

## Program Assessment Report (PAR) Template Part I (Revision for 2020)

### Program: Bachelor of Arts in Spanish

1. **Mission:** What is the mission of your program? How does it align with the mission of the college and university? How do your PLOs inform or reflect your mission? [250 words max]

As reflected by our six newly revised (May 2020) PLOs, the mission of the Spanish B.A. is to provide students with the linguistic skills, critical thinking abilities, and cultural competencies that will allow them to succeed in a wide variety of careers. In addition to reading, writing, speaking, and listening in Spanish, particular abilities that our program gives students the opportunity to acquire include the ability to: adapt and function in unfamiliar environments and new situations; communicate well with individuals from diverse cultural, geographical and historical backgrounds; analyze, evaluate and assess cultural differences in professional settings; and apply the skills of critical thinking, reading, writing, and synthesizing information. Given that Spanish 101 through 202 are Foundations of Humanities (FH) courses, a secondary mission of our program is to contribute to UF requirements by providing non-majors insight into the study of the French language and the cultures it expresses as a form of humanistic inquiry.

The mission of the Spanish B.A. aligns well with key components of the College of Arts and Sciences' and the University's missions. Central to the COAS mission statement is the aim "to enhance the [...] ethical and cultural foundation of society through education, research, creative activity and community engagement" and, in so doing, to have faculty, staff and students "share knowledge, understand and appreciate diversity [..]" Similarly, in tandem with the University's mission to engage in "cultural enrichment," a strategy identified by the Provost's Office to "create a signature, high-quality educational experience for all students" involves "facilitat[ing] respect for the diversity of human cultures, institutions, and experiences in curricular and co-curricular education."

The Department of World Languages is one of the primary academic units on campus charged with carrying out these objectives, and the coursework that leads to the B.A. in Spanish plays a critical role by offering profound intercultural analysis and linguistic training. The study of language provides insight into human cultures that is often impossible to gain without knowledge of the target culture's language and, as a result, Spanish language courses notably fulfill ULO 6: Diversity (Apply knowledge of diversity and systems of inequality to address social issues of local and global importance). Furthermore, one of the pillars of the University's strategic plan is local and global impact: "Our students graduate with skills, knowledge, and experience that are relevant and valuable locally, regionally, nationally, and globally." A student who is truly prepared for the demands of the global job market in the 21st century will be capable of demonstrating proficiency in a second language. Given that Spanish is spoken by over 437 million people worldwide, is the official language of 20 countries, and that the relevance of Spanish is both established and growing here in the Treasure Valley, our program is vital regionally, nationally and internationally. Furthermore, the United States is slated to become the largest country of Spanish speakers in the world and the Spanish Program is adapting to the needs of both Spanish second language learners as well as growing coursework specific to address the needs for heritage and native Spanish speakers in the Treasure Valley.

2. **Assessment Process:** Responses to this item reflect the **current state** in the department/program. Provide a current 'snapshot' of your PLO assessment process.
  - a. *Engagement & Process:* Describe how the department discusses, uses, and shares information about student learning outcomes achievement (i.e., How does the assessment process work beyond individual courses? Who is involved? How do the department's faculty interact around this topic? How often? How are results shared and with whom?). [750 words max]

Program learning outcomes (PLOs) are a topic of ongoing and regular discussion among faculty members in the Spanish Section. Once, if not several times a semester, the Spanish Section Head calls a meeting of full-time and adjunct faculty

to discuss and make decisions concerning issues such as: curricular changes (including, for instance, the sequencing of courses found to be most beneficial to student learning, and the potential introduction of new courses that could be both valuable and interesting to students) and textbook adoptions (so as to assure quality platforms of instruction that do not unduly burden students financially). In addition, Coordinator for Lower-Division Spanish Courses, Fátima Cornwall, meets once a semester with adjunct faculty to discuss uniformity of assignments and grading rubrics in lower-division courses that often have multiple sections. All of these items of discussion center on, and are influenced by, the assessment of student performance on the embedded assignments throughout the Spanish curriculum. At these meetings, instructors have the opportunity to share both the means and the results of their assessments, to address areas of concern, and to propose changes as needed.

