

**LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES  
ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW**

**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO**

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## I. MISSION AND HISTORY

### A. Mission

The Latin American Studies Program embodies the University of San Francisco's mission "to provide a rigorous, world-class education to a new generation of leaders, who will work to create a more humane and just world" – or as the campus motto has it, "educating minds and hearts to change the world."

The Latin American Studies major prepares students for a global and transnational "America" by providing sophisticated, hands-on, innovative courses. With its emphasis on interdisciplinary studies, immersion experiences, and second-language proficiency, the Program enables students to understand the historical, cultural, economic, political and social conditions that shape contemporary Latin America.

### B. History

- 1) *What is the recent history of the program and what are the most noteworthy changes that have taken place within the department and its program/s over the past five years?*

The major started in Fall 2001 in order to better address the academic and professional needs of USF students and to further the University's mission of training leaders for a more humane and just world. The growing economic, political, and technological integration of the Americas, as well as the important presence of Latin@s in the United States made an in-depth understanding of Latin America highly salient. We believed that graduates with a degree in Latin American Studies would be in demand in teaching, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, service agencies, and the business world. In addition, the program sought to expand and enhance the ways in which USF could serve San Francisco by offering an academic program that addressed one of the most important aspects of the city's identity, its Latin American history. The Latin American Studies program would also serve the fastest-growing demographic group in the State of California (approximately one out of every three Californians is a Latin@).

The then-Latin American Studies Certificate had grown in size and sophistication since its inception five years previously; in 2001 it ranked as one of the largest certificate programs on campus, due largely to increased student interest in Latin American Studies stimulated by excellent faculty and exciting new courses. USF had added several Latin Americanists to its faculty in departments including Economics, History, Modern and Classical Languages, Philosophy, Physics, Politics, Psychology, Sociology, and Theology and Religious Studies. These faculty members provided USF with a "critical mass" to offer an integrated and interdisciplinary program in Latin American Studies. USF had built exchange programs with the Jesuit university system in Mexico, opening exchange and research opportunities for students and faculty alike. By implementing a new major and building more exchange programs with Jesuit universities in Latin America, USF could emerge as a leader in hemispheric international programs. Moreover, the

new Center for Latin@ Studies in the Americas (CELASA) added institutional support for Latin American Studies both on and off campus.

At its inception, we saw our program differing from other local universities in a number of areas including the inclusion of a required immersion experience in Latin America, often through the Jesuit network, and the concern for social justice in core course offerings.

Since the program's inception the course offerings have expanded as yet more Latin American Studies-focused professors have joined the faculty. The major currently has a similar structure to the initial one, with equal numbers of required and elective courses, a strong interdisciplinary direction, a required immersion experience in Latin America, and regional language proficiency as its foundation. The excellence and breadth of its offerings, appealing structure, and excellent faculty have resulted in a 300% increase in students enrolled in the program in the last five years.

2) *What is the relationship of the program to other programs and administrative units within the University (e.g., interdisciplinary programs, research centers, etc.)?*

Latin American Studies (LAS) is a stand-alone program in the College of Arts and Sciences. It is the academic arm of CELASA, the umbrella organization bringing together people and units working on Latin American and Latin@ issues at USF. The LAS chair serves on the CELASA board, and works closely with the CELASA director/s on programming. The LAS chair has also been involved in developing an international service-learning program in collaboration with the McCarthy Center for Public Service and the Common Good, as well as other study abroad opportunities in conjunction with the Provost's office.

LAS also has a close relationship with the International Studies program. Latin American Studies is currently the largest regional track within the major. We also share a growing number of double majors. The LAS chair serves as a member of the faculty advisory board of BAIS and advises BAIS students with LAS minors.

The chair also serves on the advisory board of the new MA in International Studies, consults with the director of the Latin@/Chican@ Studies Minor, and is a judge for the yearly Ester Madriz Sociology Prize.

LAS associated faculty have home departments across the arts, humanities, and social sciences; this year many of the core members are chairing their home departments.

3) *How would you characterize the morale and atmosphere within the department?*

The atmosphere within the program is collegial and solidaristic. The core LAS faculty – those who come to faculty meetings, regularly offer LAS courses and programming, and advise Latin@ student groups – are a tight-knit group that work together to support a common endeavor.

Historically, morale has been high in terms of faculty commitment to the subject, the students, and the mission of the Program. But faculty experience tension around how to contribute to an interdisciplinary program that offers little external recognition in terms of service and support than home departments. Given the high demands placed on our faculty for service to other units,

primarily home departments, it has become difficult to expect them to contribute to LAS matters on a regular basis. As the program expands, this puts additional pressure on the chair and program assistant, particularly in their efforts to carry out student advising.

### **C. Goals**

#### *1) What are the department's program goals?*

Students who complete the B.A. in Latin American Studies will be able to:

1. Integrate perspectives from multiple disciplines to understand the diversity of the Latin American region and its peoples.
2. Understand and critically analyze the major economic, social, and political processes that have shaped the lives of Latin Americans using a variety of research tools and methodologies.
3. Communicate effectively in Spanish and/or Portuguese and demonstrate familiarity with the region's cultural and literary production.
4. Communicate knowledge about the Latin American region and be able to generate independent knowledge.
5. Be socially responsible citizens of the Americas

#### *2) What are the department's learning outcomes?*

- 1a. Students can describe and contrast patterns of geographic and sociocultural diversity in the region.
- 2a. Students can identify, classify and analyze the main historical periods of Latin American development.
- 2b. Students can define, differentiate and assess the central economic and political models that have been used in the region, including their impact on the social relations of power.
- 2c. Students can describe and analyze the complex relationships between the United States and Latin America, including how Latin Americans and Latin@s have influenced different aspects of American society and culture.
- 3a. Students can read advanced texts; write about daily activities; and communicate with native speakers about everyday topics and personal opinions.
- 3b. Students can describe and appraise major literary and other cultural works from the region, including how they reflect their historical period and illuminate systemic inequalities.
- 4a. Students can craft a well-organized and clearly written multi-page essay.
- 4b. Students can express themselves coherently and thoughtfully in discussions and presentations.
- 4c. Students can demonstrate the research skills necessary to make original contributions to the study of Latin America.

- 5a. Students can summarize and evaluate current social, political, and economic issues in the region.
- 5b. Students can express and evaluate their academic and extra-curricular experiences in Latin America.
- 5c. Students can promote understanding of Latin America in educational, service, social, or employment contexts.

3) *What are the department's diversity goals and objectives regarding students, faculty and program offerings?*

LAS seeks to include students from all backgrounds in its courses and community, while affirming the large number of Latin@ students attracted to the program. It has an ethnically diverse faculty, although US-born Latin@s are in short supply and would be a tremendous asset, particularly considering how many of our majors and minors are of Latin American descent. Its program offerings are already quite diverse, given its interdisciplinary nature and focus on transnational and international issues.

## **II. CURRICULUM**

### **A. General Overview**

1) *Please name all the degree programs offered solely by the department and name separately any interdisciplinary major or minor programs the department is involved in.*

