

Academic Program Assessment Report

Assessment is a term commonly used to encompass the process of gathering and using evidence to guide improvements.

SACSCOC requires that an institution "identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results".

Be sure to SAVE your progress as you work!

Academic Program

Spanish, B.A.

Submission Year

2020-2021

Assessment Coordinator Name

Pedro J. Lopes

Enter Assessment Coordinator Email

plopes@lander.edu

Program Goal

Goal

Goal 1

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal

To comply with Program Productivity standards as defined by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education.

Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome
Major Enrollment.

Timeframe for this Outcome
2019-2020

Performance Target for "Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the major (a) for Baccalaureate programs is greater than or equal to 12.5, (b) for Master's/First Professional is greater than or equal to 6.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Not Applicable.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the major (a) for Baccalaureate programs is less than 12.5 (b) for Master's/First Professional is less than 6.

Assessment Measure Used

Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner.

Frequency of Assessment

Annually.

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

15.4

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Enrollment numbers in the program has increased since the previous assessment cycle but persists in falling short of our best expectations. This is due to a few factors exogenous to the program itself. On one hand, foreign language teaching in high-schools across the state has been dwindling (in addition to the regrettable fact foreign languages are not offered any earlier in public schools), results in high-school graduates lacking an earlier foundation in a foreign language who thus do not feel inclined to pursue a college degree in Spanish. This produces a vicious circle in the form of foreign-language teacher shortage, in spite of the markedly high-demand for bilingual graduates in the workforce.

In any case, it has to be mentioned that the numbers fail to reflect the high(er) volume of students who engage in the program as minors, not to mention the service that the program provides in the context of its courses fulfilling Lander's World Cultures General Education requirement.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

N/A

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

N/A

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of

performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome

Completions (Degrees Awarded).

Timeframe for this Outcome

2019-2020

Performance Target for "Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded (a) for Baccalaureate programs is greater than or equal to 8, (b) for Master's/First Professional is greater than or equal to 3.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Not Applicable.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded (a) for Baccalaureate programs is less than 8 (b) for Master's/First Professional is less than 3.

Assessment Measure Used

Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner.

Frequency of Assessment

Annually.

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

3.4

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

1

Comments/Narrative

The program completion average has shown a positive up-tick when compared to the previous year (up from 2.6) - the first signs of success resulting from the adjustments to the program requirements. However, the discrepancy between the number of students enrolled in the program and that of those actually obtaining a degree persists. Recent further changes to the program (and examined below) were designed at addressing that issue, but empirical results will take time to materialize. In addition to factors within the control allowed by mechanisms inherent to the program itself, we've identified one adverse force extrinsic to the department and which has been recently addressed at the institutional level: numerous students who initially opt to double major in Spanish end up dropping their second major when they become overwhelmed both by the exigencies of the (previous) General Education curriculum and the time-consuming requirements of their first major, which are often laden with an inflated and disproportional number of credit hours. Reducing the number of hours in the General Education curriculum and lessen the sheer size of some other majors would further encourage the addition of Spanish as a double major and remove some of the hurdles hampering its completion. While the former has been addressed, the latter has not. In any case, positive results from these adjustments to the size and scope of the Gen Ed curriculum will take time to materialize.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

N/A

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

N/A

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

Exposure to and understanding of diverse ideas is in fact a salient component of foreign language instruction, as very often these courses encompass the contextual study of history, political science, geography, anthropology, literature, art, linguistics, and world cultures, among other fields which directly and indirectly complement the study of each language. This interdisciplinary presence is felt by all students who embrace Spanish as a major or as a minor, hence underscoring the pertinence of Spanish and its pivotal role within a Liberal Arts educational undertaking.

