Executive Summary

Department of Spanish and Portuguese

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese offers a full range of undergraduate and graduate courses. We offer courses in Spanish language, literature, linguistics and culture, as well as Portuguese language, Brazilian literature and cultural studies. In Spring 2007, the Department received the Departmental Award for Exceptional Teaching and Learning from the Center for Teaching Excellence, University of Kansas, and current faculty members have earned numerous individual teaching, advising and service awards on campus and beyond. The Department recognizes the integral relationship between teaching and research, and all members of the faculty are both active scholars and dedicated teachers.

Faculty hired in the last ten years built on the strengths of the internationally-recognized existing faculty. Amy Rossomondo brought the expertise in second language acquisition long missing from a program serving the largest number of basic language enrollees at the University of Kansas. Her work has allowed us to align our curriculum with new developments in the field, diversify and expand our offerings in Hispanic linguistics to Spanish majors, and strengthen the professional training of our graduate students. New faculty also enhanced the shift of our disciplinary scope from literary to cultural studies.

We judge faculty research engagement qualitatively and quantitatively. We have 15 faculty members on a 40% research allocation; in the last five years we have authored two dozen books and editions and well over 100 articles and book chapters. In that time we also presented at almost 200 professional conferences, sharing research in meaningful ways in the United State and abroad. Faculty and graduate students teach approximately 3,000 students per year, and all faculty work with undergraduate students every semester in addition to teaching graduate courses.

The Department oversees three degree programs in Spanish (BA, MA, and PhD); an elective doctoral minor in Portuguese; an undergraduate minor in Brazilian Studies; and basic language programs in Spanish and Portuguese through which hundreds of students per year fulfill the foreign language requirement in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and other units at KU.

The BA in Spanish has been reworked over the last three years. Included in this process was a thorough assessment of student learning outcomes at the beginning and end of the major. In this time we have also implemented suggestions from the external review team, including work toward offering additional service-learning opportunities. While major rankings to not include this degree (the Spanish BA), college guide books refer to the department as one of the best in the nation.

The MA degree in Spanish has an excellent time-to-degree (under two years) and produces students who go on to work in high schools in Kansas and beyond; business; journalism; and who continue on to the PhD here or elsewhere.
The PhD program is one of the strongest in the nation. External reviewers suggested that we make explicit the excellent mentoring opportunities for students by more effectively explaining some of our practices (the three-member advising committee for each student, etc.) to graduate students. Since the review we form each student’s advisory committee earlier in the program (first year) and have clarified our program documents.

We continually strive to review and renew our degree programs and are currently preparing to review and enhance learning outcomes for all courses. In addition to adjustments to the degree programs, we have successfully responded to three other suggestions raised by the report:

1. **Improve faculty mentoring.** During each new assistant professor’s first semester, the Chair and Associate Chair now provide orientation sessions on department expectations for research, teaching, and service. We appoint a tenured faculty mentor for each new faculty member. Other department faculty members provide additional assistant professor mentoring through peer teaching observations and feedback on scholarship. During their first semester at KU, assistant professors begin working with the Hall Center for Humanities developing their research programs and writing grant proposals, first for the KU New Faculty Award from the General Research Fund for summer support, and later for extramural competitions.

   We are especially aware of the need to improve mentoring for mid-career faculty, in part because we only have four full professors in the department, two of whom have duties beyond the department. We are currently working to provide the support necessary for associate professors to progress toward promotion. This process is being supported by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

2. **Build stronger ties with K-State and the western Kansas.** We are aware of the importance of significant ties to regional universities. At present, KSU, Wichita State, and Pittsburg State professors work with the *Latin American Theatre Review*, to give one example of inter-university collaboration. In addition, Stuart Day recently traveled to Pittsburg State to give a talk on Latinos in Kansas, and Professors Yajaira Padilla and Jorge Pérez took the Whirlwind Tour in order to understand better where our students are coming from. We are also working on offering credit at the 500 level for Kansas teachers to study abroad in a Spanish immersion program. As KU works to recruit more students from Western Kansas, and as Latina/o recruitment continues, we hope to develop even stronger ties with Kansas residents through service-learning, courses for heritage speakers, etc.

3. **Faculty Hiring.** The External Review Committee recommended that conduct two faculty searches. With support from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences we have successfully recruited two additional professors since the review, both of who are from underrepresented groups.

Because of the strength of our degree programs, the success of our graduates from the BA, MA and PhD, and the local, national, and international visibility of our faculty, these programs will be continued.
Department of Spanish and Portuguese

Program Highlights

• In 2007 we were honored with the CTE Departmental Teaching Award, and current faculty members have earned numerous individual teaching, advising and service awards on campus and beyond.

• In the most recent NRC ranking, our PhD in Spanish was #10 in the nation (#5 among publics) in the combined areas of Research Productivity, Student Outcomes and Student Resources.

• Spanish for Business and Spanish for the Medical Professions courses are offered each semester, as well as courses that support Education degrees for Kansas teachers.

• Department faculty lead study abroad programs to Latin America and Spain every summer, giving at least sixty students an international experience with a faculty member (in addition to the 100-200 students who choose semester and year-long study abroad programs).

• We teach approximately 3,000 students per year in language, literature, and culture courses.

• Our undergraduate majors take a required Capstone course in which they showcase the outcome-based research and critical thinking skills they acquire in our program.

• We judge faculty research engagement qualitatively and quantitatively. We have 15 faculty members on a 40% research allocation; in the last five years we have authored two dozen books and editions and well over 100 articles and book chapters. In that time we also presented at 200 professional conferences.

• Faculty from our department serve in key administrative positions on campus (Danny Anderson, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Jill Kuhnheim, Co-Director of Latin American Studies; Yajaira Padilla, Coordinator of Latina/o Studies).