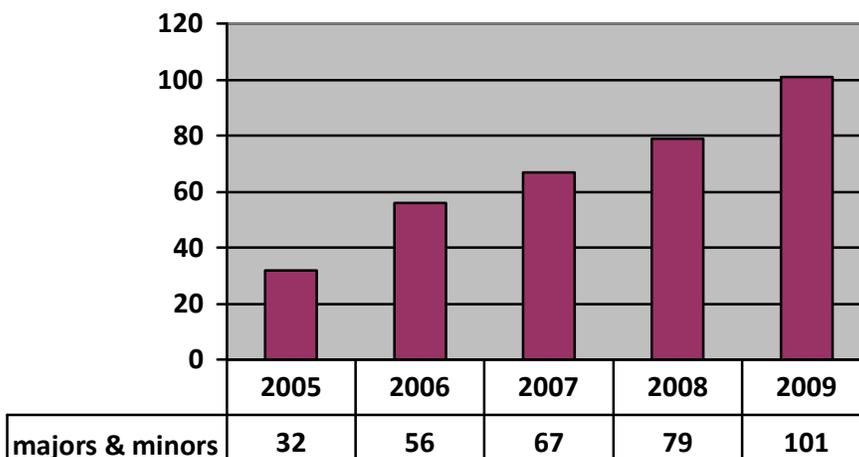
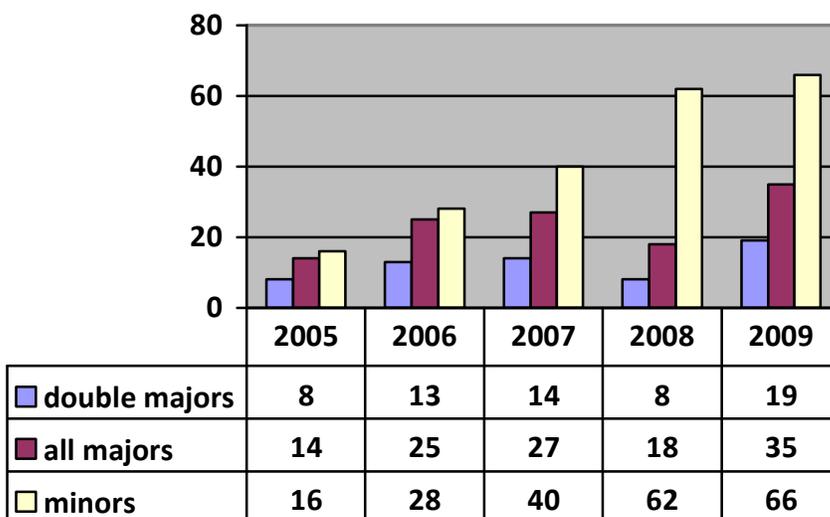
BA in Latin American Studies; Latin American Studies minor. The minor also serves as one of the regional minors of the BA in International Studies. The program has a close relationship to the minor in Latin@/ Chican@ Studies, which has its own chair.

2) *What are the distinguishing features of your program?*

The Latin American Studies program embodies the USF mission to educate hearts and minds to change the world through a structured approach to interdisciplinary studies; integration of study abroad experiences; and regional language competence.

3) *How many declared majors, double majors and minors have the department had in each degree program over the last five years?*

As the graphs below track, we have had significant growth in all aspects of our program in the last five years. Please note that while historic numbers have been taken from USF records, 2009 are from an internal LAS count (more up to date and thus higher). This 2009 data has us with the 22<sup>nd</sup> largest major on campus, ahead of at least three departments with their own faculty: Computer Science, Mathematics, and Theology and Religious Studies. Our data also has us with the third largest minor on campus (out of 65 total), behind the “pre-law” Legal Studies Minor and the Music minor.



4) *How many degrees has the department awarded in each of the last five years?*

In 2005, we awarded 14 BAs; in 2006, 25; in 2007, 27 ; in 2008, 18.

5) *For the period since the last review, indicate and interpret trends in enrollment, retention and graduation for your program. Based upon these data, what do you project enrollments to look like in the next 5-10 years?*

Enrollment in the program has increased 300% in the last five years. In 2006 we nearly doubled our enrollment, which increased 75% from the previous year; since then we've had steady increases of 20%, 18%, and this year's 29%. A considerable part of this increase is due to the burgeoning International Studies major; 13 of our current double majors and 45 of our minors come from that program. Given its rise, the attractiveness of the double major, and the healthy expansion of both the major and minor on their own, we predict continued development of the program. If the rate of increase stays close to 20%, by 2015 we would be looking at well over

200 students enrolled in the program. There may be some natural leveling before that, but even so there is no reason to think our numbers have peaked.

6) *How does the department determine curricular content?*

The structure of the major and minor are decided upon by the faculty advisory committee.

7) *How does this curriculum compare with other programs nationally and internationally?*

For our current curriculum revision process we surveyed programs at comparable Jesuit institutions and several local institutions. What we found was that our program compared favorably in terms of the breadth of our course offerings and the organization of our core courses. However, some programs required proficiency in more than one regional language, and several had a capstone experience for their senior majors. Both of these issues are being addressed in our current curriculum revision (please see attached).

8) *What is the department's philosophy with respect to the balance between core curriculum courses, service courses for other departments and major courses?*

Nearly all of the core courses for the major are part of the university core, as are many of the electives. The program does not offer service courses for other departments. It is important to note that the program itself has relatively little control over course offerings in a particular semester, since all courses are decided upon by the home departments in which their faculty are located. We do not offer courses that are limited to majors and/or minors; all courses include students from LAS program as well as other programs.

## **B. Undergraduate Program**

1) *What are the department/program learning goals/outcomes? What are the standards by which you measure success in achieving the learning outcomes?*

Please see above ([I. Mission and History/C. Goals](#)) for our learning goals and outcomes. In conjunction with a university-wide assessment plan for all majors, we have developed a rubric for assessing each learning outcome (please see attached).

2) *Are the major and minor requirements coherent or merely a collection of unrelated courses? Is the program structured in a logical, sequential and consistent manner?*

The requirements are fairly coherent. There is an interdisciplinary core course (Latin American Perspectives) that students are urged to take first. All courses speak to the central arena of study, although students have a fair amount of latitude in selecting the different approaches they will take. We insist that they have a multi-disciplinary experience that includes spreading the electives out among three groups of disciplines (humanities, social sciences, and arts and literature).

That said, we are in the midst of a curriculum review. We have attached the proposed curriculum revision to this document and are eager for comments. We are maintaining our strong interdisciplinary approach, immersion experience, and linguistic competence. The basic thrust of

the revision is to highlight the areas students are completing; ensure an even wider interdisciplinary scope while still allowing students to focus on areas of their interest; and add an integrative experience at the end of the major.

- 3) *Do students learn about the discipline's historical roots and development as well as current trends and directions?*

Students are exposed to the history and current trends of different areas of Latin American studies in their respective courses.

- 4) *What are the core requirements for the major and for any concentrations or specialty areas?*

The core requirements for the major are:

Latin American Perspectives  
Fourth Semester Spanish or Third Semester Portuguese\*  
Latin American Literature  
Religion in Latin America  
1 course taken in Latin America

\* We currently offer Portuguese 101 and 102, each of which are six units; by the end of the year students complete three semesters of the language.

- 5) *How well is this faculty able to support any concentrations and specialty areas cited in the campus catalogue?*

At the moment, we do not have any concentrations or specialty areas, though there has been interest in adding a Brazilian Studies track. However, one reason we have not gone further in developing this track is because we have not had enough full-time faculty to ensure that the courses could be provided on a regular basis.

- 6) *How frequently are core courses and electives offered and in what sequence?*

We offer 4-5 sections of Latin American Perspective each year (2-3 each semester). Fourth Semester Spanish is offered both semesters. Latin American Literature and Religion in Latin America are offered at least once a year. Students' study abroad is, of course, individually decided upon.

The electives are offered at the decision of the faculty in consultation with their home departments. However, regularly offered electives include: Music of the Americas, Theater/Culture of Latin@ America; Latin American Politics; Gender and Politics in Comparative Perspective; Liberation Theology; Women in Developing Countries; a range of Latin American history courses; and at least one Media Studies course.

- 7) *Do students experience any difficulties in meeting graduation requirements for the program due to the frequency of course offerings?*

In general, students do not experience difficulty in meeting graduation requirements for the program. However, some students have trouble figuring out how to pay for study abroad. At the chair's discretion, other experiences (such as immersions with University Ministry or extended family visits) have served the same purpose, if students have written thoughtfully about those experiences. While we are unwilling to reconsider the centrality of first-hand experience of Latin America to our major, we would like a more systematic way to address the resources needs of our students for whom in-depth study abroad is an impossibility.

8) *What is the prerequisite sequence between lower-division and upper-division courses?*

Students are advised to take Latin American Perspectives before their other courses. The Spanish and Portuguese sequences are pre-determined, although students can test into (and out of) particular levels.

9) *What is the proportion of lower-division to upper-division courses?*

We mainly offer upper-division courses, although again, individual departments that contribute to the major offer lower-division courses (such as the 200-level Spanish courses).