A functional knowledge of Spanish is furthermore a significant asset in a state which has witnessed an unprecedented growth in its Hispanic population. In fact, according to a study conducted by the University of South Carolina, the Hispanic population in the state has yielded record growth, representing one of the highest increases in the country. The data provided by the US Census Bureau confirms this trend, showing the percentage of Hispanic population in South Carolina growing from less than one percent (0.87%) in 1990 to 5.3% in 2012. These numbers are indicative of how Spanish is important for our graduates, not only because it enriches them with invaluable communicative tools, but also because it facilitates an understanding of the cultural background and heritage of a significant portion of an increasingly diverse South Carolina. Nationally, it is estimated that by 2050, Hispanics will constitute 29% of the population in the country, according to the PEW Research Center.

A solid education based on the knowledge of Hispanic cultures and language such as that made possible by a Spanish program will provide an obvious competitive advantage to an even greater extend in the near future, especially taking into account the geographical proximity of our state with Florida, where the presence of bilingual individuals in the workforce is already widespread.

The role of Lander University is also vital in producing Spanish majors who ultimately pursue careers in secondary education teaching Spanish, a subject which has historically suffered from a shortage nationwide. Furthermore, a Spanish program is a natural academic partner of Lander's professional schools of business, education, and nursing, for its invaluable role in complimenting those programs with the cultural and linguistic tools that are crucial to students in these professional fields.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

Several changes have been implemented aimed at simplifying, streamlining, and adding flexibility and pragmatism to the program as to improve recruiting into the major (and minor) as well as to increase the prospects of graduating with a degree in Spanish. The changes strive to achieve these objectives without compromising the quality of the program or the rigor with which is administered. The scope of said revisions to the program is broad and include:

1. Re-branding courses: refresh course titles and descriptions (and possibly some content) to make them more attractive, mainly by making their practicality and pertinence more obvious to students and parents, as well as less intimidating by avoiding terms such as "literature," "grammar," etc.;
2. Counting credit earned for SPAN 101 and 102 towards the total number of hours required for both the minor (18) and major (30) in Spanish. This will lessen the completion time for the program and make the major more attractive, including by encouraging double-majors;
3. Adding theme-based courses in line with the interests and expertise of the faculty. These courses are offered as SPAN 345, 355, and 365, and range from 1 to 3-credit-hours for added flexibility .

4. Simplifying and expediting the completion of the capstone project (SPAN499), arguably the biggest academic hurdle students face before graduating and which may have prevented some students from finishing the degree. For that, we are now allowing alternative methods for the presentation of results originating in students' research; and admitting a passing grade in the DELE (Diplomas de Español como Lengua Extranjera) exam as a substitute for capstone research.

We are confident of the potential of these measures to generate positive results and contribute to the growth of the program. In the meantime, and while the impact of these measures has not yet had the time to consolidate, we are also considering other measures for future implementation and with similar aims:

1. Creation of a translation course, or courses targeting specific professional areas, such as the medical field, education, or law enforcement. This would be marketed to Education, Nursing, and Business students in particular, in the hopes of encouraging students to choose Spanish as a minor or even as a second major. This will also strengthen the content of the program and add pragmatism to its scope.

2. Creation of a Certificate attesting to the language proficiency of students completing a minor or maybe another course combination/requirement for the purpose. This is expected to incentivize a more robust presence of Spanish in many students' academic experience.

3. Creating a yearly faculty-led, short-term study abroad program aimed at freshmen. It would take place immediately before the Fall semester or during the winter break. The intent of the proposal is to facilitate a first-hand contact with language and culture as to inspire more students to pursue a major in Spanish.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

Goal 2

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal

To communicate orally and in writing in Spanish.

Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Ratio of students who demonstrate oral communication skills based on the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Advanced level proficiency standards.

Timeframe for this Outcome

2019-2020

Performance Target for "Met"

At least 75% of Spanish majors score 75% or higher on oral-intensive 200-level and above rubrics.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 65% and 74% of Spanish majors score 75% or higher on oral-intensive 200-level and above rubrics.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 65% of the Spanish majors score at least 75% on oral-intensive 200-level and above rubrics.