• The members of our faculty are engaged in internationally-recognized research that regularly involves undergraduate and graduate students as partners or apprentices.
Self-Study Program Statement for External Review  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
University of Kansas  
March 2008

Self-Study Process  
Vicky Unruh, Department Chair, prepared this statement with input from Lee Skinner, Associate Chair, and from the Chairs of standing Department committees on Basic Language, Undergraduate Studies, Graduate Studies, Study Abroad, and Portuguese. Committee chairs also received input from committee members. Prior to preparing the final version, a draft of the self-study narrative was also available for individual faculty feedback, which several people provided. The study takes into account data from the DEMIS database at the University of Kansas provided by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (and appended to this document) as well as from other sources.

Scope of Self-Study  
The Department oversees three degree programs in Spanish (BA, MA, and PhD); an elective doctoral minor in Portuguese; a recently approved undergraduate minor in Brazilian Studies; and basic language programs in Spanish and Portuguese through which hundreds of students per year fulfill the foreign language requirement in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and other units at KU. As we compare the Department of 2007-2008 with the Department of 2000-2001, the year of our last review, such terms as “sea change,” “generational turnover” and “a whole new Department” come to mind. In 2006-2007, at the request of the College, we developed a concise strategic plan organized around three assigned areas: 1) things we had been doing well; 2) things we needed to improve; and 3) goals for the future. Here we identified weathering a rapid generational shift and rebuilding a critical core of tenure-line faculty among the top things we were doing well, a change that also supported our research and curricular shift toward Cultural Studies consistent with innovations in our field, restored and expanded our disciplinary breadth in Peninsular and Latin American Literary and Cultural Studies, and, with the addition of a second-language acquisition specialist, greatly strengthened our Basic Language program and expanded our curricular offerings in Hispanic Linguistics. Thus personnel changes since our last review have paralleled curricular revisions that reflect shifts in our discipline and the diverse perspectives of our new faculty. Since 2001, our Department has also experienced a new impetus to think collectively about our objectives, particularly in our instructional programs. For these reasons, this self-study focuses on the changes since 2001 as the base line for where we are now. In each of the following sections—I) Faculty Staffing, Development, and Research; II) Instructional Programs; III) Facilities and Instructional Resources; and IV) Leadership and Governance—we identify our current strengths and our needed improvements and changes for the next several years.

I. Faculty: Staffing, Development, and Research  
A. Changes in Staffing  
The sea change in our Department is most evident in our new composite faculty profile. Through retirements, departures, and death, between Fall 1997 and Fall 2000, we had dropped from 15.2 to 10.83 FTE (or from a head-count of 16 to 13 regular faculty). Since Spring 2001,
we lost 6 senior faculty: 4 through retirement, 1 through departure to another institution, and one through death. Even so, because we have been fortunate to hire 8 new faculty since 2001, we now have a head count of 16 (15 regular faculty plus 1 tenured unclassified instructional staff member, or 15.25 FTE). With this year’s hiring of an associate professor (Santa Arias) who will join us in Fall 2008, we will soon have a head count of 17 (16.25 FTE, one of which is an unclassified instructional staff member). The departures and new arrivals have transformed our faculty demographics. In Spring 2001 our faculty consisted of 6 full professors, 6 associate professors (3 of them nearing promotion to full professor), 1 assistant professor, and 1 unclassified instructional staff member at the assistant professor level. In 2007-2008, our faculty consists of 3 full professors, 5 associate professors (one promoted in Spring 07), 1 tenured unclassified staff member at the associate professor level, and 7 assistant professors in the tenure track. Half of our faculty (the 7 assistant professors plus the 1 recently promoted associate) have joined the Department since our 2001 review, and 7 have been here for less than four years. In the past 7 years, then, we have shifted from a tenure-dense department of full or mid-career associate professors to a department with a very small full professor bench and a large cadre of assistant professors working to integrate themselves into a department and a university with high expectations. Moreover, whereas the senior corps in the 2001 Department was still dominated by faculty who earned their doctorates in the 1960s or early 1970s, our current full professors entered the field between the mid-to-late 1980s.

Our new faculty have diversified our research and teaching, restoring our disciplinary breadth. Margot Versteeg and Jorge Pérez (who joined Jonathan Mayhew as our modern Peninsularists) have solidified strength in nineteenth-twenty-first century Spanish Peninsular Studies challenged by the retirements of Roberta Johnson and Robert Spires and the departure of Sharon Feldman. Patricia Manning and Robert Bayliss restored our disciplinary breadth in Early Modern Spanish prose and Spanish Golden Age drama that had decreased with the departures of Sherry Velasco and William R. Blue. In the face of George Woodyard’s retirement, the hiring of Stuart Day allowed us to build on the Department’s longstanding strength in Latin American theatre and Mexican studies. Although the Department’s Latin Americanists collectively provided strength in Mexico (Anderson), the Southern Cone (Kuhnheim), and the Hispanic Caribbean (Unruh), the hiring of Yajaira Padilla added Central American and U.S. Latino Studies to our disciplinary breadth, and the hiring of Paul Sneed brought Brazilian Studies back onto our regional map and enhanced the promise of growth in our Portuguese program.

But faculty hired since 2001 did not simply restore strengths. They have enhanced our program and brought it up to date. Amy Rossomondo brought the expertise in second language acquisition long missing from a program serving the largest number of basic language enrollees at the University of Kansas. Her work has allowed us to align our curriculum with new developments in the field, diversify and expand our offerings in Hispanic linguistics to Spanish majors, and strengthen the professional training of our graduate students. New faculty also enhanced the shift of our disciplinary scope from literary to cultural studies. Although continuing faculty had already moved in this direction, Jorge Pérez, for example, brought a growing expertise in film studies, Stuart Day expanded our strength in theatre to performance studies, and Paul Sneed brought the study of music into the literary cultural field of Brazil. Similarly the research of Patricia Manning, Robert Bayliss, Margot Versteeg, and Yajaira Padilla brings the literary into dialogue with contextual materials from politics, religion, journalism, and cultural performances. New faculty also improved possibilities for trans-national and trans-Atlantic collaboration. For example, the recent hiring of Santa Arias, a scholar of Spanish American
Colonial Studies, not only provides expertise in an area of longstanding Department need but also enhances opportunities for collaborative trans-Atlantic research and teaching as her work dovetails in historical period with that of Rivera, Manning, and Bayliss.