10) *What are the average class sizes in core courses, required major courses and electives? Are these class sizes appropriate for the learning goals/outcomes and learning objectives of the curriculum? How do they compare to those of other departments in the College of Arts and Sciences?*

Core courses such as Latin American Perspectives vary from low 20s to 40 students. Given that they also fulfill a college-wide core requirement (history), they are comparable to similar courses, and appropriate for learning objectives.

11) *What is the mix of majors to non-majors enrolled in your program's courses?*

Predominately non-majors, given the relatively small size of the major, although we have a rapidly increasing number of minors taking our courses, given the popularity of the BA in International Studies.

12) *What policies and practices are in place to ensure a modicum of uniformity in terms of grading standards, course content, and learning-outcomes across the curriculum?*

We discuss our learning outcomes at program meetings; the recent assessment process has also enabled professors to consider how their courses respond to the program's learning outcomes. Course content is far from standardized, again given the very different departments contributing to the major. However, in the core courses syllabi are shared among professors (and adjuncts, when offering courses).

13) *How much and what type of writing assignments does the department require?*

This is determined by individual faculty. However, most faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences offer writing-oriented courses. All courses in the major feature research papers and/or other writing assignments.

- 14) *What does the department offer its most outstanding students, e.g. honors track, capstone course, senior thesis, etc.*

We currently have no final, “integrative” experience. However, as indicated above we are planning to add one in our curriculum revision. It would consist of a single unit added to a Latin American Studies course through which seniors complete an independent project under supervision of the professor, with a presentation of senior projects in the Spring semester.

We currently offer a Latin American Studies Paper Award at the end of the year. Students may also compete to participate in the CELASA Seminar, which includes an immersion experience during Spring break, and the Summer Service Learning Seminar in Nicaragua, run through the McCarthy Center.

- 15) *What opportunities exist to actively involve students in learning through internships, work-study, practicum, study abroad, etc.*

We regularly offer several service-learning courses through which students can support local community organizations, which focus on the Latin@ community in San Francisco. Our student employees for the LAS department are all majors or minors, and contribute directly to our mission through their work on our program’s twice-yearly publication, *Divisadero* (see attached). Students undertaking their required immersion experience regularly participate in service-learning and/or internships while doing so.

- 16) *In what ways have you been able to involve undergraduates in research programs in your department? How do you assess the results?*

This is dependent on the research agendas of individual faculty and not assessed at a departmental level. LAS faculty have taken advantage of competitive faculty/undergraduate student research grants to focus on Latin American issues. Again, we would mention the program’s publication, *Divisadero*. Mainly student-run with faculty supervision, this publication allows students to publish their research and other writing, as well offering faculty an opportunity to share current projects with the campus and external community.

- 17) *How well prepared are majors for graduate study in the field?*

Well prepared. LAS majors and minors have pursued graduate degrees at the top programs in the country, including the University of Texas at Austin, Stanford University, and the University of California at Berkeley.

- 18) *Are undergraduates interested in graduate programs in the field? What percentage are interested and what percentage actually go on to graduate studies? What other academic and non-academic fields are they entering upon?*

Students enter non-profit organizations, government work, and positions in both business and social service in Latin America. We are pleased to see how many of our graduates go on to social justice-oriented work, as a brief survey of recent graduates' current employment and/or studies reveals. These include graduate work at Tufts (History/Museum Studies) and the European University (Frankfurt; MA in International Law and Human Rights & Humanitarian Law); volunteering with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps (focusing on immigrant workers and refugees in Houston and Santa Clara); health care positions; pro bono paralegal work; and catering that features sustainably produced food.

#### **D. International Programs**

- 1) *For all USF programs taught overseas, please describe the curriculum. How was it similar or different to programs taught on the USF campus?*

We currently offer one course abroad led by a USF faculty member: Central America Today. Its main difference is the intense immersion experience: students participate in service learning, visit historical, cultural, and contemporary sites, and are taught by local faculty. The CELASA seminar, although taught in the United States, features a 10-day immersion experience in Latin America.

- 2) *How was/is the program set up? How were/are classes scheduled?*

Our faculty have worked with local teams.

- 3) *Who has taught in the international programs? Overall, what has been the quality of instruction? What support services were provided by USF?*

Faculty have travelled to El Salvador, Mexico, and Peru to lead study abroad experiences ranging from a week to a month. All of these immersion courses, where readings were reinforced by direct contact, made the experience more powerful and educational for students. Support services were offered through the Center for Global Education. In the last years, funds have been made available to partially subsidize some summer study-abroad units.

- 4) *What have been the results of learning outcome assessment? (If no assessment has been made, simply state this and explain why not).*

Preliminary assessment has been made based on observation of students at campus "report-backs" of their immersion experience.

- 5) *Is the program being continued or discontinued? (In either case, please provide a brief rationale. If the program is being continued, what can be done to improve the quality of the program?)*

The program is being continued, but with a significant change this year: in previous years students have visited El Salvador, and they will now go to both Salvador and Guatemala.

## **E. Admission and Transfer Policies**

- 1) *Are there any requirements for admission to the program?*

The general USF requirements for undergraduate admission.

- 2) *Are there any internal procedures for accepting credit from elsewhere (advanced placement, transfer, study abroad, etc.)? What are they?*

After following the standard USF procedures for transferring in credits from elsewhere, LAS majors and minors meet with the program chair to determine which courses count towards the major or minor. In the case of study abroad, every effort is made through advising to determine what the courses will count for before students leave, and adjusted as necessary upon their return. Students often send email messages from abroad to confer about any changes with the chair.

- 3) *Are there any procedures for awarding credit to experiences other than traditional instruction (experiential learning, undergraduate research, internships, etc.)?*

We offer an internship course, but not on a regular basis. Some students carry out research and internships under the supervision of individual faculty members (as “directed study”).

## **F. Advising**

- 1) *How are students advised and mentored by the department?*

All official advising is done by the chair. Individual faculty also do informal advising and mentoring when sought out by individual students. However, faculty believe that students could use more regular and in-depth advising than the twice yearly suggested for selecting courses. This would enhance faculty/student interaction and lead to better mentoring for our majors.

- 2) *Is advising valued and rewarded by the department?*

The associated faculty recognize the enormous advising load carried out by the chair, who is currently responsible for advising 101 majors and minors. There is no reward for it, beyond the single course release per year given to the chair for all LAS-related duties. Program faculty are proposing several steps to change the advising system, particularly given the bright prospects for program expansion.

- 3) *Are there less formal opportunities for faculty/student interaction?*

LAS co-sponsors a significant amount of programming on the USF campus where students and faculty can interact more informally than in a classroom setting; we also throw an end-of-the-semester party co-sponsored by the International Studies department. In the past, other informal occasions have been sponsored by the department, but current time demands on faculty have made this hard to continue.

## **G. Overall Academic Quality**

### *1) What, in the opinion of the faculty, is the overall quality of the program?*

The faculty think that the LAS program is of high quality. The curriculum includes courses from a variety of disciplines (history, politics, sociology, media studies, performing arts, visual arts, literature, theology, religious studies) on a wide range of topics. The program's requirement that students take at least one credit-bearing course in Latin America is important for adding a field experience on the themes covered in these courses. Both the major and the minor demand language proficiency in one of the major regional languages.

In addition to the curriculum, the program is also very active in promoting events on campus and solidarity work with student organizations. Students are usually very involved with the program, have their own organizations, and seem to be very enthusiastic about their studies and extra-curriculum activities. Another important aspect of the program is its coverage of Latin@ studies in the United States, connecting well the issues facing immigrant and Latin@ communities with the history of Latin America and its relations with the United States.

As an interdisciplinary major, the Latin American Studies Program stands firmly on two pillars: a deeply committed core of faculty and staff, and an engaged group of majors and minors. Faculty members' expertise and research interests guarantees that students study with instructors whose current research agenda focuses on Latin America. Faculty study Latin America, publish about Latin America, attend Latin American Studies professional meetings, and some are from Latin America. We complement what we don't teach by hiring adjunct faculty with comparable professional credentials.

The program helps prepare LAS students to become activists and intellectuals with meaningful knowledge of Latin American history, culture, and politics. LAS students are passionate and committed, even beyond students from some of our home departments. The camaraderie and support students give to each other comes through in their willingness to try new things and respond to faculty feedback and suggestions, which makes classes more interesting.

