



# CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON

*Department of Modern Languages & Literatures*

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25 April 2018

To: Sheryl Fontaine, Dean, College of Humanities & Social Sciences

From: James Hussar, Chair, Department of Modern Languages & Literatures

Re: Department's Response to Dean's Summary and Evaluation of the Department of Modern Languages & Literatures' Program Performance Review

On behalf of the Department of Modern Languages & Literatures, I would like to thank you for noting MLL's achievements with regard to curriculum development, collaboration with other colleges, and online offerings. The Department looks forward to working with the College to achieve the goals described both in our self-assessment report and in the response to the external reviewers. In this memo, I address the five recommendations in the Dean's Evaluation.

1. Restructure GE courses and reduce five-unit courses to three units.

As I explain in the Chair's Response to the External Review Team, MLL has prioritized the development of fully online and hybrid courses at the 100 level, in part to address the challenge of scheduling classrooms for five-unit courses. It does not appear that the higher unit count dissuades students from taking our lower-division courses, as even those offered as multiple sections enroll well, often filling to capacity and generating considerable FTES for the Department and College. Moreover, redistributing the content of our current five-unit courses into an increased number of three-unit courses would not accelerate, and in fact might delay, time to degree, particularly for MLL majors, minors, and certificate students.

2. Develop a new advising structure and designate a departmental advisor.

As discussed in Section V of the Program Performance Review Self-Assessment Report, MLL has a systematic and consistent method for advisement in place. The onboarding process for some faculty, however, has been an ongoing challenge. This spring, I will work with our Student Success Coordinator, André Zampaulo, to finalize MLL's advisement plan for rollout in Fall 2018 and oversee its consistent implementation.

In my response to the External Review Team, I explain why a single departmental advisor is impractical for MLL. Beyond the daunting comprehensive knowledge of undergraduate and graduate programmatic and course offerings that such a position would require of a single advisor, s/he would need to be capable of assessing proficiency of incoming students in all 12 languages of instruction (including English for TESOL students) in order to place those students at the appropriate levels.

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Moreover, reassigned time for an advisor would come at the expense of instructional units unless the Dean's Office were to provide additional funding.

### 3. Invest in programmatic curricular revision and develop thematic courses.

Spanish and Portuguese faculty are taking the lead by discussing significant changes to its undergraduate and graduate programs and piloting online courses. Examples include: development of a Spanish/English translation certificate; creation of a graduate-level course on Research and Teaching Methods for the Spanish M.A.; and proposals for online sections of SPAN 301, SPAN 315, and SPAN 316. As the External Review Team notes, however, there is a direct correlation between programmatic curricular revision and future hires. In order to achieve the recommended goals, we need the Dean's Office to invest in MLL by approving additional tenure-track and full-time lecturer hires. At present, our heavy reliance on adjunct faculty makes it difficult to sustain our existing programs and meet our service obligations, much less undertake the types of initiatives described.

### 4. Reserve time for a one-two day strategic planning retreat to address the above.

This suggestion aligns with my plan to hold departmental retreats immediately prior to the start of each semester, with implementation scheduled for next academic year. Ideally, we will hold sessions for both tenured/tenure-track and adjunct faculty, with some programmatic overlap. Potential topics will include some of those discussed herein.

### 5. Prioritize the revision of the website and other marketing materials.

When I began as Chair in 2016, I oversaw the revision of the entire MLL website and worked with Chris Salomone, H&SS Public Affairs/Communications Specialist, to develop new marketing materials, including Adobe Spark Pages, posters featuring successful alumni, and program-specific business cards. Moreover, catalog descriptions for our three BA programs were changed to correct inaccuracies, provide additional clarification, and eliminate potential "hidden unit" issues. The MLL Outreach Committee and I also created new departmental displays and promotional flyers for use at events such as Welcome to Fullerton Day and H&SS Day. We will continue to update and enhance our websites, materials, and distribution lists on a regular basis as part of an ongoing effort to foster stronger connections between the Department and our students—past, present, and future.

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