Our generational and research diversification has paralleled an increase in gender balance and cultural diversity. The ratio of men to women faculty was 9 to 5 in 2001. In 2008, the ratio is 8 (men) to 8 (women), which will increase to 9 women as of Fall 2008. In 2001 we had only 2 native speakers of Spanish or Portuguese on our faculty; in 2008 we have 4 (5 as of Fall 2008). In 2001 we had 1 faculty member whose country of origin was other than the U.S., and in 2008 we have 4. In 2001, two faculty members were listed as minorities, and in 2008 there are 3 (4 as of Fall 2008). In earlier incarnations of the Department, although programmatic excellence and teamwork were viewed as major strengths, cultural and gender homogeneity were perceived as marked weaknesses. We are pleased to have moved ahead on this, but more work is needed to increase the greater diversity we have established.

B. Changes in Faculty Development, Mentoring, and Intellectual Life

Since 2001 we have worked to enhance faculty mentoring and development. During each new assistant professor’s first semester, the Chair and Associate Chair now provide orientation sessions on Department expectations for research, teaching, and service. We appoint a tenured faculty mentor for each new faculty member. Other department faculty members provide additional assistant professor mentoring through peer teaching observations and feedback on scholarship. During their first semester at KU, assistant professors begin working with the Hall Center for Humanities developing their research programs and writing grant proposals, first for the KU New Faculty Award from the General Research Fund for summer support, and later for extramural competitions. Although extramural grants are often beyond the reach of assistant professors, proposal writing helps refine research and expedite the transition from dissertation to book. Mentors also encourage junior faculty to participate in conferences that increase their professional visibility and provide external feedback. On campus, the Department encourages assistant professors to present work in such venues as Hall Center faculty seminars, the International Studies seminar, and the Center of Latin American Studies lunchtime *merienda* series. Department faculty who are Latin Americanists also present their work at the Center of Latin American Studies annual Waggoner Research Colloquium.

Annual reviews and the third year progress toward tenure review provide critical moments to reinforce mentoring. With the adoption of a new Department Faculty Evaluation Plan, all faculty now rate themselves in teaching, research and service and write narrative self-reflections on their progress in each area. Through the endowed one-year Cramer Award for Teaching and Research as well as the three-year Cramer Award for Research, the Evaluation Committee also rewards special achievements with financial support for additional faculty development.

The Department encourages participation in Hall Center for the Humanities multi-disciplinary seminars or colloquia as enhancements to faculty research at all levels. But since 2001 we have also expanded scenarios for intellectual exchange in the Department. For the past three years, we have increased opportunities for all faculty to receive peer feedback on their research and teaching at lunchtime *tertulias*. We typically hold 2-4 faculty *tertulias* per semester. We have also increased access to visiting specialists by supplementing limited speaker funds from our endowment and teaming up with the Hall Center, the Center of Latin American Studies, and our own graduate student organization (GRASP). Thus in recent years the Department has hosted or collaborated in hosting visits by Laura Freixas (Spanish writer), Claire Kramsch (U of
California, Berkeley), Debra Castillo (Cornell), Donald Tuten (U of North Carolina), Marcia Stephenson (Purdue), Regina Harrison (U of Maryland), Diana Taylor (NYU), Patricia Grieve (Columbia), Silvia Bermúdez (U of California, Santa Barbara), Cristina Moreiras-Menor (U of Michigan), Jacqueline Bixler (Virginia Tech), Eduardo Rovner (Argentine playwright), Cristina García (Cuban-American novelist), Arturo Arias (U of Texas), Luis Fernando Restrepo (U of Arkansas), and Linda Willem (Butler). Since 2001, we have also hosted three professional conferences: the 2001 Mid-American Conference on Hispanic Literatures (MACHL), with keynote addresses by William Rowe of the U of London and Bradley Epps of Harvard; a 2002 Poetry Symposium in honor of Andrew Debicki; and the Latin American Theatre Today Conference/Festival of 2005 with talks and performances by numerous Latin American theatre groups, playwrights, and directors and a keynote by renowned Puerto Rican playwright and novelist Luis Rafael Sánchez.

C. Research Productivity and Activity Based on Scholarly Competence

The 1995 National Research Council evaluation of PhD programs ranked the Department faculty 11th in the nation in research strength. This study assessed an era when we had 9 full professors at the peak of their careers, several with national and international research profiles at the top of their fields. With the generational shift to a Department that currently has only 3 full professors and half of whose members (primarily assistant professors) entered the profession since the year 2000, it would be unrealistic to expect the duplication of such a ranking or its equivalent whenever the results of the 2007 NRC study are released. But even with the shift to a Department with half of its faculty at the assistant or freshly promoted associate level, our research productivity since 2001 has remained proportionately strong.

1. Faculty publications. Since 2001, our current faculty have published or had accepted 13 books, including 6 single-author monographs, 2 edited collections of critical studies, 2 critical editions of Latin American plays, 2 textbooks, and 1 guide to Brazilian Portuguese pronunciation. Faculty members also have 3 books currently under advance contract: 2 single-author monographs and 1 co-edited collection of critical essays. Publishers of our books include the University of Texas Press, Liverpool University Press, Bucknell University Press, Juan de la Cuesta, the Modern Language Association, Brill, University of Chicago Press, Palgrave/Macmillan, and Georgetown University Press. (This summary does not include the work of active emeriti faculty.)


2. Faculty grants and research recognition awards. In addition to the New Faculty General Research Grants received by all beginning assistant professors, since 2001, our faculty have received 2 KU Hall Center for the Humanities Fellowships, 3 sabbatical leave awards, and 1 regular GRF summer research awards. In addition 2 of our faculty have received National Endowment for the Humanities University Fellowships to work on their book projects; 1 has received a National Endowment for the Humanities Grant to co-direct a faculty Summer
Seminar; 1 has held a continuing four-year grant from the Title VI International Research and Studies Program of the U.S. Office of Education, and 3 have received grants from the Program for Cultural Cooperation Between the Spanish Ministry of Culture and US Universities. Jill Kuhnheim received the KU 2005 Byron Caldwell Smith Book Prize for her most recent monograph.

