DePaul University Academic Program Review

Cycle 5: Spring 2002–Spring 2003

Memorandum of Agreement -- September 2003

Latin American and Latino Studies Program

As a result of the fifth cycle of DePaul University's Academic Program Review Process (Cycle 5), the participants in the process enter into the following agreements. The participants understand that this document will be available to be made public once all the signatures are in place.

University Commitments to Cycle Five Units:

1. Academic and Career Advising:
   a. The University will look into providing institutional assistance for graduate/professional school preparation in terms of publicizing and making certain that standardized test preparation programs are available.
   b. The University will look into implementing advising alerts through Campus Connect that encourage students to contact their advisors prior to enrolling in courses.

2. Diversity:

   Consistent with the University’s mission, DePaul University remains strongly committed to promoting the diversity of faculty, students, and staff. Academic Affairs will support a variety of strategies developed by departments and programs to enhance such diversity.

University Commitments to Interdisciplinary Studies Programs:

1. Cross Referencing Courses:

   The University will look into having ARC (the Advising Resource Center) identify departmental courses that count for credit in various interdisciplinary studies programs and cross-referencing those courses in Campus Connect under interdisciplinary program headings to increase student awareness of course options in the Interdisciplinary Studies Programs.

Actions agreed upon for the coming academic year:

1. Curricular Matters
   a. Curriculum Revision

      The program will complete its curricular revision, including the development of learning goals for core courses that can readily be measured to assess student outcomes.

   b. Refinement of Concentrations

      While the program is completing curricular revision it will, when possible given the interdisciplinary nature of the program, focus on its four broad areas of concentration to ensure balance among these areas, internal consistency, and logical sequencing and progression.

   c. Address Program Gaps

      The current Latin American/Latino Studies courses tend to be heavy in the humanities
and do not address Brazil as an area of study. Faculty are being encouraged to create and teach courses that address these omissions. Additionally, the suggestion of using part-time instructors to handle some of these courses will be considered.

2. Student Advising

The program, with relevant faculty, will determine an advising plan using faculty who teach within the program, but do not have a faculty line within it, as advising resources. The distribution of advising responsibilities will be articulated in this plan.

3. Resources

a. Library Holdings

The LALS Program will work with the library, inviting a liaison from DePaul University Libraries to create a foundation of journals, periodicals, texts, etc. within the library system that will be useful to students in LALS courses and address any omissions that currently exist. Of particular note, the lack of scholarly and research materials regarding Brazil should be remedied.

b. Faculty Line

The LALS Program and the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences agree to continue discussions regarding the addition of a faculty line. The Dean noted that as growth occurs within the program and/or collaborations with other universities prompt the need for additional coverage, new lines will be added. Additionally, the program agrees to explore the use of part-time faculty to address gaps that currently exist within the program.

4. Collaborations

a. Internal

The LALS Program plans to expand its connections with other DePaul programs, departments, and centers and institutes through co-sponsorships of events and other initiatives.

b. External

i. Community

The LALS Program will explore possible connections with Chicago area Latino community organizations and actively search out such collaborations.

ii. Universities

Collaborations with other universities and regional programs will be explored in order to increase the visibility of the LALS Program. Additionally, a joint application with the LALS Program at University of Illinois at Chicago for a Department of Education Title VI 2 grant is being investigated.

5. Distinctiveness

The Latin American and Latino Studies Program faculty will discuss the advantages of developing a distinctive niche, in the fashion that other LALS Program have done. Part of the discussion will include the role of Vincentian values and the University’s mission in any decision to create a niche
with a focus on service learning and DePaul’s strong ties to its urban community.

One possibility in this area is to link the globalization aspect of the existing program with local organizations both in terms of activities and funding support. Possibilities for grant funding may be explored in several areas including the Center for Latino Research, Steans Center for Community-Based Service Learning, and Community Connection with the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE).

6. Governance

Revisions of the Program by-laws to more accurately reflect the current needs of the program and to better meet its future requirements, including the establishment of promotion and tenure guidelines for the program’s full time faculty, will be completed. Discussions with faculty will continue and governance changes will be formalized.

Signed:

Chair of Unit Review Committee _______________ Department Chair/Program Director _______________

APRC Subcommittee _______________ Chair of APRC _______________

Dean of the College _______________

Associate V.P. for Academic Affairs _______________ Executive V.P. for Academic Affairs _______________