Assessment Measure Used

Language Proficiency Rubric (oral) [based on the ACTFL proficiency standards]

Frequency of Assessment

SPAN 203; SPAN 205; SPAN 215; SPAN 240; SPAN 305; SPAN 340; SPAN 345; SPAN 490; SPAN 499

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

47 instances of achievement in 57 attempts (87%).

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Students' success rate within the Spanish major is high (87%) in regards to oral proficiency. This is due to the rigorous requirements of the program, including overseas study.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

N/A

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

N/A

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Ratio of students who demonstrate written communication skills based on the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Advanced level proficiency standards.

Timeframe for this Outcome

2019-2020

Performance Target for "Met"

At least 60% of Spanish majors earn an A or B on Senior Project and on writing-intensive 200-level or higher rubrics.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50% and 59% of Spanish earn an A or B on Senior Project and on writing-intensive 200-level or higher rubrics.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 50% of the Spanish majors earn at least a B on Senior Project and on writing-intensive 200-level or higher rubrics.

Assessment Measure Used

Language Proficiency Rubric (written) [based on the ACTFL proficiency standards].

Frequency of Assessment

SPAN 203; SPAN 240; SPAN 305; SPAN 306; SPAN 340; SPAN 499

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

16 instances of achievement in 27 attempts (59.3%).

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

2

Comments/Narrative

Students' success rate within the Spanish major is lower (59.3%) in regards to written proficiency in comparison to other aspects of their program metrics. This is due to the rigorous requirements of the program, including writing-intensive courses taken during overseas study, as well as the substantially higher threshold applied to this particular assessment component.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

N/A

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

N/A

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

The level of achievement in a mostly production-based category is quite substantial, partly because of the increased instructor-student interaction possible at higher-level courses. This observation is supported by an increase in the number and scope of assessment tools as a result of recent changes to the major, materialized by the addition of several new courses.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

We have added several theme-based topics courses in line with the interests and expertise of the faculty, offered under the general designation "Topics" but each focused on one of three specific categories: Topics in Language, Topics in Cultural Studies, and Topics in Reading. (SPAN 345, 355, and 365, respectively). In what Goal 1 is concerned, SPAN 205, SPAN 345, and SPAN 306 are the most relevant in addressing language proficiency. More substantial results from these additions are expected to

become more evident in subsequent years.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

Goal 3

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal

To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Hispanic cultures.

Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Ratio of students who compare and contrast at the advanced level cultural differences between their own culture and that of the Hispanic world.

Timeframe for this Outcome

2019-2020

Performance Target for "Met"

At least 75% of Spanish majors perform at an advanced level based on the Language Proficiency Rubric (oral/written).

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 65% and 74% of Spanish majors perform at an advanced level based on the Language Proficiency Rubric (oral/written).

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 65% of the Spanish majors perform at an advanced level based on the Language Proficiency Rubric (oral/written).

Assessment Measure Used

Frequency of Assessment

Study-abroad Journal.
Senior Project Rubric.

SPAN 205; SPAN 240; SPAN 280; SPAN 320;
SPAN 330; SPAN 340; SPAN 355; SPAN 380;
SPAN 480; SPAN 490; SPAN 499

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

56 instances of achievement in 59 attempts
(94.9%).

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Progress has been made in this category, as the range of assessment tools made available as well as their increased regularity permitted a more relevant measure of students' progress.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

N/A

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

N/A

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Ratio of students who demonstrate an advanced understanding of the relationship between the practices, products, and perspectives of different cultures within the Hispanic world.

Timeframe for this Outcome

2019-2020

Performance Target for "Met"

At least 75% of Spanish majors perform at an advanced level based on the Senior Project Rubric.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 65% and 74% of Spanish majors perform at an advanced level based on the Senior Project Rubric.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 65% of the Spanish majors perform at an advanced level based on the Senior Project Rubric.

Assessment Measure Used

Frequency of Assessment

SPAN 205; SPAN 280; SPAN 320; SPAN 350;

Language Proficiency Rubric (oral/written).