3. **Faculty invited lectures and conference presentations.** Since 2001, our faculty have given invited individual lectures, keynote addresses, or select symposia presentations at Emory University, Yale University, The University of Texas at Austin, Northwestern University, Texas A&M University, Texas State University, SUNY Binghamton, Rice University, Penn State University, the University of California, Davis, Miami University (Ohio), Missouri Southern State University, the University of Santiago de Compostela, the Círculo de Bellas Artes in Madrid, and the Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies symposium in Santiago de Chile, among other venues. Our faculty also regularly present their research at high profile national and international conferences such as the Modern Language Association (MLA), Latin American Studies Association (LASA), the International Association of Hispanicists (AIH), the American Studies Association (ASA), the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP), the Brazilian Studies Association (BRASA), the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), and the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA), as well as at a wide range of well regarded regional conferences.

4. **Faculty editorial work.** Since 2001, current faculty have served as editors or editorial board members of 4 book series. Isidro Rivera serves on the Editorial Board of the Brill series on The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World. Danny Anderson served as editor of the Pan-American Literature in Translation Series for the University of Texas Press until 2006 and on the Editorial Board for the MLA series on Teaching Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. Anderson currently serves on the Editorial Board of the In Extenso book series of the Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez. Since 2001 Department faculty have evaluated book manuscripts for numerous presses, including those of the University of Texas, Bucknell University, University of Minnesota, University of Chicago, University of Kentucky, and Vanderbilt University among others.

The Department participates in publishing two major journals--**Latin American Theatre Review**, now edited by Stuart Day, and La Corónica, a journal of Medieval Spanish Language, Literature, and Cultural Studies, whose Managing Editor is Isidro Rivera. Since 2001 Department faculty have also served on the Editorial Boards of such journals as PMLA, Revista Iberoamericana, Revista de Estudios Hispánicos, Decimonónica, Letras Femeninas, Hispanic Poetry Journal, Hispanófila, and Romance Notes among others, and almost all Department faculty are called on to referee manuscripts for numerous journals in the field.

5. **Other faculty activity requiring scholarly competence.** Since 2001, (primarily senior) faculty have frequently served as external reviewers for academic promotions at every level (including chaired professorships and distinguished hires) for top private and public doctoral granting institution in the field (Princeton, Yale, Texas, Indiana, Ohio State, Michigan, UC-Davis, Berkeley, Toronto, NYU, UCSB, BYU, Tulane, U of New Mexico, Penn State, UC Irvine, among others), and high quality MA granting programs and liberal arts colleges (Brandeis U, Trinity College, Carleton College, Grinnell College, York University, Davidson College, Notre Dame, among others). Faculty have also served as external evaluators for programs at UC Irvine, LSU, and the University of New Mexico and one faculty member has served as an external evaluator for grants administration of areas studies and international studies
programs at several institutions. Faculty have also served on the Program Committee for the Latin American Studies Committee International Congress and the MLA Divisional Executive Committees for Spanish Medieval Language and Literature, Latin American Literature from Independence to 1900, and Twentieth-Century Latin American Literature and on the Executive Committee of the Mexican Cultural and Literary Studies (founded by one of our faculty members).

D. Goals for Improvement and Change in Faculty Staffing, Development, and Research

1. **Increase faculty research time.** To maintain a strong research profile, we must provide faculty with more time for research. Because as a group we are high performers in teaching and service as well, we must find better ways to protect faculty research time in the face of demands posed by multiple programmatic commitments, curricular innovations, the KU ethos of strong service, and calls for participation in such initiatives as thematic learning communities, multi-departmental programs such as Latino Studies, and course development for the Edwards Campus and for distance learning. In the coming years, we should use the new College opportunities to teach 8 week courses, releasing concentrated time blocks for research and develop other allocation of effort strategies for protecting research time for faculty with active research portfolios.

2. **Improve mid-career mentoring.** While the Department devotes much time to mentoring junior faculty, our norms are less specific for post-tenure promotions. Although our annual review process encompasses periodic feedback with an eye toward eventual promotion, we can improve in this area. Even with eligibility to apply for sabbatical leaves every six years, the challenges for associate professors to balance what should be growing research programs with high quality teaching and increased service demands can be greater than those for assistant professors. Because we have only 2.25 full professors, we are stretched to provide ongoing mentoring to current associates and what will be a growing cadre of associate professors over the next few years. We need to protect and expand time for research at the mid-career level, while encouraging continued quality teaching and rank-appropriate service.

3. **Investigate more flexible models for faculty performance over time.** Given the current relative youth of our Department and the fact that only one current faculty member is certain to retire in the next ten years, this is a good time for us to reflect on more flexible models for the arc of faculty careers over time, in particular ways that, once a faculty member has established a strong record of research achievement, our merit review system might be more flexible in rewarding diverse kinds of faculty activity at different stages of a long career.

4. **Strengthen rigor of interdisciplinary work.** As our faculty move toward research roughly defined as “interdisciplinary,” we should enhance the rigor of these initiatives so that we are not simply adapting information from other fields but rather learning new methodologies that might yield truly innovative and collaborative cross-disciplinary research. While Hall Center seminars bring together faculty from multiple disciplines, the exchange is often more content based than methodological. Keeler intra-university fellowships provide one opportunity in this arena.

5. **Increase faculty diversity.** When making new hires, we should keep the need for additional cultural diversification of our faculty in the forefront.