At the departmental level, data on achievement of University Learning Outcomes in our FH courses is shared with all full-time and adjunct faculty every three years (once per reporting cycle). The data and suggestions for improvement are then discussed at the World Languages pre-semester workshop that all full and part-time faculty are invited to attend. Follow-up discussions are held as needed at subsequent meetings of the full-time faculty, which occur on a monthly basis throughout the academic year (Aug-May). Because all of our department's PLOs align with at least one ULO, discussion of ULO data for FH courses affords instructors across sections an opportunity to discuss strategies both for strengthening student achievement and—most recently—for better positioning students to reflect on and value these learning outcomes in the context of their Spanish studies.

The WL Senior Exit Survey results are shared with full-time faculty in each program at the end of each academic year. In this survey, students are asked to indicate their perceived level of achievement of PLOs and to comment on the program's strengths and weaknesses. Follow-up discussions of the survey occur as needed at faculty meetings (including both full-time and adjuncts), both at the section and departmental levels.

- b. *Strengths & Challenges:* What is going well in the assessment of this program? Are there any challenges, gaps, or areas for improvement in the assessment of this program? [250 words max]

### **Third Year Assessments:**

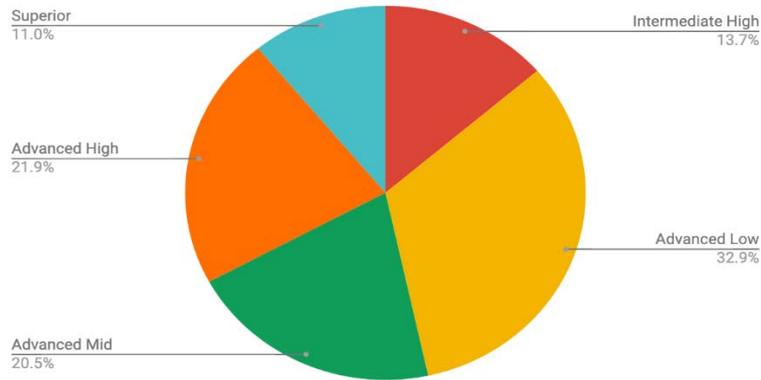
151 [Advisory Oral Proficiency Interviews](#) were conducted over the past three years for Spanish majors and minors entering into the upper-division Spanish course sequence (enrolled in Spanish 300 for bilinguals or Spanish 301 for second language learners). The OPI assessment is an objective oral exam administered face to face by certified Spanish examiners in the department and based on the national standards provided by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

However, due to the time commitment and burden of workload on faculty, starting in Spring 2019, only declared Spanish and Spanish Secondary Education Majors take the OPI so that we can continue to track improvements in oral proficiency from SPAN 300/301 to the finishing foundation course, SPAN 498. This decision (to no longer include Spanish Minors) was based on the rationale that OPIs had been conducted for five years for all Spanish Majors and Minors and the data gleaned from that period (Fall 2013-Fall 2018) sufficed in helping evolve our third-year course sequence (see 3a).

### **Finishing Foundations: SPANISH 498 Oral Assessments**

82 Advisory Oral Proficiency Interviews were conducted over the past three years for Spanish and Spanish Secondary Education majors taking the Senior Seminar. The data reveal that the majority of our students (87%) obtain advanced level oral proficiency by the time they graduate. This is compelling especially when considering national averages for teacher candidates majoring in a foreign language whereby only 65% reach the advanced level (Glisan, Swender & Surface, 2013).

Senior OPI Data Spring 2017- Spring 2020



In addition, an extensive series of **assignment-specific rubrics** are used in all Spanish courses to ensure proper assessment of program-specific Learning Outcomes and to give students a clear idea of the purpose and expectations of assignments, as well as where they are succeeding and where there is room for improvement. Course offerings have been revised over time to address Learning Outcomes, regional and national trends, and student needs and desires.