LAS is well-integrated within the larger mission of the university. LAS operates in league with several other program units in a particularly harmonious way — and embodies in ideal fashion the vision of quality interdisciplinary curriculum and pedagogy.

Given the inherent difficulties present in running a program with faculty physically dispersed throughout campus, and with a varied range of disciplinary backgrounds (including several who are also busy chairing their respective home departments), the quality of academic engagement, collegiality, and support is vibrant, highly stimulating, and above the norm for our University.

### *2) How, in the opinion of the faculty, does the program compare with others nationally and internationally?*

In size, wide course offerings, immersion requirement, and the diversity and breadth of our excellent faculty, our LAS program gives students as good a preparation in the field as any small or medium-sized program at even larger institutions.

In particular, the requirement to study abroad for a semester or summer is a major plus that we offer. We also have many experiential elements aside from the study abroad requirement, or the service learning requirement of USF (which can be carried out through several courses in the major); even the Latin American Perspectives class is very self-reflective (students expressing their own feelings about revelations that came as the result of acquiring knowledge).

Another plus is the relationship to programs with other Jesuit universities in the Americas. Not many programs can count on this network. Jesuit universities in Latin America are often the very best universities in their respective countries. Students benefit from studying at these universities (and USF financial aid applies to these study abroad opportunities).

- 3) *Describe any special departmental strengths and/or unique features of the program. Are there special research emphases that make a unique contribution to the program?*

At USF we are currently strong in Spanish, History, Theology and Religious Studies, and Performing Arts & Social Justice offerings, with multiple LAS-affiliated faculty in each of those areas. As noted above, unique features include a regional immersion experience, which students can carry out through a host of different options, ranging from short summer courses, some of which recently have had financial support from USF, to semester-long programs. Those programs include traditional university experiences as well as more field-research/experiential learning situations. Thanks to support from CELASA, for the last two years we have been able to offer the CELASA Seminar, which includes an immersion experience during Spring break for no charge to the students. It has tremendous interest: this Fall, 65 students applied for 12 spots.

Due to the interests and networks of several of our LAS-affiliated faculty as well as our location in the San Francisco Bay Area, a special research emphasis on campus has focused on the Latin@ immigrant experience. We have also engaged with issues including globalization, human rights, women's human rights, and alternative media.

- 4) *In what areas has the program improved or deteriorated within the last five years? Please describe the evidence used to support these conclusions along with plans for eliminating any deficiencies (include expected timetables).*

The program has expanded its offerings steadily over the past five years, mainly because of new hiring. Its numbers of majors and, especially, minors have increased, in great part due to the booming International Studies major.

These expansions have lead faculty to consider several areas for improvement.

*Revising the curriculum to more accurately reflect current staffing and courses and offer a more enriched experience for our majors and minors.* This curriculum revision (see attached) has been amply discussed by the faculty, and we now look forward to external feedback before moving forward next year in final revisions and college approval.

*Broadening our offerings in Brazilian studies.* We have in the past considered the idea of adding a Brazil-focused "track" to our major. But currently we have only one Brazilianist on faculty, and

our Portuguese language offerings are given by an (extremely dedicated) adjunct. She has been willing to offer directed studies for our students returning from Brazil alongside her regular intensive Portuguese courses. But this is not a sustainable situation for her or the program, and there is not yet room for other courses, such as Portuguese for Spanish speakers, that would enable us to offer a truly regional program. We would greatly benefit from a full-time hire who could offer Portuguese as well as Brazilian studies courses, like our many talented Spanish language professors who deliver courses on Latin American literature, culture, and cinema.

*Supporting the Latin@/Chican@ Studies Minor with a Latin@ hire.* Most of the courses for the minor also count for the LAS major. However, many of them have to be given by adjuncts since there are few full-time or term faculty who have the time or inclination to offer Latin@-focused courses. We also recognize that our shockingly low number of Latin@ faculty mean that there are few role model-mentors for our growing number of Latin@ students. It would be ideal if the college could hire full-time Latin@ faculty with an understanding that they would regularly contribute to, if not chair, the minor, and thus also contribute to the LAS and CELASA community on campus.

*Finding more sources of financial support to enable our students to complete the immersion requirement for the major.* Many of our students are first-generation children of immigrant families, and have to work while going to school. For a number, extensive travel abroad is prohibitively expensive. We have certainly benefited from models such as that used for the Summer Service Learning in Nicaragua course – which has had three years of funding from the Sarlo Foundation to provide full scholarships, including travel, lodging, and course enrollment at USF; the El Salvador (now Central America) Today course – which has benefited from access to USF scholarships from University Ministry that cover two of the four course units; and the new CELASA Seminar described above. But longer-term immersion experiences remain out of reach for some of our students. We hope to develop other scholarship opportunities and can imagine two scenarios: offering students a one-time option to register for Spring units which they then fulfill in a USF-sponsored Summer course; or increasing competitive scholarship funds for student study-abroad opportunities.

*Improving LAS structure and advising.* We have been fortunate to have excellent LAS chairs. However, their task is harder than that for most departments. As an interdisciplinary program rather than a department, “buy-in” is at the discretion of the associated faculty members. This year, four of our core faculty have been chairing their home departments, making it extraordinarily difficult for them to devote time to LAS, even during a year when we are carrying out an external program review. We have been blessed with adjuncts and term faculty who have made LAS a priority for their – unremunerated – service energies. But effectively, LAS is overload service for everyone but the chair. In years where only normal departmental business was on the agenda and the advising load was under 70, this situation was nearly tenable. But in years such as this one, with a new assessment plan to carry out, an Academic Program Review report to write, and around 100 students to advise, the service load is unsustainably heavy. It also results in only brief opportunities to connect with individual majors and minors for academic and related advising. With the current chair’s term expiring this year, it is not clear who will replace her, particularly given the current and future service commitments of the most historically committed of the faculty members.

Over the past two years we have had a conversation about departmental by-laws (see appendix); we hope that more explicit discussion with college administrators will institutionalize service loads in such a way as to encourage more regular participation by faculty and more support for the chair. We propose an interlocked set of changes. First, equalize the LAS chair's course releases with that of all other department chairs on campus. At present, the LAS chair is released from one class every year; department chairs are ensured a 1-2 teaching load (which means three course releases over two years). This seems particularly inequitable given the fact that we have more majors that at least three departments on campus, as well as the third highest number of majors on campus. Second, distribute major advising to the whole faculty advisory board, so that each member advises a small number of majors and can develop personal relationships with them that include but go beyond required 1x/semester academic advising. The program chair would remain responsible for all minor advising, final approval of waivers/substitutions, and all other chair-specific duties. Third, raise the profile of the faculty advisory board service so that college administrators recognize it as bearing the same "service weight" as participation in other departmental or college-wide committees.

We would expect to put these changes in place with our transition to the new curriculum, so that all advisors could get training on advising the new curriculum at the same time.

As an interdisciplinary program we face an extra administrative burden for both the chair and, particularly, the program assistant in getting our students recognized, from the start to the finish of their academic careers. It often takes two or even three rounds of identical paperwork before students see their major or minor officially registered on their transcripts, online degree evaluations, etc. Then, when they file for graduation, they are sent confusing letters from the grad center regarding missing coursework, much of which is accounted for in their advising files but cannot be sent over for processing until after they have filed for graduation. Once their individual major advising forms are sent to the dean's office, it can still take months before the grad center recognizes that the students have completed their majors. Because we administer an interdisciplinary major in which students study abroad, there will always need to be human intervention in explaining certain waivers or substitutions, but our students are effectively trapped by this system. We have had cases where we have had to send students' final major checklists through twice or even three times, even delaying the receipt of their degree.

In other words, at both the inception and termination of the degree, students have frustrating experiences; needless to say, it is highly detrimental to the University to leave recent alums still smarting from their occasionally traumatic experience of filing for graduation. It also increases the already high administrative burden of the major for the Chair and program assistant. Again, we have been in conversation with the deans' office staff about these procedures, which we hope to regularize in some way.

*Exploring graduate degree options.* Our faculty are divided about the viability of a MA in Latin American studies. Some feel we could capitalize on the distinct mission and resources of USF. Others feel that it would be difficult to compete for students with the programs at the major research institutions in the Bay Area, UC Berkeley and Stanford. The most likely direction at the moment is exploring mutually advantageous developments with the new USF MA in International Relations, such as an explicit Latin American track.