6. **Future hiring areas.** Although we have not yet prioritized the following areas for faculty hires and although this does not cover hires we might need due to faculty departures, we have identified areas for future faculty hires, several of which could enhance interdisciplinary
support within our own Department and across departments: a) A position in 20th and 21st-century Peninsular theatre and film to enhance our cluster in Hispanic theatre and in contemporary Spain and to establish additional faculty interaction with the Department of Theatre and Film; b) an additional position in Hispanic Linguistics, most likely in Sociolinguistics or Historical Linguistics that would allow us to develop the undergraduate minor in Hispanic Linguistics and possibly revive our alternate MA. degree in Language, Literature, and Culture that could meet needs of a different graduate constituency than our current MA; c) a position in Andean Studies, with an interdisciplinary focus on the overlapping terrain of Cultural Studies with Folklore, Anthropology and/or History; such a position would enhance interdisciplinary cross-over and meet needs of students in multiple Departments and programs and possibly enhance offerings in indigenous languages; d) a position in Modern European Studies to be held by a Hispanist with a trans-European focus who could contribute to a European Studies program; e) as our Portuguese program grows into a possible Portuguese major, an additional position in Portuguese, in this case focused on Lusophone African and/or Peninsular Portuguese Studies.

II. Instructional Programs

In the application that led to our receipt of the 2007 Departmental Award for Exceptional Teaching and Learning awarded by the KU Center for Teaching Excellence, we noted that “the Department of Spanish and Portuguese is a small department doing a big teaching job.” The CTE award, given for innovation and mentoring, and the receipt by Department faculty of numerous individual teaching awards since 2001 suggest that we strive to do a good job as well. These awards include 2 W.T. Kemper Awards for Excellence in Teaching, the Mortar Board Award for undergraduate teaching, the Louise Byrd Graduate Educator Ward, the Self Graduate Fellowship Mentor Award, and several CTE Teaching Excellence Awards. Since 2001 several faculty have also participated in CTE Best Practices workshops and seminars. Currently 2 faculty members have been selected by the CTE as finalist nominees for a Chancellor’s Teaching Award. A major substantive change in our instructional activity since 2001 has been an increase in collective dialogue about our teaching mission and the articulation of specific shared objectives, a process initiated through faculty retreats in Fall 2002 and Spring 2005.

Basic Language Program in Spanish

The primary program goal of our Basic Language Program in Spanish is promoting communicative competence in the approximately 1000-1200 students enrolled in classes each semester. On successful completion of SPAN 216 (4th semester), the students have developed the skill set to listen, speak, read and write in Spanish at a level (ACTFL immediate mid-high for speaking and listening) enabling them to express themselves effectively, understand people communicating with them in Spanish, and apply these abilities to future professional endeavors. A second major goal is to encourage students to become informed global citizens. The mission statement of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences affirms that at “the core of a liberal arts education are research and informed engagement with global issues, multiculturalism, and diverse experiences; these goals represent our greatest hope for a better understanding of differences in the human condition and the potential for enhanced tolerance.” Our program plays an integral role in this mission. We are committed to producing students who are not only able to communicate in Spanish, but are also well versed in the past and present cultural realities of the diverse human groups who share Spanish as a common language. Equipped with the skills and
knowledge we aim to develop, students completing the Basic Spanish Program should be prepared as effective members of our global community.

A. Innovations in the Basic Language Program

With the key hire of second language acquisition specialist, Amy Rosomondo, who joined Rosalea Postma-Carttar as Co-Director of Basic Language, since 2001 we have accomplished the following curricular innovations that pave the way to our future initiatives:

1. Innovation in sequencing. Since 2001, we have radically restructured our program sequence and created two tracks for elementary Spanish. The first consists of a one-semester, five credit hour course (SPAN 111) offered every semester for students who have previously studied Spanish in high school but feel unprepared for the intermediate (200) level. The vast majority of students enrolled at the 100-level takes this accelerated course (approximately 325-400 per semester). Although the students enter the course with disparate skills and experiences, upon successful completion they are prepared to begin intermediate course work. Previously students typically took two semesters of elementary Spanish (SPAN 104/105 and SPAN 108) to reach the intermediate level. Most were under-enrolling or “back-placing” themselves out of fear of a higher level or a desire to earn an “easy A” in two five credit hour courses. SPAN 111 offers a solution to students’ trepidation and has increased the rate at which the majority of students complete the College’s language requirement (3 instead of 4 semesters), thus promoting the University’s goal of graduation in four years. This progress-to-degree enhancing shift accounts largely for the recent lower figures for lower division undergraduate credit hours.

We offer a separate track for those students who have not previously studied Spanish in high school or whose Spanish study took place five years prior to enrollment. Approximately 40-70 students enroll in a two-semester sequence (SPAN 104 in the fall and SPAN 108 in the spring) designed for true beginners. After successfully completing the two five credit hour courses, these students enter the 200-level program. Our 200-level sequence of two three credit hour courses (SPAN 212 and 216) enrolls approximately 400-600 students per semester.

2. Innovation in content and approach. Since 2001 we have changed the Basic Language Program through increased attention to communication in context and a greater emphasis on cultural content. This new approach recognizes that while meaningful focus on form can be useful when acquiring Spanish, one learns communication through exposure to spoken and written input in context and through opportunities to interact through speaking and writing. At the 100-level students hear Spanish exclusively in class sessions and learn strategies for expressing themselves. While much of class time is dedicated to discussing topics related to daily life in order to build a core vocabulary and linguistic system, students explore issues cultural learning issues in preparation for 200-level study. For example, first year students conduct ethnographic interviews with native speakers. In 200-level classes, students use Spanish to communicate about the histories and cultures of Spanish speakers, beginning with Spanish speaking groups in the United States. Second-language learning research shows that content-driven courses offer opportunities for communication that result in more effective language acquisition than grammar-driven approaches. A content-driven approach also enacts our commitment to expose students to realities of a global society. Thus students now learn about patterns of immigration and the political and social situations that produce these patterns. They also explore issues in bilingualism and biculturalism, and learn about the histories of the 21 Spanish-speaking countries from pre-colonial times to the present. Ultimately, the courses seek to foster the development of cultural sensitivity and respect for the complexity of other societies.
3. **Innovation in instructional technology.** Since 2001 we have enhanced our use of instructional technology for the Basic Language Program in multiple ways: a) **Electronic workbooks,** whereby students complete homework using the Quia platform, which provides immediate feedback and the enforceable completion of daily work without daily exchange of papers in class; b) **Blackboard (Bb),** for organization and communication in all courses; c) **Turnitin.com** for all 200-level courses, ensuring that diaries and essays are the original work of each student and greatly reducing the number of academic misconduct charges each semester; d) **200-level Technology Project,** whereby 200-level instructors are working to create grammar and vocabulary activities that reinforce course content and encourage meaningful focus on form to improve accuracy and that will be accessed through testing functions of Blackboard; e) **Digital oral examinations.** In Fall 2007, instructors of our 100-level classes recorded all oral examinations digitally by using video iPods. With this innovation we will be able to store and track student progress from semester to semester. Use of video iPods will be expanded to 200-level classes in Fall 2008.

