

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

2022-2023

Assessment Coordinator Name

Pedro J. Lopes

Enter Assessment Coordinator Email

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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
2021-2022

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)

14.8

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

3

Comments/Narrative

Enrollment numbers have remained relatively steady over the last few assessment cycles, with an average meeting the goals but still lower than what we ambition. Foreign language teaching in South Carolina high-schools have continued to decline, which materializes in a lack of preparation and enthusiasm on the part of the incoming freshmen towards a degree in Spanish. This naturally results in a shortage of teachers of Spanish, which in turn contributes to further exacerbate the problem in an autocatalytic loop.

Nevertheless, the relative low number of Spanish majors is somewhat compensated by the high number of Spanish minors, which continues to grow – meaning that students continue to acknowledge the importance of learning the language and acquire the skills that will serve them well in their future professional and personal pursuits, even though they may lack the confidence or the interest in dedicating their academic career to Spanish in exclusivity. At 32, it is the most popular minor in the College of Arts and Humanities.

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

2021-2022

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)

3.0

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

1

Comments/Narrative

The program completion average over the last five academic years still reflects a trend dominated by graduation rates that are out of step with the number of declared majors. We've operated profound changes to the program that will take more time to materialize in positive results. One of the projected changes included the creation of a freshman experience abroad, which the pandemic prevented us from implementing.

The recent revision of the General Education curriculum promises to add flexibility and lessen the requirements to some other majors, thus further encouraging the addition of Spanish as a double major; and removing some of the hurdles hindering its completion on the part of students who have had to drop Spanish as a second major due to academic load constraints.

We have found, also, that the study abroad requirement often constitutes a last but unsurmountable hurdle for many students to complete the program, especially during, and predictably in the aftermath of, the two years dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

N/A

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

N/A

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

At the intersection of language and culture lies the inescapable contextual study of history, political science, geography, anthropology, literature, art, and linguistics – lending an interdisciplinarity to the study of Spanish that benefit all who embrace the language by enrolling in one or more of the various courses offered on campus related to the field. A Spanish major program has thus a pivotal role in a Liberal Arts context, as it facilitates the exposure to, and understanding of, both concrete and abstract notions that are rather unique and exclusive to the foreign language classroom.

Proficiency in Spanish is otherwise a significant asset in a region of the country that has witnessed an unprecedented growth in its Hispanic population. Data provided by the US Census Bureau shows that the percentage of Hispanic population in South Carolina grew from less than one percent (0.87%) in 1990 to 5.3% in 2012. This trend highlights the relevance of Spanish as an academic career, not only because of the invaluable communicative tools with which it qualifies our graduates, but also because it fosters an understanding of the cultural background and heritage of a significant portion of an increasingly diverse population that call South Carolina home. Presently the largest minority in the country, it is estimated that by 2050 Hispanics will constitute 29% of the US population, 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 extent 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.

Lastly, Spanish courses are arguably among the best suited to satisfy the World Cultures General Education requirement to graduate with a degree conferred by Lander University.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

Several changes have been implemented aimed at simplifying, streamlining, and adding flexibility and practicality to the program. The idea is to enhance the efficacy of our recruiting efforts, as well as to increase the prospects of students 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. Considering the scope and breadth of the changes implemented, the goals they set out to achieve have the long term in mind – and it is thus pertinent to restate said revisions:

1. Re-branding courses: refresh course titles and descriptions (and even some content) to make them more attractive, mainly by making their applicability and pertinence more obvious to students and parents, as well as less intimidating by avoiding historically intimidating terms such as “literature,” “grammar,” “linguistics,” 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 lessens the completion time for the program and makes 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), one of the biggest academic hurdles students face before graduating and which may have prevented many a student 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, as part of a plan that included factors we were forced to suspended temporarily due to adverse circumstances brought about the recent pandemic:

1. Creation of a translation course, and/or courses targeting specific professional areas, such as the medical field, education, or law enforcement. These 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

2021-2022

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 204; SPAN 215; SPAN 240; SPAN 305; SPAN 340; SPAN 345; SPAN 490; SPAN 499

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

32 instances of achievement in 34 attempts (94.1%).

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

3

Comments/Narrative

Students' success rate within the Spanish major is high (94.1%) in regard to oral proficiency. This is due to the rigorous requirements of the program, which includes overseas study in a Spanish-speaking country.

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

2021-2022

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)

34 instances of achievement in 38 attempts (89.5%).

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

3

Comments/Narrative

Students' success rate within the Spanish major is slightly lower (89.5%) in regard to written proficiency in comparison to other aspects of our 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 that is feasible in 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 come to fruition 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

2021-2022

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

Study-abroad Journal.
Senior Project Rubric.

Frequency of Assessment

SPAN 204; 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)

14 instances of achievement in 15 attempts
(93.3%).

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

2021-2022

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

Language Proficiency Rubric (oral/written).

Frequency of Assessment

SPAN 204; SPAN 280; SPAN 320; SPAN 350;
SPAN 355; SPAN 360; SPAN 380; SPAN 480

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

12 instances of achievement in 14 attempts
(85.7%).

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 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 are concerned has increased substantially - a trend we expected continues.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

We had 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 is expected to encourage students to consider multiple experiences abroad; we also hope it will contribute to the overall efficacy of each of those experiences, by guaranteeing a solid foundation upon which to build the desired language and cultural competencies. These changes are still recent and therefore impossible to yet assess their desired effect, especially in the aftermath of the stagnation of the study abroad activity imposed by the pandemic.

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

2021-2022

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)

15 instances of achievement in 18 attempts

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

3

(83.3%).

Comments/Narrative

Program Goal 4, and Outcome 1 in particular, embodies a particularly demanding skill set, as it's based on the more abstract and writing-intensive nature of the competencies addressed. Achievement ratios are lower than for other outcomes, but well within 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

2021-2022

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)

16 instances of achievement in 18 attempts

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

(88.9%).

3

Comments/Narrative

As with Outcome 1, Outcome 2 embodies a particularly demanding skill set due to the abstract and writing-intensive nature of the competencies addressed, with the added challenge of establishing theoretical connections with the English language. Achievement ratios are also 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 upon graduating from Lander University with a degree in Spanish.

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, we foresee, lie at the foundation of improved student achievement in subsequent stages of the curriculum. As this is a recent change, practical results are not yet noticeable.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

Thank you for completing your assessment report. Your report will be sent to your College Dean for their review and approval after you hit "Submit" below. Please enter their email address below.

Dean's Email Address

mrollins@lander.edu

Thank you for reviewing and approving this report. The approval and a copy of the report will be emailed to you and the Assessment Coordinator.