### **III. ASSESSMENT**

- 1) *What are the methods by which the department assesses its success in achieving its program learning goals/outcomes?*

LAS is currently in the second year of its first assessment plan (see attached). We have relied primarily on two sources for assessment: coursework from appropriate classes, and an exit survey for major and minor graduates.

- 2) *To what degree have you achieved your learning goals/outcomes? Please include in the appendices the department/program assessment reports.*

These goals are being partially achieved, based on just the first round of assessment carried out last year; please see attached report.

- 3) *How does the department determine whether individual courses are meeting their stated learning outcomes?*

This is up to the individual instructor.

- 4) *How are program expectations communicated to students? Are they informed as to their progress in meeting program learning outcomes?*

These expectations are communicated through program literature; we do not have a systematic way to inform students of their progress vis-à-vis particular learning outcomes beyond their course grades.

### **IV. FACULTY**

#### **A. Demographics**

- 1) *Please discuss, assess and evaluate the faculty demographic data contained in the appendices.*

Any discussion of demographics must be begun with the reminder that LAS does not do its own hiring, but is dependent on the hiring priorities of other departments and the college as a whole. Our faculty is relatively balanced with regards to gender, includes significant numbers of faculty from Latin America, and is lacking in U.S. Latin@s.

#### **B. Teaching**

- 1) *Do the faculty as a whole possess the appropriate background and expertise to deliver the current curriculum?*

Yes, with the partial exception of courses focused on the U.S. Latin@ experience; many of those are delivered by adjuncts.

2) *How are teaching assignments made within the department?*

Assignments are not controlled by the program, but by faculty's home departments.

3) *With regard to interdisciplinary programs, how are teaching loads negotiated and balanced between the home department and the interdisciplinary program?*

All LAS courses are cross-listed with faculty's home departments. Regularly taught/core LAS courses form part of faculty's teaching portfolio in said departments.

4) *To what extent do faculty enjoy teaching the courses they teach?*

Everyone enjoys teaching their LAS courses. Many faculty find the LAS major and minor present them with an ideal venue to teach from their strengths and passions, as well as explore new areas of research. LAS students, particularly those with upperclass standing, are highly motivated and a pleasure to work with. Some find them more enthusiastic and sophisticated in their understanding of the issues raised in class than their departmental majors.

5) *Do faculty wish they taught different courses or taught existing courses differently?*

Because faculty have a great deal of discretion over their course design and execution, there are few problems here. The major challenge to LAS faculty is that of "multiple audiences" in the classroom, particularly given the large number of courses that also fulfill college or university core requirements. Students who enroll to "knock off a core requirement" may be under-prepared or less than enthusiastic, and can detract from the experience of the more engaged and focused students there for the subject matter. Some faculty's home department teaching obligations mean that they are not able to teach LAS courses as often as they would like.

6) *Has new technology affected the way in which courses are taught?*

Our faculty make regular use of the features of the "smart" classrooms on campus; they find students are now used to the presence of technology. Videos, DVDs, YouTube clips, and PowerPoint are widely used, and enhance the students' experience of studying a region to which they cannot easily gain regular access.

7) *Other than classroom teaching, how is the faculty involved in student learning and development (e.g. independent study, mentorship, advising)?*

Our faculty engage with student learning in a variety of venues. Many give public presentations on campus, whether brown bag talks or guest lectures in each others' classrooms; others regularly bring outside speakers – academics, activists, artists, policy-makers, politicians – to campus; others organize film series on campus. We honor our graduating students at a final reception, and showcase their study abroad experiences in a Fall presentation.

Several of our faculty advise student organizations. Susana Kaiser stands out in this regard: "I have been: 1) advisor for LASO (Latin American Student Organization) for two terms; 2) advisor

for School of Americas Watch at USF for one term in which traveled with the students to Ft. Benning, Georgia for the annual protest; 3) I am currently, and for the second term, advisor for Lambda Theta Nu Sorority, Inc., an organization of female Latina Students. I have been keynote speaker for events organized by LASO and Latinas Unidas (an organization of Latina female students). I have organized a conference panel w/students as co-panelists (US/Latin American Relations at USF). I attend most of the events that these groups organize. I attend the events organized to honor LAS students. I collaborate with the Admissions Office in the annual Bienvenidos event for new admitted Latino students and their families. I am regularly consulted by students who may not be taking my class but are working in projects related to my areas of expertise. As a Latina faculty I have been interviewed several times by students for a variety of projects (e.g. my experiences teaching in the U.S.).”

As mentioned above, the program chair is expected to do all of the formal student advising.

Many would appreciate the opportunity to connect the students with other faculty and each other to give more of a sense of community. There are certainly plenty of events going on at which this could, and does, take place, but the community feels dispersed. That said, the students who are integrated into the department as assistants, and work on *Divisadero*, are a great presence and useful resource to others! Again, the service obligations, as well as commute distances of several of our faculty, work against more frequent casual interaction with our students.

### **C. Research**

- 1) *What are the faculty’s scholarly/artistic interests and aims? Please describe the research and/or creative work of the department, focusing primarily on achievements since the last review.*

Recent research includes an impressive list of titles and projects: *Racism in Latino/a Perspective: Nation-Building and Religious Identity in Nuestra América* (Baylor University Press, anticipated 2010); a book chapter about a Latino Reality TV show in *Women in Popular Culture: Representation and Meaning* (Marian Meyers (Ed.) Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2008); *Religion on the Corner of Bliss and Nirvana: politics, community and identity in new migrant communities* (Duke University Press, 2009); *Desarquivando a Ditadura: Memória e Justiça no Brasil* (“Declassifying the Dictatorship: Memory and Justice in Brazil”, Hucitec Press, 2009); *Yankee, Don’t Go Home: Mexican Nationalism, U.S. Business Culture, and the Shaping of Modern Mexico, 1920-1950* (University of North Carolina Press, 2003); “Re(gion)alizing Women’s Human Rights in Latin America” (*Politics & Gender*, 2009); a social and cultural history of feminine beauty in Colombia, 1845-1985, under contract by University of Texas Press; a series of performances entitled *Border (TRIP)tych* which follows the physical and poetic journey of a Latin American woman’s journey as she migrates to the US in search for work.

- 2) *What is the recent history of research support, fellowships, grants, awards, contracts or commissions by members of the department?*

Our faculty vary considerably in their needs and search for research support. Some are not doing funded research, or apply largely for internal funds (from the USF Faculty Development Fund) for

their research and conference support. Larger grants include Lois Lorentzen's 2007 grant from the CeiMigra Foundation (funded by the European Union) to study incorporation of migrants into the labor market in Los Angeles and San Francisco, and her four-year, \$600,000 grant from Pew Charitable Trusts (June 2000 – June 2004) for the Religion and Immigration Project (TRIP). Cecília MacDowell Santos also coordinated a 2-year (2007-2009), \$106,000 grant from Portugal's National Foundation of Science and Technology on "Reconstructing Human Rights through Transnational Mobilization? Portugal and the European Court of Human Rights." Roberto Varea was recently awarded a Creative Capital Foundation Grant ranging from \$40,000 to \$110,000 to support the development and presentation of his most recent theater project for the next three years. And Julio Moreno is currently carrying out a year-long, \$100,000 Institute for Historical Studies Fellowship at the University of Texas, Austin for his current book project, "What Global Capitalism Leaves to the Nation: Coca-Cola, The United States, and Latin America."

#### **D. Service**

- 1) *What are the major service contributions made by faculty to the college and university over the last five years?*

Our faculty are devoted to college service. As mentioned above, four of our core faculty are chairs of their home departments: Roberto Varea: Performing Arts and Social Justice; Cecilia Santos: Sociology; Michael Stanfield: History; and Lois Lorentzen: Theology and Religious Studies. Lorentzen also directs CELASA. Jorge Aquino is the chair of the Latin@/Chican@ Studies and Catholic Studies minors, Susana Kaiser oversees Cine Acción (see below) and runs the Human Rights Film Festival, and LAS Chair Elisabeth Jay Friedman also coordinates the Global Women's Rights Forum. In these positions faculty develop policy, contribute to curriculum building, offer study abroad trips, program events, participate in brown bag presentations, interact with consulates and community-based organizations, judge the LAS paper prize, and offer service learning courses in the community.