4. **Cross-Cultural Innovation: Project Conexiones.** A recent major innovation is “Project Conexiones.” A modified and enhanced version of the MIT Cultura program for French (Furstenburg et al., 2001), the project was created by Amy Rossonondo with faculty at the University of Costa Rica and a Lawrence campus graduate teaching assistant. Using technology developed by EGARC (the College’s language resource center), 4th semester Spanish honors students (SPAN 217) from KU and 4th semester English students from UCR participate in Web-based (e.g., email, discussion boards, chat, internet-based video conferencing) cross-cultural exchange that juxtaposes similar materials and products of the two cultures. First the participants complete relatively simple, parallel questionnaires (word associations, sentence completions, and reactions to hypothetical situations) on the Web. Next they analyze responses of both groups, first individually and then in class discussions at both institutions. Then both groups of students post messages on a virtual discussion board in which they communicate their initial reactions to the questionnaire responses. These interactions promote deeper exploration of topics and provide opportunities for authentic communication in the students’ second language. Students increasingly investigate complex cultural beliefs, using national opinion polls, political documents, press articles, films and literature from both target cultures. Finally, the participants create a collaborative culminating project representing their cultural exploration throughout the exchange.

5. **Changes in program administration and staffing.** The jobs of our Basic Language Co-Directors combine the direction of the entire program, the supervision of GTAs and lecturers, and the coordination of instructors in the multi-section levels. To make this job more manageable, since 2001 we have shifted from using Head GTAs as coordinators of individual multi-section courses to full-time Lecturers/Academic Program Associates for this role. When we have succeeded in hiring and retaining appropriate personnel for these positions, it has fostered more professional course administration and greater course and program stability. We have also enhanced this stability by initiating the requirement that all instructors must take SPAN 801 (our methodology course), even if they have previously taught elsewhere.

**B. Goals for Improvement and Change in the Basic Language Program**

1. **Expand technology access.** A major obstacle to aligning our Basic Language Program to the state of the art in the profession is the limited access to computers and projectors in our assigned classrooms. The Web offers endless possibilities for stimulating class activities and direct contact with cultural products. But to integrate these effectively into our entire program,
we need computers and projectors in all of our assigned classrooms. In addition, we would like to make the digital recording of oral exams a permanent part of our Basic Language Program, but to do so we need ongoing resource renewal in this area. We have recently dedicated funds from our CTE Award and an additional College allocation to the purchase of video iPods, but we will need to identify a clear revenue stream for their ongoing replacement. We would also like to have the option of expanding Project Conexiones to other regular 4th semester sections, but we would need additional classrooms equipped with the technology that has been available to the single section of SPAN 217.

2. **Improve strategies to keep materials current and comprehensive.** In keeping a Basic Language program current, maintaining fresh content is essential for instructors and for students who consistently pass on their completed material to future students. Thus we must constantly review new materials. For the 100-level classes, we are considering a program with video-based materials to foster comprehension of a wider variety of Spanish speakers and communicative contexts. The videos feature multiple native speakers conversing in groups, which would expand the students’ experience beyond the typical pattern of instructor-student interactions.

3. **Enhance grammar components of available textbooks.** We also seek to improve the materials that we employ to teach 200-level classes. While we are pleased with the scope of our current materials (Mundo 21), many aspects need improving. For example, the approach to grammar instruction is insufficient. We must create innovative materials that facilitate more effective and meaningful focus on form.

4. **Address instructional needs of heritage speakers of Spanish.** Although the population of heritage-Spanish speakers in the state of Kansas and the nation, we have yet to address the needs of this student population. Doing so is not only essential for our students but is also consistent with the thematic focus on migration-exile-globalization that integrates our strategic plan for the next several years. As we identify a significant heritage-speaker population with an interest in Spanish language courses, we expect to develop an appropriate new course, most likely at the 4th semester level.

5. **Improve continuity of multi-section course administration.** In order to keep the workloads of our Basic Language Co-Directors viable, we need to complete the transition to the administration of multi-section courses by full-time Lecturer/Academic Program Associates. Although this new category of lectureship has helped, we still struggle yearly to attract and retain good people for these jobs because the existing course-load and salary structure of KU lectureships hampers our competitiveness. With increased flexibility in the salary range for these positions, we believe we would be more successful in attracting good people for 2-3 years before they move on.

**Undergraduate Spanish Major and Undergraduate Studies**

The B.A. in Spanish serves a range of student constituencies: future Spanish teachers, a small number of potential future graduate students in Spanish Literary and Cultural Studies, and—above all—students who combine the study of language and culture with majors in a broad spectrum of other fields (History, Latin American Studies, English, Communications, Journalism, Business, Social Welfare, and Political Science, among others). The curriculum and goals of our undergraduate major exemplify our mini-mission statement crafted in response to our Provost’s call to explain why our field is important: “because bilingual, bicultural fluency and analytical understandings of literary and cultural texts create educated citizens of the
Americas and the Trans-Atlantic.” This mission is also fully consistent with the philosophy of our Basic Language Program and the College’s goals to engage students with global issues, multiculturalism, and diverse experiences and to enhance their understanding of others and their capacity for tolerance. The extensive innovations in our program since 2001 have aimed to increase curricular rigor, diversify and update the program content in response to interests and needs of twenty-first century students, enhance advising and assessment of student outcomes, and improve articulation between our undergraduate program and our students’ experiences studying abroad.

