

Academic Assessment Plan

BA / Latin American and Latino Studies

April 2015

Program Goals

(Program goals are broad general statements of what the program intends to accomplish and describes what a student will be able to do after completing the program. The program goals are linked to the mission of the university and college.)

- 1. Area Studies Focus:** to cultivate an understanding of the historical, cultural, geographic, and political processes that define Latin/o America as a distinct area of academic study
- 2. Interdisciplinarity:** to facilitate education from a variety of academic disciplines
- 3. International focus:** to foster critical awareness of international issues and their articulation with / impact on, domestic realities
- 4. Diversity focus:** to foster the inclusion of students/scholars of diverse backgrounds and cultivate an atmosphere of inclusion for diverse perspectives and insights

Student Learning Outcomes

(Student Learning Outcomes are defined in terms of the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students will know and be able to do as a result of completing a program. These student learning outcomes are directly linked to the accomplishment of the program goals.)

1. Historical trajectories to the present

Fostering critical understandings of the historical actors and events that shaped Latin America and the Latino U.S.

2. Political and economic issues

Promoting an awareness of the political underpinnings, economic structures and contemporary political economies of Latin America and Latino/as in the U.S.

3. Literatures and arts

Cultivating critical understandings of, and appreciation for, the diverse literary and artistic currents in Latin America and the Latino U.S.

4. Language skills

Fostering deeper understandings of Latin America and the Latino U.S. through cultural literacy and proficiency in an area language. (Currently Spanish is offered at UA; in the future, training in Portuguese, Quechua, and/or other indigenous languages may be available.)

5. Social and cultural issues

Awareness of the cultural diversity and social concerns that shape and impact contemporary Latin America and the Latino U.S.

6. Study Abroad experiences

Opportunities for students to study and live in a Latin American country

Process for Assessing each Student Learning Outcome

(A process must be defined and documented to regularly assess student learning and achievement of student learning outcomes. The results of the assessment must be utilized as input for the improvement of the program.)

1. Timeline for assessment and analysis *(Must include specific timeline for collection and analysis of assessment data.)*

Collection

The Program Director will be responsible for collecting assessment data and will convene a committee to discuss and analyze student outcomes. The Program Director will also disseminate results and will report to the Dean of Arts and Sciences.

Timeline:

- a) Annual tracking of LAST co-majors and minors (noted below in “Reporting of Results”)
- b) Dissemination of Exit Survey (attached). Our Exit Survey will be administered to graduating seniors during the Spring semester of each year. It will be collected by the LAST program’s GA and will be analyzed by the Director and committee before the June 1st reporting deadline.
- c) Analysis of other indicators of student learning (see “Means of Assessment” below) will be carried out by the Program director and committee before the June 1st reporting deadline.

2. Means of assessment and desired level of student achievement *(Must include at least one direct and one indirect method of assessment for each learning outcome.)*

a) Latin American and Latino Studies Exit Survey (attached) – to be completed by graduating seniors. The Survey provides qualitative and quantitative measures of student exposure to various disciplinary approaches to the Latin/o Americas (#1-5 above) as well as an indication of their engagement in study abroad opportunities.

b) Evaluation of skills and areas acquired in capstone course – LAST 4003 is required of all of LAST co-majors and minors. Various members of the Program’s faculty offer this course on a variety of topics. Committee members will meet to discuss and evaluate student outcomes in terms of course content (how LAST 4003 fosters exposure to diverse perspectives and interdisciplinary approaches) and skill sets (e.g. how LAST 4003 teaches students to: engage in critical analysis, design projects/research, write research papers, build focused research

bibliographies, and/or public presentations of their work). Although “Introduction to Latin American Studies” (LAST 2013) is not a required course, our committee will also make a comparative assessment of the breadth of knowledge and competencies acquired from “Intro” to “Capstone.”

c) Student GPA – the GPAs of graduating seniors will be tracked; committee will compare and evaluate trends

d) Honors theses, Conference Presentations, and Publications – shall be tracked and compared to data from previous years to evaluate areas of program strength and impact

e) Alumni tracking – the LAST Program will endeavor to track alumni to assess our students’ post-graduation trajectories and successes (careers, internships and/or graduate study)

3. Reporting of results *(Must at least report annually to the Dean of college/school.)*

a) Fulbright College Annual Report – (quantitative focus on numbers of majors/minors, honors theses, matriculation, etc.; and qualitative report on diversity initiatives) sent to the Dean of Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences

b) Annual Academic Assessment Report – will be produced by Program director in collaboration with Program committee and submitted on June 1 (annually) to the Dean.