**Exit Surveys** remain overwhelmingly positive on all accounts. The only repeated mention of proposed improvement in the past three year's Exit Surveys can be summarized as the desire for more variety in electives and in Senior Seminar choices. The latter had been addressed early on (Fall 2018) and there have since then been two Senior Seminar options provided every semester. Unfortunately, the current budgetary state of the department and university render it improbable to continue to offer two sections of the Senior Seminar each semester. With regard to the former, the Spanish section continues to diversify elective options for students. In one example, we now consistently offer Portuguese and French for Spanish Speakers in rotating spring semesters; these are two popular elective options that help foster multilingualism and a continued love of language learning. One student stated, "All of the professors I've had are fantastic teachers of the language, and are more than happy to go out of their way to help students, or simply talk in Spanish. I appreciate how open and welcoming faculty and staff are, and **I've seen significant growth and improvement in the program in the three years I've been a part of it.**"

Finally, assessment data collected during the Fall 2018 academic semester regarding World Languages' FH ULO scores revealed that our lowest average scores were in 10.5: Personal Development and 10.4: Cultural, Historical, Conceptual and Linguistic Awareness. Consequently, we have addressed these findings. (See 3b below.)

3. **Continuous Improvement:** Responses to this item are **backwards looking** in that you are reflecting on action items and next steps that were identified in your last report.
  - a. *Curriculum, instructional, or programmatic changes* (see previous PAR Template II, column 4; previous Curriculum Map; and Follow-Up Report, question III): Were you able to address action items and next steps identified in your last report? Please refer to specific items and discuss the 2-4 most significant changes. Discuss items that were not addressed, those you are continuing to work on, or new items that were substituted for the original action items/next steps. If new items were introduced, please provide brief rationale. [750 words max]

In Spring 2020, the World Language faculty revised all PLOs for the French, German and Spanish majors. As a result, they now more accurately align with the Proficiency Guidelines and National Standards for Learning Languages set forth by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), an organization of more than 12,500 language educators and administrators from elementary through graduate education, as well as government and industry.

We have also implemented each of the three action items we identified based upon the last PAR cycle's reviewer feedback. As part of their ePortfolio in FORLNG 410 (required of all Spanish Secondary Ed majors), students now write

both a "Teaching Statement" and "Language Learner Statement" that encourages reflection on their understanding of theory, method, and the goals they have for their own practice as well as for their learners. Students choose the best way to express this, whether it be through video, text, narrative or infographic. Additionally, as reflected in our newly revised PLOs, we have adopted performance descriptors from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) for skills other than speaking.

As indicated in the previous PAR template II, column 4, we were already embarking on substantial curriculum changes directed at the third year sequence (specifically, SPAN 301: Conversational Spanish and SPAN 302: Spanish Grammar & Composition) to better fit the needs of *second* language learners. First, we aligned the course content to the national standards via standards-based assessments and rubrics. Second, we intentionally rewrote learning outcomes for these courses to better match the level of the learners entering into these courses based on evidence (data) we collected in the 5-year period of advisory OPIs that included all Spanish Majors and Minors. These LO's use key criteria reflected in the standards and link, specifically, to three modes of communication, namely, interpersonal, presentational and interpretive communication. Third, and consequently, we created a new course (SPAN 300) to address the needs of Spanish bilinguals (native speakers, heritage language learners, or students entering the program with extended study abroad experiences) to better differentiate learning outcomes associated with students' fundamentally varied linguistic backgrounds. As a corollary, we deleted SPAN 203 from the catalog.

Several changes had not been predicted in the previous cycle but have helped diversify course content, especially for our growing Hispanic population. First, we created an additional Spanish course (SPAN 402) for bilinguals to parallel the SPAN 302 course but at an advanced level. This course allows Spanish bilinguals to take full advantage of their prior learning by diving into writing and grammatical content at an advanced and accelerated pace. This course can be taken (as an elective) by second language learners once they take SPAN 302 as well as by our Spanish Secondary Education majors who need advanced grammar training for their future profession. In this way, the program is meeting a critical need while also expanding course topics for all.