A. Enhancement of consistency and rigor

Since 2001, we have done the following to increase the consistency and rigor of our curriculum in order to ensure student success as they move through the major:

1. Gateway courses. We experimented with the formats of our two gateway courses, SPAN 324 (Grammar and Composition) and SPAN 340 (Textual Analysis and Critical Reading), running them with a one-day per week large lecture taught by core faculty and two-day per week small breakout sections taught by faculty and advanced GTAs. The lectures structured the follow-up work of the break-out sections. (In the case of SPAN 340 our goal was primarily the provision of literary/cultural studies teaching opportunities for advanced GTAs, a goal we are seeking to address in other ways.) Although we discontinued this format because its administration proved unnecessarily cumbersome, the experiment greatly enhanced the consistency, rigor, and curriculum of SPAN 324. Once a multi-section course without significant coordination (often taught by visiting instructors or lecturers) it is now taught with a more centralized syllabus aiming at rigor across sections, supervised by at least two regular faculty per semester and sharing common materials, assignments and exams. The new curriculum also brings the course into line with our larger focus on cultural diversity. In line with changes in SPAN 324, we changed SPAN 328 (Conversation) from a 1-credit course lacking coordination among sections to a regulated, collaborative multi-section, 2-credit course. SPAN 328 now supplements the SPAN 324 focus on critical thinking skills through writing with a parallel emphasis on oral production. The course also now addresses the skills identified by ADFL guidelines for measuring communicative proficiency.

2. Standardization of student learning outcomes for courses in the major. Since 2001 we have adopted explicit Department guidelines for student output and skill development in each level of courses in the major. These are published in the Faculty Handbook and included in the orientation of all new faculty.

3. Creation of bridge course. As a bridge between our Basic Language and our undergraduate major and in response to those students seeking to improve their Spanish without electing a major, we developed a new course, SPAN 322 (Form and Meaning in Context). This course is currently a work in progress, as we bring it into line with our Department’s thematic focus on cultural content and improve the communicative skills and accuracy of students who have completed the basic language requirement and are deciding how next to refine and use their skills.

B. Diversification of curricular content

Consistent with the shift in our field and faculty research toward Cultural Studies, we have diversified the content of our major through the creation of new courses and changes in the content of existing courses. This shift began in the mid 1990s when we replaced traditional survey courses in Hispanic literatures with courses focused on special topics or national regions.
Innovations since 2001 continued this Cultural Studies shift and diversification through the following:

1. **Conversation through film.** We redesigned our 1 credit advanced conversation course (SPAN 428) into a two-hour, content-driven course that includes the study of Hispanic Cinema. This also addresses the question of rigor and makes 428 consistent with the two-credit hour328.

2. **Expanded disciplinary reach of literary/cultural topics courses.** We have diversified the content of our special topics courses (SPAN 440, 540, 550 and 560) to cut across historical, geographic and disciplinary boundaries. Recent topics for SPAN 540, for example, a required capstone colloquium for Spanish majors with a significant research component, include “Travelers, Tourists, Migrants, and Exiles in Hispanic Literatures and Film,” “Pan-Hispanic Don Juanes: Rewriting the Don Juan Legend in the Hispanic World,” and “Revolutions and Revolutionary Thought in Spanish America.”

3. **Diversified upper level language courses.** We have increased the variety of topics and approaches in our advanced language classes. For example, SPAN 522 (Advanced Studies in Spanish Language), a capstone language course for majors, has addressed topics such as translation theory and practice or stylistics and professional writing. Similarly, SPAN 570 has addressed such distinct topics as Sociolinguistics, Applied Linguistics, and Contrastive Spanish and Portuguese Phonology.

4. **New culture and literature courses.** New courses respond to changes in the field and the interests of contemporary students, including SPAN 346 (Transatlantic Hispanic Cultures), and SPAN 464 (Reading and Analysis of U.S. Latino/a Literatures).

5. **Service learning.** Since 2001 we have moved into service learning consistent with the larger KU mission in this area. For example, Isidro Rivera’s version of SPAN 522 (Advanced Studies in Spanish Language) included a service learning component whereby students worked on a translation project at the Lawrence Public Library and prepared Spanish-language versions of publication materials for the Bert Nash Mental Health Center. In a pilot service learning project, Danny Anderson used the open topic SPAN 494 rubric to create Spanish through Service Learning. This course provided an experimental approach to reading about personal life experiences and supported 20 students who undertook ten weeks of volunteer service in agencies serving the Spanish-speaking and Latino communities of Lawrence and Kansas City. As a follow-up to this course, we created a new course rubric for service learning, SPAN 330 (Service Learning Internship in Spanish).

6. **Courses for Edwards Campus constituencies.** We have long struggled to find courses that would meet the needs of Edwards Campus students. Offerings such as SPAN 324 (Grammar and Composition intended for Spanish majors) drew more students from Lawrence than the Edward Campus region. Most recently, Danny Anderson re-conceptualized SPAN 300 (The Origins and Development of Spanish American Culture) as an introductory culture class in English that satisfies a Humanities distribution requirement and meets the dual goals of teaching students the basic elements of cultural studies and introducing them to primary literary and cultural texts. The course subtitle is “Introduction to Mexican Cultural Studies,” and in order to meet the needs of non-traditional students at the Edwards Campus, the course is taught in a 3 hour seminar format that relies on technology.

7. **Curriculum beyond the major.** We have provided further opportunities for learning and developing skills by coordinating our curriculum with the college’s Research Experience Program and promoting our own departmental honors program so that our most promising students may explore graduate-level coursework in our field. We have also contributed to the
College’s Thematic Learning Communities initiative through Yajaira Padilla’s Learning Community Seminar (LA&S 101), “(Dis)locating the Border: Language and Culture on and Beyond la Línea,” which provided new KU students with a basic understanding of Latino/a cultures that complemented their study of the Spanish language.