- 2) *In what ways are the faculty linked to the community?*

Roberto Varea is the director of the *Teatro Jornalero!* a San Francisco based Latin American immigrant workers' theater; a member of the interdisciplinary performance collective *Secos & Mojados* made up of established Latin American immigrant artists, with whom he has performed locally, nationally, and internationally, including Latin American venues; and collaborator of the Peruvian-based *Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani*, and the Cordoba/Argentina-based *Teatro Medida por Medida*. Susana Kaiser is the director of Cine Acción at USF, which was originally a collective of Latino filmmakers and producers. Julio Moreno has given over 200 press interviews with outlets including CNN, NBC, ABC, Univision, and Telemundo on issues of US/Latin American relations and Latin American current affairs. We have consulted with a wide range of organizations, including the Mission Cultural Center for the Latino Arts, Galeria de la Raza, El Teatro de la Esperanza, SOMARTS, Caminante Cultural Worker, Centro Familiar de la Raza, Mujeres Unidas & Activas, La Raza Centro Legal, and local school districts. Several of us offering service learning opportunities with local organizations focused on the Latin@ community. Several faculty have run film series for on- and off-campus audiences, and serve on boards including the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival and the Pan-American Society.

LAS faculty maintain ties with various Latin American consulates in San Francisco. Cecilia Santos has served on the Citizens' Council of the Brazilian consulate; Karina Hodoyan and Sergio de la Torre have sponsored projects with the Mexican consulate. The consulates of Brazil, El Salvador, Mexico, and Colombia have also sponsored events at USF.

We are active in scholarly associations, including leadership roles in the "Religion in Latin America and the Caribbean group" of the American Academy of Religion; the "Gender and Feminist Studies section" and "Culture, Power and Politics Section" of the Latin American Studies Association; and the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics. Several serve on editorial boards of Latin American-focused journals, or have guest edited for them.

### **E. Relationship with other Departments and Programs**

- 1) *In what ways does the department collaborate with other departments and programs at USF?*

As noted above, LAS collaborates closely with the International Studies program, as well as the new MA in International Studies, given their large number of minors and growing number of double majors. This involves participating in curriculum and policy development, and, of course, advising students whether as groups or in individual sessions. We frequently co-sponsor activities with departments across the university. We maintain close contact with professors of Spanish language and literature in order to facilitate student learning as well as Spanish-language event production. And we rely heavily on other departments' willingness to offer Latin American or Latin@-focused courses; occasionally the chair is approached for names of suitable adjuncts when those courses cannot be offered by regular faculty.

- 2) *What is the department's assessment of the successes and disappointments of those collaborations?*

In general these collaborations have been successful. We have sometimes been disappointed when a course that would be useful to the major is not offered as regularly as our students would like, such as Latin American Philosophy or Latin@ Politics. There are departments, such as Economics and Philosophy, whose Latin Americanists are so busy with other service that they have not been regular participants in our faculty advisory board in the last five years.

- 3) *How could the University aid you in strengthening and developing such ties?*

This is predominately a hiring question, though occasionally has to do with the service loads of those faculty whose teaching interests may include Latin America, but schedules do not permit them offering classes about the region.

#### For interdisciplinary programs:

- 1) *How do you maintain program coherence and vision when the faculty comes from a number of different departments?*

Ideally, program coherence is gained through the collaboration of core faculty who advocate for the program as needed in their home departments and elsewhere in the university. When those faculty are not available for LAS service, coherence becomes more difficult.

2) *How do you maintain relationships with contributing departments?*

Largely through the participation of faculty from the departments. As noted above, this is not an entirely reliable mechanism, given the inconsistent interest of faculty from different departments. But it should be noted that several faculty are entirely consistent in their interest in and advocacy for LAS.

3) *Are there other departments or programs that could enhance your interdisciplinary perspective?*

As noted above, there are courses on the books and faculty on the staff of both Philosophy and Economics that are irregular contributors to the program.

4) *Are there obstacles to approaching these departments or programs?*

Just the usual awareness of the service obligations of faculty across the college, and an unwillingness to pressure faculty who are unable or uninterested in participating.

5) *How could the University aid you in solidifying old relationships and fostering new ones?*

It would help to further institutionalize the recognition of the service that LAS participation requires, so that both faculty and administrators see that participation as part of individuals' service profile on campus.

### **E. Recruitment and Development**

1) *In what areas and specialties does the department wish to hire in the future? What is the rationale for recruitment in these areas?*

We would very much like the college to hire someone who could teach Portuguese and Brazilian culture classes; the rationale, as described above, is to make our coverage truly regional and improve the language proficiency of our majors and minors. We would like at some point in the future to establish a Brazilian studies track within the major.

Making a Latin@ hire who would be expected to regularly contribute to the Latin@/Chican@ Studies minor as well as the LAS major would be a boon for us and the college as a whole. It would enable the strengthening of the minor and also provide our many Latin@ students with a role model and possible mentor.

2) *In what ways does the department help foster professional development and growth of the faculty?*

We collaborate with CELASA in offering brown bag opportunities for professors to share their research (or screenings of their films, readings of their books); we also distribute information about conference, grants, and research opportunities.

- 3) *Are members of the department faculty involved in creating a “living-learning” community at the University of San Francisco?*

Several faculty have been eager to participate in Sentipensante, a two-year-old initiative to have students focused on Latin America live on the same floor of a door and collaborate in programming and other activities. This community has become quite small this year, and does not seem to have a significant campus presence yet. But the current group is enthusiastic and we hope that the community will grow in the next few years. LAS also regularly supports the dinner in honor of Ester Madriz, put on by the Ester Madriz community, and the LAS chair is a judge of the Ester Madriz Sociology prize.

## **V. DEPARTMENTAL GOVERNANCE**

- 1) *How is this department organized? Describe the department’s governance structure and include in the appendices the existing department by-laws and/or related governance documents.*

As an interdisciplinary program, LAS is organized rather differently than other departments on campus. It includes a chair, a faculty advisory board, and associated faculty.

The Program Chair is the chief administrative officer of LAS and is responsible for the effective use of LAS’s resources and for providing leadership and focus for the program. Their specific duties include: recommend for appointment new members of the board, Program Assistants and other staff; organize and facilitate LAS meetings; serve as faculty advisor to the LAS publication, *Divisadero*; fulfill all student advising for the LAS major and minor; oversee the LAS budget in consultation with the faculty advisory board; represent LAS by regular attendance at monthly meetings of the College Council and Arts Council and all other College and University meetings and activities as required; represent LAS on the International Studies Program and MA in International Studies board; represent the program in correspondence and communication with the USF community, and those seeking information about the Program from outside of the university.

The associated faculty of the Latin American Studies (LAS) program consists of all full-time and part-time faculty and instructors at the University of San Francisco who offer courses within the LAS major, and wish to be recognized as being affiliated with the program. Any associated faculty member can attend the regular meetings of LAS and may speak to any matter being discussed.

Those faculty members who are appointed to the faculty advisory board constitute the decision-making arm of the program. Board members are expected to attend LAS meetings and fully participate in decisions about program development, evaluation, and resource use, and can be removed if they miss meetings for an entire semester and/or do not fulfill responsibilities.

That said, the reality of LAS governance is that the faculty who show up get to participate, and for those who do not choose not to show up there is no penalty. LAS is dependent upon the good will and energies of LAS faculty, but everyone involved understands that despite much good will, LAS service comes second to service in home departments. In a semester such as this one, where four of the faculty who normally would serve on the advisory board are serving as chairs of their respective departments, attendance at meetings has been terrible. Thus, most departmental business, including planning for this APR, has been carried out via email or by the chair and program assistant.

This situation is far from ideal, and as explained before and below the program is seeking to change both the advising loads and the recognition of LAS service by the college.

2) *What is the term of the chair and how is he/she elected?*

Three years. The expectation is that the chair rotates among interested tenured-track faculty, but this rotation is highly dependent on respective faculty's other service obligations and research opportunities.

