these changes as quickly as possible.

The array of LING courses listed in the University catalog reveals that the program curriculum, like the current requirements, is somewhat imbalanced with the greatest percentage of classes offered at the senior level:

Class Level	# of Courses in Catalog	New Courses or Proposed Courses Not Yet Approved	Total	% of Total
100-level	2	1	3	12%
200-level	1	0	1	4%
300-level	6*	0	6*	25%
400-level	8	1	9	38%
500-level	5	0	5	21%

*4 of these 6 classes are cross-listed and are rarely taught by Linguistics faculty.

It is interesting to note that there are no prerequisites in place for any of the 400-level courses and there is only one required 300-level course. This makes for a flat degree structure. A discipline requires foundational knowledge upon which to build higher levels of competence and this component is clearly lacking in the current requirements for the undergraduate degree in Linguistics. Clearly, additional 300-level prerequisites are needed. With no prerequisites for the senior level courses, instructors must find it difficult to “pitch” the course appropriately.

Demand and Enrollment Trends

As noted earlier in this report, the number of undergraduate majors has steadily increased over the past seven years while the number of graduate students has declined. This pattern is largely due to the lack of tenured/tenure-track faculty. One tenured faculty member and one full-time lecturer cannot be expected to support large numbers of graduate students and so, by necessity, the graduate program has had to shrink. I expect we will see a reversal of this trend by the time of the next Program Performance Review.

Documentation of Student Academic Achievement and Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

The assessment program for the Linguistic degree programs is in its infancy. There are learning goals established for the graduate program, but there seems to be confusion about the learning goals for the undergraduate program. There are learning goals outlined in the university catalog, yet the self-study states, “We are hoping to develop a parallel statement [referring to learning goals] for our BA program as part of our planned review of the structure of our undergraduate curriculum during our next five year plan.”

Program assessment must become a priority for this faculty. I did not find the required Appendix III: Documenting Academic Achievement in the self study; however, if I were to fill it out for this program, most of the assessment plan components would have to be marked as “Planning” or “Emerging.”

Faculty

I have mentioned several times throughout this report that the Linguistics Program faculty have only this year increased from one to three tenured/tenure-track faculty. In 2010-11, we hired two new assistant professors, one of whom has been a full-time lecturer in the program for several years. Given these two recent hires, there are no plans at this time for conducting any additional searches.

Reviewers' Report

The reviewers' report was decidedly positive and they endorsed many of the plans the faculty outlined in the self study. For example, the reviewers agree that the plan to require all Linguistics majors to take one of the introductory courses is a good one; similarly, the reviewers endorse the planned change from two to four upper division electives from the Linguistics curriculum (reducing from four to two the number of electives taken from other departments). The reviewers strongly recommend that the faculty make some decisions about program governance and establish regular faculty

meetings now that there are three core tenured/tenure track faculty. Finally the reviewers made excellent recommendations for increasing the program visibility.

On a separate note, the reviewers' report addresses the topic of the English Language Development (ELD) credential that was just recently approved by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The Subject Matter Requirements rely heavily on applied linguistics and thus the reviewers strongly recommend that the Linguistics Program faculty take the lead in developing the Subject Matter Preparation Program for students planning to earn the ELD credential.

Dean's Recommendations

1. ***Make assessment a priority.*** There is much to be done in the area of assessment. I strongly recommend that the faculty develop a timeline with identified milestones to be accomplished by internal deadlines throughout the 2012-13 academic year. I would like to see the following accomplished by the end of the spring 2013 term, with a report included in the 2012-13 annual report:
 - a) ***Refine the M.A. learning goals and student learning outcomes.*** The current goals and outcomes represent a first draft, but I would like to see the verbs move from (mostly) knowledge and comprehension levels to the higher levels of synthesis, analysis, and evaluation. I encourage the faculty to consult some of the many online resources that describe Bloom's Taxonomy (e.g. http://www.technology.com/worksheets/time_savers/bloom/) and work toward refining the student learning goals and outcomes. It is helpful to develop student learning goals that are measurable—thus I recommend that the learning goals be refined with this in mind.
 - b) ***Review the B.A. learning goals found on pages 409-10 in the University catalog and use these as the starting point for finalizing the B.A. degree learning goals and outcomes.*** As with the M.A. learning goals, refine the B.A. learning goals using Bloom's Taxonomy to more accurately describe the sophistication and complexity of the student outcomes from this rich degree program.
 - c) ***For each of the degrees, the M.A. and the B.A., create a curriculum map to identify potential gaps in the curriculum vis a vis the learning goals.*** A curriculum map will reveal whether or not the current requirements adequately introduce, develop and allow for mastery of the concepts inherent in the learning goals. This exercise will provide a guide to faculty discussion of prerequisites, required classes, and where assessments should take place.
 - d) ***Develop a 5-year assessment plan that identifies one goal from each program to be assessed each year. Design an assessment to be carried out for one goal in the M.A. and one goal in the B.A. during 2013-14.***
2. ***Increase FTES.*** In the early years of the review period, the Linguistics Program's budget was folded into the budget of the larger department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics. In more recent years, the resources allocated to the Linguistics Program have been identified separately for the purpose of a) ensuring that the allocated resources do, indeed, flow to the program, and b) gauging whether

the program enrollments support the allocation. We have found that the enrollments do not consistently meet the FTES targets. In 2012-13 I anticipate that Linguistics will operate with a slightly reduced SFR which will help the program meet its enrollment target; now I urge the faculty to do their part to meet target in the following ways:

- a. *Make the changes in the program requirements described in the self study immediately.*** I agree with the reviewers that there are sound pedagogical reasons for these changes and they will have the side effect of increasing the numbers of students in the LING courses.
 - b. *Establish a rational schedule that rotates course offerings in predictable ways.*** There are LING courses in the catalog that the program rarely offers and this should be corrected. For example, LING 360, Nonverbal Communication, is offered every term by the HCOM department even though Linguistics is the home department. LING 369, Language, Sex Roles and the Brain, is another course that is rarely offered, though I note it is being offered this spring and is on the schedule for spring 2013 after over 15 years lying dormant. If regularly offered, this course would be ideal for inclusion in the Queer Studies minor.
 - c. *The Coordinator needs to proactively work with the department chair to routinely migrate students from the English side to the LING side of cross-listed courses when LING pays for the class.*** Two classes in particular need monitoring—ENGL/LING 206 and ENGL/LING 305. For reasons of visibility, students seem to “find” these courses more readily through English than through Linguistics. When the Linguistics Program offers and pays for the course, it is possible to initially offer the bulk of the seats on the English side of the course and then migrate students prior to the first day of the term. In the past, the coordinator has left this to the Associate Dean to initiate.
 - d. *Develop strategies to recruit majors from the introductory GE courses.*** I recommend developing a 5-minute recruitment pod-cast or You Tube video that can be shown in every section of the course.
- 3. *Develop the SMPP for the new English Language Development Credential.*** I would like a progress report about this by October 1, 2012.