

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 Due Date

2023-2024

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
2022-2023

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)

15.2

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

3

Comments/Narrative

Enrollment numbers have registered an uptick over the last few assessment cycles, a positive sign that our enhanced recruitment efforts are paying off. This is particularly notable considering the observable fact that Foreign language teaching in South Carolina high-schools continue to decline, resulting in a lack of preparation and enthusiasm on the part of the incoming freshmen towards a degree in Spanish. From here it follows a shortage of teachers of Spanish, which in turn contributes to further exacerbate the problem, in a vicious circle.

The number of Spanish minors also continues to grow – an indication that our students, in spite of the less-than-favorable environment for the teaching of Spanish, continue to acknowledge the importance of learning the language and acquire the skills that will serve them well in their future professional endeavors, even though they may lack the confidence or the interest in dedicating their academic career to Spanish in exclusivity. Spanish is by far the most popular minor (34) 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

2022-2023

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)

3.8

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

1

Comments/Narrative

The program completion average over the last five academic years does not yet reflect the number of declared majors. We've operated profound changes to the program which have not had time to yield substantial gains, since the measures implemented have yet to complete a graduating cycle.

The latest revision of the General Education curriculum is predicated upon the added flexibility and lessened requirements for some majors at Lander, which has increased the viability of promoting Spanish as a double major; and removed some of the hurdles hindering the program completion on the part of students who have been forced to abandon Spanish as a second major due to academic load constraints brought about their first majors.

We have also found that the study abroad requirement often constitutes a last but unsurmountable hurdle for many students to complete the program in Spanish, especially in the aftermath of 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 6.9% in 2020, according to the latest census, with some counties coming close to matching national figures, such as Jasper and Saluda, where Hispanics or Latinos constitute 17.6% and 16% of the total population, respectively. The city of Saluda boasts a whopping 49.5%! This trend highlights the relevance of Spanish as an academic career, not only because of the invaluable communicative tools with which we empower our graduates, but also because it fosters an understanding of the cultural background and heritage of a significant portion of an increasingly diverse swat of the population that calls South Carolina home. Presently the largest minority in the country (18.7%), 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

We made substantial changes to the program in the previous two assessment cycles, all aimed at simplifying, streamlining, and adding flexibility and practicality to the Spanish degree. In addition to strengthening our recruitment endeavors, great focus was directed at increasing the prospects of students enrolled in the program of completing their degree in Spanish. More than a face-lift, the breadth of the overhaul to the major was significant, but it will take time to mature and show results. This academic year, we mostly tended to the efficient and productive implementation of these changes, and to the optimization of their mechanisms.

In the meantime, we continue to consider further innovations for future implementation and with similar aims, although the adverse circumstances brought about the recent pandemic delayed their application. Some of the pending proposals include:

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. In the summer of 2023, a similar program was tested, and four students spent three weeks studying language and culture in Cuba, with the facilitation of a Lander faculty member and professors from the University of Pinar del Río.

4. We are considering eliminating a semester of study abroad as a requirement. As we study the most beneficial way to maximize completion rates without compromising the integrity of the program, it is guaranteed that we will remain committed to encourage students to spend a semester abroad.

In complement to efforts aimed at revitalizing the program, we have taken important steps in strengthening the consistency and uniformity of our methods of delivery across different sections and instructors, in a context of an increasingly digitalized academic environments. Towards that end, we have standardized the nature and organization of content in several of our courses within our LMS (Blackboard), while assuring compliance with campus-wide recommendations for best practices regarding the structure and design of our online presence.

We have also implemented an internal system of keeping track of our minors and reach out to them with information that may encourage them to convert their minor into a major or double major.

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

2022-2023

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)

34 instances of achievement in 37 attempts (91.9%).

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

3

Comments/Narrative

Students' success rate within the Spanish major is high – 91.9%, just slightly lower than the 94% from the previous year – in regard to oral proficiency. This is due to the rigorous requirements of the program, which still includes at least one semester of 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

2022-2023

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)

33 instances of achievement in 36 attempts (91.7%).

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

3

Comments/Narrative

Students' success rate within the Spanish major is equally high at 91.7%, consistent with 89.5% in the previous year, in regards to written proficiency. This may be attributed to the metrics being applied to writing-intensive courses taught in the department, in which we as faculty have put significant efforts towards students' success. On the other hand, the writing demands of courses taken during overseas study tend to prepare students well for the workload back home upon their return.

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 in a recent past.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

The addition of several theme-based topics courses in line with the interests and expertise of the faculty, offered under the general designation "Topics", is still quite recent, and thus more substantial results from these improvements 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

2022-2023

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)

18 instances of achievement in 20 attempts (90%).

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. The program has also been shifting towards a significant reinforcement of the cultural component of foreign-language teaching.

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

2022-2023

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 promotes. 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. Students are also urged to participate in Hispanic communities closer to home, as venues and opportunities to do so have increased in number and frequency.

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

No changes were made nor proposed during the 2022-23 academic year in regards to this outcome.

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

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

2022-2023

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)

13 instances of achievement in 14 attempts
(92.9%).

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

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 within desired levels, although within a reduced statistical universe.

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

2022-2023

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)

8 instances of achievement in 9 attempts (88.9%).

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 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 4 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

No changes were made nor proposed during the 2022-23 academic year in regards to this outcome.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

Dean's Email Address

smcmillan@lander.edu

Approved by Dean?

Signature of Dean

Comments from Dean's Review