3) *How well is the department or program governed?*

Those who have served as chair have been dedicated to expanding the program, working in conjunction with other majors and programs on campus to do programming. The faculty strive for consensus-based decision-making.

4) *How is the department's work and administration allocated among individual faculty members?*

All administration is done by the chair. There is no regular allocation of departmental work, although the faculty advisory board does contribute to assessment and review as individuals are able and willing. Again, we are seeking to modify this situation.

5) *Do all faculty members feel included in departmental decision-making? How is participation in shared governance encouraged and valued?*

The chair and program assistant circulate the semester's meeting schedule well in advance, send out reminders before each meeting, and solicit faculty participation in all aspects of the program.

6) *How is leadership encouraged and developed, particularly among junior faculty?*

We expect this is done primarily through faculty's home departments, although LAS reaches out to new LAS-focused faculty upon their arrival at USF and offer them affiliation.

## **VI. STUDENTS**

1) *What is the program looking for in its students?*

Students who have an interest in expanding their knowledge and capacity for critical analysis of the Latin American region from an interdisciplinary perspective.

- 2) *What kind of students is the program well suited to serve?*

Students who seek a well-rounded approach to the region. Our students include both those with a facility for academic research, a strong commitment to social justice in the region and the US, and those who have a familial attachment to the region. These are not exclusive categories!

- 3) *Are there striking ethnic, racial and/or gender disparities among majors and non-majors taking courses in the department and USF students as a whole? If so, are there ways to attract those not normally attracted to the department?*

Latin@ students are overrepresented in terms of their numbers at USF, currently making up about 25% of the program. We do not consider this a problem, but rather an asset, of the program. White students also make up around a fourth of the program, and those students who choose not to offer an ethnic designation come in at around one-fifth of the program.

- 4) *What efforts are made to create an intellectual and social climate that fosters student development and supports achievement of the program's objectives (e.g. clubs, student chapters of professional organizations, etc)?*

As noted above, faculty routinely serve as sponsors of Latin@ clubs on campus.

- 5) *Do students affect department policy and operations (e.g. student membership on program committees, representation at faculty meetings, etc)?*

The students who elect to work for the department and edit *Divisadero* are regularly invited to program meetings to share their work. There is no formal mechanism for student involvement in policy.

- 6) *How are program expectations communicated to students?*

Through advising.

- 7) *Are students kept informed of their progress in meeting intended learning outcomes?*

Insofar as individual faculty do so in their classes, yes; however we hope to work on this as part of the assessment we have recently put into place. This is an area where distributing the advising load would help a great deal, as faculty would be able to follow the work of individual students more carefully and communicate with them more regularly about program expectations and their own progress.

## **VII. STAFF**

- 1) *Please describe the administrative support staff in the department (program assistants, student assistants, etc.)*

We currently have a tireless, capable, and delightful program assistant, Marissa Litman, who also is the primary administrator for CELASA; the Latin@/Chican@ Studies minor; and the Philippine Studies program. She has four student assistants.

- 2) *What has been the turnover rate in these positions during the previous five years? If it is high, what steps have been taken to identify and address the problem?*

There have been three program assistants in the last five years. One left to take a on a different position within the university, after several years of service. The second was initially expected to support both BAIS, LAS, and all regional studies minors. In her second year her position was split in two, she remained with BAIS (and now, MAIS) and we hired for the current position supporting LAS, CELASA, the Latin@/Chican@ minor and Philippine Studies.

- 3) *What professional development and training opportunities are provided for the staff (evaluation and promotion, reclassification, opportunities to enhance/obtain skills, etc)?*

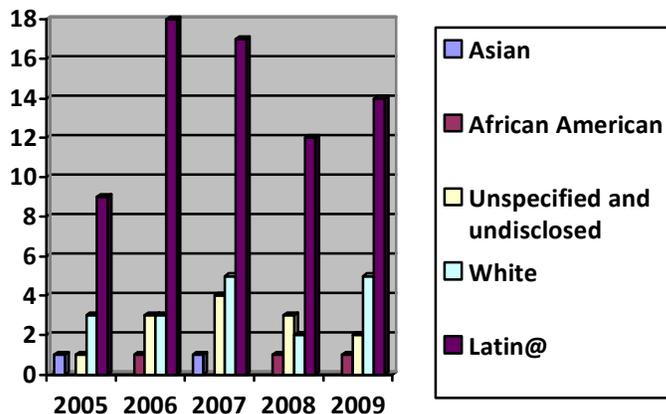
These opportunities are standardized by the program assistants’ supervisors on campus, rather than through individual programs and departments. The Center for Instruction & Technology lab on campus offers technology classes throughout the year including: Powerpoint, Wiki, Wimba, Website Updating, Photoshop, and InDesign.

## **VIII. DIVERSITY AND INTERNATIONALIZATION**

### **A. Diversity**

- 1) *Describe for your department the inclusion of underrepresented groups for students (by entering cohort), faculty (by academic rank), and staff.*

Our students are predominantly Latin@. Using university data (not actualized through November 2009), the percentages of majors between 2005 and 2009 breaks down along ethnic lines in the following manner: 66% Latin@; 17% White; 12.3% Unspecified/undisclosed; 2.8% African America; and 1.9% Asian.



These breakdowns are also reflected amongst faculty and staff. Our current faculty advisory board has five Latin Americans, two Latin@s, and four people of non-Latin descent. Our program assistant, and her assistants, are Latina.

- 2) *What factors facilitate or impede your efforts to recruit members of underrepresented groups?*

On the faculty side, we are entirely dependent on the hiring practices of the college and individual departments within it; we do not do our own recruiting. We have advocated for hiring more U.S. Latin@s.

- 3) *What factors facilitate or impede the department's ability to retain students and faculty from underrepresented groups once they have been recruited?*

In the past few years several of our faculty advisory board members have left the university for other faculty positions. Some of our students have had to take leaves of absence from USF for lack of funds.

- 4) *Is there anything the University can do to help the department with recruitment and retention?*

Yes, make a more concerted effort to hire U.S. Latin@s. We believe it would help strengthen ties to our students and student organizations, provide direct role models, and expand the perspectives offered in our classes.

- 5) *Has the increased diversity of the student body and/or faculty in your department generated any changes in your curriculum?*

The establishment of the Latin@/Chican@ minor was intended to capitalize on the growing population of such students on campus, as well as educate our undergraduate population about this increasingly powerful and numerous community in the US. The loss of key Latin@ faculty, and their generally low numbers, has been a problem for the expansion of the minor.

### **B. Internationalization**

- 1) *Have students in the department taken advantage of study-abroad programs organized by USF or other institutions?*

Yes; since we require study abroad our students routinely take advantage of these programs. In the last three years our students have gone to Mexico City, Belo Horizonte (2), El Salvador, Rio de Janeiro (3), Santo Domingo, Buenos Aires, Managua, Cordoba (4), San Salvador, Quito (2), and Central America.

- 2) *Have faculty participated in international programs sponsored by USF or other institutions?*

Yes; our faculty have run courses on the US/Mexican border and El Salvador.

- 3) *Does the department recruit and retain international students, faculty and staff?*

Again, our recruiting is dependent on the college, but as noted above several of our faculty are from Latin American countries, and we routinely host Latin American students in our classrooms who are taking advantage of exchange programs.

- 4) *Does the department have any international partnerships and collaborations with educational institutions and public or private sector organizations?*

Our summer program in Central America partners with Jesuit universities there; many of our faculty have ongoing relationships with Latin American educational institutions and networks, such as the Jesuit immigration network, and the Yuyachkani theater group (Peru). The university has a number of memos of understanding with Jesuit (and other) universities throughout the region that undergird student, and hopefully in the future, faculty exchanges.

- 5) *What are the goals, priorities and challenges of the department in this area?*

We strive to enable more students to spend more time living in Latin America, as well as welcome students and faculty from the region to USF. We have collaborated with other units at USF such as CELASA and the McCarthy Center to co-sponsor immersion experiences for students, and hope to continue to find resources to make it possible for more students to go abroad in meaningful programs. Working with CELASA, we would like to make it possible for faculty exchanges from the Latin American Jesuit network.