In addition, we recently created a Spanish Minor in Interpretation and a Spanish Latinx Community Engagement Certificate. With regards to the former, the minor provides students who are already advanced speakers of Spanish with the opportunity to expand their knowledge of professional Spanish. As indicated in our exit surveys and evidenced by enrollment numbers in our two interpretation courses, there is a growing interest in our student body in becoming interpreters. Additionally, this minor is designed for students who have majors outside of our Department and would benefit by using Spanish in their professional settings. With regards to the latter, the Latinx Community Engagement Certificate offers advanced speakers of Spanish an opportunity to combine their primary studies with classes that focus on social issues concerning the Latinx community in the USA. This certificate includes a final project with the goal of public dissemination that will include service learning, a professional internship or an Honors project supervised by a Spanish instructor. Students will read, write and present about their project in Spanish, expanding their knowledge of how to effectively communicate with a diverse community of Spanish speakers. This is the first advanced-level certificate that the Department offers and expands opportunities for students to personalize their course content to fit their professional aspirations.

Another significant curricular and instructional change not outlined in the last PAR cycle concerns FORLNG 498 and FORLNG/WORLD 300. Prior to Fall 2019, the Department of World Languages offered FORLNG 498: Professional Portfolio Seminar, a 1-credit co-requisite to the capstone 498 course required of all French, German and Spanish majors. FORLNG 498 focused on the e-portfolio and professional skills such as writing résumés and cover letters, establishing professional contacts, and interviewing for jobs. The e-portfolio that students work on in FORLNG 498 serves as a language dossier whereby learners catalogue artifacts that demonstrate their linguistic and intercultural competence obtained over time in our program. In both FORLNG 498 and across all courses required for the Spanish B.A., there has been an increased emphasis by faculty on encouraging students to recognize both language-specific and broader skills they acquire over the course of their Spanish studies. This meta-cognitive discussion of, for instance, (inter)cultural

competency and critical thinking skills better positions our students to recognize and articulate the value, impact and marketability of their Spanish studies, and constitutes a key reflective component of FORLNG 498.

In Fall 2019, the Department of World Languages changed FORLNG 498 to FORLNG 300: Career Exploration and Portfolio Development (the prefix will change to WORLD as of Fall 2020) in order to impress on our majors earlier in their studies the importance of documenting the process and product of their language studies and recognizing the many specific skills that are associated with their language acquisition.

To replace the reflective component of the FORLNG 498 course that, as explained above, was refashioned as FORLNG/WORLD 300 and thus is no longer part of our capstone course, starting in Fall 2020 we will be implementing a new Finishing Foundations component in Spanish 498. Students will be asked to complete a Senior Seminar 498 Skills Inventory similar to one they will have completed in WORLD 300 and to write a narrative reflection in which they reflect on skills they have acquired or further developed as a result of their language studies.

- b. *Assessment process changes or improvements* (see previous PAR Template 1, question 6 and/or any self-identified areas for improvement): Have you made any changes to address the challenges, gaps, and/or areas for improvement identified in the assessment process? [250 words max]

Beginning in Fall 2020, what we are terming “pre-” (3rd-week) and “post-” (14th week) semester surveys will be administered in all Spanish 101-202 courses (as well as, more generally, in all FH courses offered by World Languages). The creation of these surveys was a direct result of the data collected during the Fall 2018 academic semester regarding assessment of Foundations in Humanities ULO scores in courses offered by the Department of World Languages. Having discussed the data as a department, we decided to focus our efforts on improving two of the outcomes with the lowest average scores—10.5 Personal Development and 10.4 Cultural, Historical, Conceptual and Linguistic Awareness—by creating the aforementioned surveys. We believe that the implementation of these new assessment measures in Fall 2020 will allow us to better understand how our students’ awareness and appreciation of their own and others’ views is affected as a direct result of taking our courses. Similarly, we feel that by prompting students to reflect on their own growth with regard to issues of diversity and inclusion, they will be better poised to acknowledge and appreciate these ULOs as a core component of our department’s (and university’s) curriculum.