SPAN 355; SPAN 360; SPAN 380: SPAN 480

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

50 instances of achievement in 52 attempts (96.2%).

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Students demonstrate a high degree of cultural proficiency and sensitivity, due to the increased focus on the variety of Hispanic cultures that the program pursues. This approach encourages an appreciation for the wide range of cultural manifestations within the Hispanic world via comparative cultural perspectives, which materialize both in and outside of the classroom, namely in widely-made available opportunities for long and short-term study abroad.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

N/A

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

N/A

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

Given the renewed focus on cultural perspectives on the program embodied not only in new courses but also in the redefinition of existing ones, student's dexterity in what cultural matters is concerned has increased substantially.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

We have established SPAN 203 as the minimum requirement for study abroad; in that context, 8 weeks abroad in a fully sanctioned program would be equivalent to a semester abroad for purposes of major requirement. This adjustment not only encourages students to consider multiple experiences abroad, it also contributes to the overall efficacy of each of those experiences, by guaranteeing a solid foundation upon which to build the desired language and cultural competencies. Moreover, the creation of SPAN 205 ("Spanish World Today"), a required course for program completion, addresses the importance of a solid understanding of current affairs and issues shaping the Hispanic world.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

Goal 4

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal

To understand the nature of language and how it works.

Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Ratio of students who demonstrate an understanding of the nature of language.

Timeframe for this Outcome

2019-2020

Performance Target for "Met"

At least 75% of Spanish majors demonstrate proficiency at an advanced level based on the Study Abroad Journal and Language Proficiency Rubric (oral/written).

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 65% and 74% of Spanish majors demonstrate proficiency at an advanced level based on the Study Abroad Journal and Language Proficiency Rubric (oral/written).

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 65% of Spanish majors demonstrate proficiency at an advanced level based on the Study Abroad Journal and Language Proficiency Rubric (oral/written).

Assessment Measure Used

Language Proficiency Rubric (oral/written).

Frequency of Assessment

SPAN 305; SPAN 306; SPAN 345; SPAN 360; SPAN 365

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

57 instances of achievement in 63 attempts (90.5%).

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Program Goal 3, and Outcome 1 in particular, embodies a particularly demanding skill set due to the more abstract and writing-intensive nature of the competencies addressed. Achievement ratios are within the desired levels.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

N/A

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

N/A

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Ratio of students who demonstrate an understanding of how language works through the comparison of Spanish and English.

Timeframe for this Outcome

2019-2020

Performance Target for "Met"

At least 75% of Spanish majors demonstrate cross-language proficiency at an advanced level based on the Language Proficiency Rubric (oral/written).

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 65% and 74% of Spanish majors demonstrate cross-language proficiency at an advanced level based on the Language Proficiency Rubric (oral/written).

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 65% of Spanish majors demonstrate cross-language proficiency at an advanced level based on the Language Proficiency Rubric (oral/written).

Assessment Measure Used

Language Proficiency Rubric (oral/written).

Frequency of Assessment

SPAN 305; SPAN 306; SPAN 345

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

41 instances of achievement in 46 attempts
(91.1%).

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

As with Outcome 1, Outcome 2 embodies a particularly demanding skill set due to the more abstract and writing-intensive nature of the competencies addressed, with the added challenge of establishing theoretical connections with the English language. Achievement ratios are within the desired levels.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

N/A

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

N/A

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

Program Goal 3 is, by design, specifically directed at those students planning to seek subsequent graduate degrees in Spanish and therefore their numbers are substantially lower than for those not contemplating advanced studies. While a pertinent goal to the program, the low volume, (also reflected in the number of assessment tools and the frequency of their use) is not an accurate indicator of goal purpose. In any event, results demonstrate that Spanish graduates are prepared for future academic endeavors should they choose to pursue them.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

We created a course to function as a solid transition between lower and higher levels of the program. SPAN 204 aims at guaranteeing an increased solidity to the students' theoretical knowledge base that will lie at the foundation of improving student achievement in subsequent stages of the curriculum.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files