## **IX. TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES**

### **A. Technology**

- 1) *How well do the university's computer hardware and software policies and campus support for technology meet the program's needs?*

The program's technology needs are largely met by USF's policies. Students who work for the LAS journal *Divisadero* are largely self-taught, but use the program's computers for their layout and editing work. Faculty use a wide variety of technology, as appropriate to their individual teaching needs.

### **B. Library**

- 1) *What is the department's assessment of the library's holdings and services?*

The collection is generally perceived as adequate for standard undergraduate research, although faculty note that for music and film they have to look elsewhere, and would appreciate a larger budget for films in particular. Most faculty do not depend on the library for their own research needs, but are nurtured by local major research libraries on Latin America (particularly the Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley), online resources, Inter-Library Loan, and field research opportunities abroad. The library is responsive to requests for acquisition of LAS materials.

- 2) *How has the department utilized its library liaison and its library budget?*

As needed, individual faculty have interacted with the library liaison for student orientation sessions to Latin American resources; their individual research; and ordering books, journals, and media.

## **X. FACILITIES**

- 1) *Please describe the current instructional and research/creative work facilities of the department.*

All of these facilities are those of the departments of individual faculty members; there is no exclusive “Latin American Studies” facilities beyond the program office. It is shared by the program assistant and her student assistants.

- 2) *To what extent do these facilities meet the needs of the department?*

Facilities, particularly the “smarter” of the “smart” classrooms, are adequate. However faculty note that it can be hard to do any kind of sustained group work (because of small rooms, fixed chairs, and bulky desks). The lack of adequate facilities for performing arts – music, dance, and theater – let alone their own offices – are a serious and on-going problem for our arts faculty and the students in their classes. In the past, the dean’s office has supported the rental of rehearsal facilities in the Mission district, home to the local Latin@ community.

Some faculty have trouble finding research assistants, for limitations of language and/or training in particular disciplines.

## **XI. CONCLUSIONS**

- 1) *What are the department’s strengths? What examples of long-term excellence, recent accomplishment, or improvement characterize the department’s recent history? In what ways could the department be considered a leader in its field?*

Our department brings together inspired and inspiring multi-disciplinary faculty from across the college to teach a burgeoning number of diverse, socially aware, and committed students. In the last five years we have developed new course offerings across the disciplines, expanded our language offerings to increase regional language proficiency, and found ways to underwrite a growing number of immersion experiences. Our interdisciplinary breadth, required study abroad, co-curricular programming, and integration with other programs on campus have attracted a significant number of new majors and minors, resulting in a 300% increase in program enrollments since 2005. Our program now has more majors than three departments in the college, and hosts the third largest minor in the college.

Our program can be considered a leader in the field of Latin American Studies for the multiple ways it exposes students to the realities of the Latin American region as well as the experiences of Latin Americans in the United States. Our students can take courses across disciplines that span the humanities, social sciences, arts and literature; acquire two regional languages; and immerse themselves in one or more in-country experience. Throughout their college career they are challenged to think critically about the impact of the US on its regional neighbors and ways to improve social justice for all those living in the Americas, whether through their course work, service learning experiences, study abroad, or attendance at on-campus programming that ranges from musical performance to human rights-related documentaries.

- 2) *What are the department's weaknesses? Where could the department most improve? What challenges or obstacles make it difficult for the department to overcome these weaknesses? What further challenges do you foresee in the coming years?*

Current challenges include expanding our regional and thematic coverage, leveraging resources for our students to study abroad, providing faculty with incentives to offer service to the program, and ensuring adequate advising for and tracking of our rapidly growing pool of majors, double majors, and minors. We need to work more closely with the college and university to ensure staffing of the program, adequate compensation for the leadership, and administrative and financial support for students. These and other structural issues plague interdisciplinary majors/minors at the university, including Latin American Studies.

## **XII. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE FUTURE**

Major changes in Latin American Studies over the next decade include the decentering of the US/Latin American relationship for wider understandings of the global position of Latin American countries and populations, and a more transnational perspective on Latin@ communities, whose bodies and cultures cannot be bounded by geography. We want to reflect this in our curricular offerings and extra-curricular programming. In the next decade or so, we hope to move forward on the idea of offering graduate training in Latin American Studies, perhaps in concert with other programs at USF.

Below we offer three specific areas for program development over the next five years. These include improving program structure to more adequately and equitably fulfill responsibilities; making a case for new faculty hires in areas that would greatly enhance program delivery and outreach to students; and advocating for adequate funding for immersion experiences.

Below we list the core objectives for improvement, including how they will strengthen the program; potential obstacles to their achievement; the sequence of action to be taken for each item; and whether the actions require reallocated or additional resources. Many of these action items are out of the program's direct control, so appear as suggestions for the college.

- 1) Improve program structure to enable chair and faculty advisors to fulfill administrative and advising responsibilities.***

*Program strengthening:* the redistribution of advising duties and enhanced support for the chair will allow for more individual attention to our majors, opportunities to connect to other programs on campus, and a more reasonable work-load for the chair. It is vital to put this in place now to ensure that the continued expansion of the program does not come at the expense of high-quality contact between students and faculty or manageable faculty workloads, but is characterized by program cohesion and the nurturing of our students' intellectual and social development.

*Potential obstacles:* this re-structuring depends on the willingness of college administrators to more tangibly recognize and reward faculty involvement in the program, as well as faculty ability to take on more service for the program.

*Suggested sequence of action:*

For 2010-2011 and onwards, provide an additional course release to the chair every two years to enable him or her to teach a 1-2 load, standard across departments in the college.

For 2010-2011 and onwards, require all faculty on the advisory board to equitably distribute major advising as well as carry out their other LAS responsibilities.

*Resources:* Providing an additional course release to the chair might require additional resources should that course need to be covered by an adjunct; this depends on the specific situation of the chair. Restructuring advising would require a reallocation of existing resources insofar as faculty advisors would need to trade other service obligations rather than adding new expectations to original service loads. We understand that in other inter-disciplinary programs faculty have at times been released from home department advising requirements (or had them reduced) in order to fulfill advising responsibilities for the program at hand.

## **2) Hire new full-time faculty to teach Latin@ Studies and Portuguese/Brazilian Studies.**

*Program strengthening:* our core Latin@/Chican@ Studies courses, which contribute both to the LAS major and Latin@/Chican@ Studies minor, are often taught by adjuncts. We also lack full-time U.S. Latin@ faculty. Hiring Latin@ faculty with the understanding that they would regularly contribute to the major/minor, including minor governance, would be an excellent way to grow the minor as well as provide role models for our expanding Latin@ student population.

A full-time hire in Brazilian studies with an emphasis on language instruction would enable our program to offer language competence in the two major languages of the region, including Portuguese for Spanish speakers. It would also improve our offerings in Brazilian culture and society, and make possible the eventual addition of a Brazilian track to our major.

*Potential obstacles:* We understand that resources are scarce at USF during this time of budget difficulties, and full-time hires are not cheap. However, these potential hires could strengthen other areas of the curriculum; for example, we expect that a Latin@ hire could be in any one of a number of departments, and Portuguese language could enhance the European Studies Minor language requirement.

*Sequence of action:*

Spring 2010: meet with college administrators to make the case for these hires in upcoming budget cycles.

*Resources:* Hiring new faculty would require additional resources.

**3) Provide adequate support for student immersion experiences.**

*Program strengthening:* at present not all our majors can afford to adequately complete the immersion experience. This experience is crucial for their academic and civic development, as well as being a vital, and unique, aspect of the major. More resources would improve recruitment into the major and provide a more equitable situation for the students within it.

*Potential obstacles:* at present there are very limited and specific opportunities for students to compete for scarce funds for immersion experiences. During a time of budget constraints it is difficult to ensure resources.

*Sequence of action:*

2010-2011: Meet with stakeholders in international education (Center for Global Education, University Ministry, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, McCarthy Center) to discuss possibilities for competitive grants to fund summer and semester study abroad opportunities.

*Resources:* Offering study abroad funding would require new resources, although LAS faculty wonder if a former practice, of having students sign up for course credits in the Spring to take a Summer course, perhaps on a one-time-only basis, could be reconsidered.