- c. *Response to scores of “no evidence” or “beginning:”* If your program received such ratings on the last PAR, please indicate specifically what has been done to move the program forward in these areas? [250 words max]  
N/A

4. **Curriculum Map:** Complete the Curriculum Map Template and provide a summary analysis based on the following questions:

- o Are students provided with multiple learning opportunities to develop the learning outcomes?

Yes, for each of our 6 PLOs, there are multiple courses representing each degree of emphasis placed on the outcome (I-R-Em). This not only ensures that students have multiple opportunities to take courses at each degree of emphasis but that they will take at least two courses in which each PLO is emphasized (Em).

- o Are courses in the major sequenced in a logical pattern to facilitate student achievement of the learning outcomes?

Yes. This has been something we constantly revisit to ensure a smooth progression in the acquisition of each PLO. Please note that in the curriculum map, we have “I” categories for SPAN 101-202 coursework and “Em” categories for PLOs 1, 2 and 4 for SPAN 300, 301, and 302. This is due to the unique nature of language learning, which is a psychomotor skill. Third year coursework strategically emphasizes the skill building and polishing process of

constructing a solid foundation so that students can use their linguistic skills in Spanish for upper-division coursework that follows that is focused on reinforcing their skills through culture, linguistics and literature.

- How are learning experiences such as internships, service-learning courses, or other opportunities reflected on the map and how do they support the development of the PLOs?

As of now, the Spanish program's internships and service-learning courses are, as with study abroad opportunities, reflected on our curriculum map under upper-division Spanish electives. Because these experiences are based upon the varying internship opportunities offered to our students (such as being a teaching assistant in our lower-division courses) and individual teaching loads of our instructors, as well as students' ability to study abroad, we have not mapped them in a more definitive way at this time. Limited resources restrict us at this time from being able to require any of the aforementioned experiences for our majors. Nevertheless, with the addition of the new Latinx Community Engagement Certificate, we have been able to programmatically incentivize service learning as a 1-credit option associated with SPAN 300.

Undergraduate programs, please also address:

- Considering ULOs 1 through 6, which ULOs are reinforced within your curriculum and to what extent? How are students provided with opportunities to develop these outcomes prior to and during their Finishing Foundations experience? Provide relevant examples as appropriate.

After thorough consideration with regard to how each ULO aligns with our PLOs, we are confident that each of the six ULOs is reinforced in our program in some way—i.e. by the courses we have identified respectively in our curriculum map.

Briefly stated: ULO 1 (Written Communication) and ULO 2 (Oral Communication) align with our PLOs 1 (Interpersonal Communication), 4 (Presentational Communication) and 6 (Critical Analysis). In the context of the profound linguistic training that is at the heart of our program, these learning outcomes are found in every course of our curriculum and culminate with the FF course, in which students write and present orally an original, critical research paper in Spanish. ULO 3 (Critical Inquiry), as reflected in our PLOs 5 (Intercultural Awareness) and 6 (Critical Analysis), is broached in our lower-division courses by way of students identifying, investigating and explaining products and practices in Spanish and/or Hispanic cultures to compare/contrast, evaluate, and reflect on intercultural analysis perspectives, and continues on to the FF course, where students engage in effective critical inquiry by conducting scholarly research and writing their final research paper. ULO 4 (Innovation and Teamwork) aligns with our PLOs 1 (Interpersonal Communication) and 6 (Critical Analysis): From partner work and group projects and presentations to presenting and discussing the FF research paper, innovative engagement and collaboration are consistent components of our program's framework. ULOs 5 (Ethics) and 6 (Diversity) are most directly aligned with our PLO 5 (Intercultural Awareness) and, as such, constitute the bedrock of our program; after all, whether it be with respect to analyzing ethical issues and producing reasoned evaluations of competing value systems and ethical claims (ethics), or applying knowledge of diversity and systems of inequality to address social issues of local and global importance (diversity), the B.A. in Spanish, as stated above (see 1), embodies profound intercultural analysis and provides insight into human cultures that is often impossible to gain without knowledge of the target culture's language.

