

2008-2009 Assessment Plan Report

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT REPORT AY 2008-2009

Report Date:

School/College: College of Arts and Sciences

Department/Program: Latin American Studies (LAS)

Person completing the Report: Elisabeth Jay Friedman, LAS Chair (Politics Department)

1. **Overview Statement**: Briefly summarize the assessment activities that were undertaken this academic year, indicating which program goal was assessed and who was involved:

In Spring 2008, Elisabeth Jay Friedman took part in an assessment training for interdisciplinary programs in CAS. This training led to her substantial revision of the LAS program goals, which she reduced from nine to five. She also drafted a three-year assessment plan including a detailed curriculum map and rubrics for assessing each program goal's learning outcomes. During the 2008-2009 academic year, LAS faculty reviewed, improved, and approved the assessment plan. They discussed various assessment methods, and decided to focus on two methods: embedded assignments for objective evaluation and a senior exit survey for subjective evaluation (see attached). These methods will be evaluated during the 2009-2010 academic year in conjunction with LAS Program Review.

Under the leadership of the Program Chair, with substantial administrative support from program assistant Marissa Litman, we undertook a preliminary assessment of the following two 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."

LAS faculty generously agreed to collect data from their classes.



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2. Please Answers the Following Questions for Each of the Student Outcomes Assessed:

a. What did you do?

Direct Assessment:

The assessment coordinator and program assistant identified all LAS courses being taken by LAS majors.

Course instructors were asked to collect portfolios of work by LAS majors in their courses.

Course instructors provided the portfolios to the assessment coordinator.

The assessment coordinator then evaluated work relating to program goals 1&2 using the program learning outcomes rubric for each program goal.

Results:

Program Goal 1: assessed through the evaluation of 9 essays

Student achievement of learning goal: Very good:1

Good: 3 Average: 4 Poor: 0% Very poor: 0%

Program Goal 2: assessed through the evaluation of 16 essays

Student achievement of learning goal: Very good:0

Good: 5 Average: 7 Poor: 4 Very poor: 0

Indirect Assessment

The LAS Graduate Exit Survey was composed for the first time, including a section allowing students to assess their learning according to program goals.

The program assistant asked each graduating senior in LAS to fill out the survey.

Since initial response was low, graduates will be contacted over the summer to ensure participation.

Survey results will be discussed in Fall 2009 at an LAS faculty meeting, as will strategies for achieving higher rates of participation on the exit survey.



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b. What did the faculty in the department or program learn?

Preliminary Conclusions:

<u>Strengths</u>: ability to express comparative historical understanding of regional diversity through essay format

<u>Areas for improvement</u>: need for more critical engagement with sources

c. What will be done differently as a result of what was learned?

The results of this first year of assessment will be discussed at the first Fall LAS faculty meeting. This year, in part based on the outcomes of our course inventory for the curriculum map, we have already undertaken a substantial revision of our curriculum. This revision will continue in conjunction with the outcomes of program assessment and our Program Review. This Review will also enhance our ability to address student learning concerns.

3. Attach a copy of the components of the department/program assessment plan that have been modified since its initial submission:

Please note that there have been no substantial changes to the assessment plan at this time.