C. Coordinated assessment of student outcomes

We have instituted an initiative to evaluate the writing of our students at the entry level (SPAN 340, Textual Analysis and Critical Reading) and exit level (SPAN 540, Colloquium on Hispanic Literature) of our major through a blind assessment according to departmental rubrics. This allows us to measure student learning and determine areas of strength and weakness that inform our teaching across the curriculum. When the Center for Teaching Excellence presented us with our Department Award, they highlighted this practice as a major area of innovation.

D. Enhanced Advising for the Major

Through additional personnel resources provided by the College, we have enhanced the administrative component of our academic advising to better serve our students and economize faculty resources:

1. Academic advising specialist. The creation of a new Academic Advising Specialist position has allowed our faculty to focus on the academic rather than the administrative component of student advising. This specialist provides basic information about the program, especially at the pre-major level, provides preliminary information for integrating study abroad plans with major requirements, handles much of the administrative paper-work for the major, and disseminates information widely to majors and students with a declared potential interest in the major. This specialist also regularly compiles statistical data regarding past and present enrollment figures which provides a perspective on the status of our major and allows us to plan future course offerings.

2. Documents for advising majors. We have developed documents detailing our program’s requirements and policies for students (including an updated Major Advising Checklist and a model four-year plan of coursework to promote timely completion of major requirements) and have made these documents accessible at our departmental Website along with course descriptions and other information.

E. Changes in Study Abroad programs

Undergraduate students of Spanish at KU may participate in one of 5 study abroad programs: a semester or Academic Year Program at the University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain; Summer Language Institutes in Barcelona, Spain and Puebla, Mexico; a semester program at the University of Málaga in Ronda, Spain; and a Semester or Academic Year Program at the University of Costa Rica in San José. The programs in Santiago, Barcelona, and Puebla offer courses corresponding to Department courses for the Spanish major (and in the latter two cases taught in part by KU faculty and GTAs); the Ronda program offers basic language study; and the Costa Rica program offers direct enrollment in UCR courses in numerous disciplines. We also approve courses from other programs. Since 2001, we have worked toward stronger guarantees that, as students enhance their cultural learning through immersion, courses taken abroad will still meet Department standards. These changes include:

1. New Location for Mexico program. We have moved our Mexico summer program from Guadalajara to Puebla, where an affiliation with the Universidad de las Américas has increased the flexibility of course options for students.
2. **Strengthening guidelines for acceptable study abroad programs and courses.** We have worked closely with the Office of Study Abroad to provide criteria for selecting programs and courses that complement our own offerings and major requirements.

3. **Streamlining advising for prospective study abroad students.** We have developed a series of informational and administrative documents, available through our Website, that simplify pre-study-abroad advising to majors and non-majors.

4. **Enhanced flexibility for awarding credit for study abroad coursework.** Changing details of our course rubrics not only provides for awarding credits to a greater range of coursework abroad, but also allows variable credit or for course numbers to be repeated when content varies.

5. **Enhancements toward completion of the Spanish major in Santiago.** We have worked closely with our own staff and USC staff in Santiago to maximize opportunities for our students to work toward completing the major while abroad. Since 2005-2006, the program has shifted from a model of rotating KU or U of Colorado faculty and GTA directors to a full-time resident, on-site Director (a PhD graduate of our program). We have also worked to ensure that the rigor of courses taught by our Santiago staff more closely approximates that of courses taught in the Department.

**F. Goals for Improvement and Change in Undergraduate Studies**

Beyond expanding current initiatives, such as further facilitating student advising and enrollment with our Advising Specialist and broadening the scope of our assessment initiative in SPAN 340 and 540 to include other courses, we aim to strengthen our undergraduate program over the next several years, not only for Spanish majors but also for other undergraduate students at KU. After peaking in 2003 at 361, our number of declared/interested majors declined over the next several years, although this now appears to be leveling off: in Spring 2007 we had 230 enrolled declared/interested majors and in Spring 2008 this number is 229. We attribute the change in majors in part to our own design, as in 2003-2004 we imposed an A or B requirement in our gateway courses to increase the rigor of our major. However, consistent with the inclination of the new KU administration to balance enhanced KU admissions standards with equal access to all majors for students admitted to KU, this year we removed the A/B requirement in our gateway courses to increase the rigor of our major. However, consistent with the inclination of the new KU administration to balance enhanced KU admissions standards with equal access to all majors for students admitted to KU, this year we removed the A/B requirement for the gateway courses and we expect this change will play out in an increase in majors over time. Although we still believe that a higher grade is a stronger guarantee of sufficient student success, the improved rigor of these gateway courses is a more important indicator of likely student learning outcomes than a specific final grade. Our main goal for our undergraduate program is to create new courses and course combinations more attuned to the needs and interests of twenty-first-century students, both prospective majors and non-majors, who are inclined to study Spanish or Hispanic cultures. Although we have focused almost all of our energies on the needs of Spanish majors, with the creation of SPAN 322 and our support of the Latino Studies Minor, we have moved beyond conceptualizing undergraduate Hispanic studies as the exclusive terrain of our own majors. The following goals for undergraduate studies, adapted from our Strategic Plan, reflect this shift

1. **Develop flexible and innovative course combinations and more courses for non-majors in Spanish.** Although we have experienced pressure from some students to develop a Spanish minor, we have not yet reached a faculty consensus about the wisdom of such a change, particularly if such an entity were simply a “Spanish Major Lite.” We do all agree that linguistic and cultural competency require high levels of exposure. We will seek innovative combinations of coursework and study abroad experiences for undergraduate students at the major and non-
major level along the lines of our newly developed Brazilian Studies Minor and the recently approved Latino Studies Minor developed by the English Department. We will explore developing 1) a Hispanic Linguistics undergraduate minor, 2) a Hispanic Cultural Studies undergraduate minor, or other innovative combinations.

2. **Develop additional courses for Edwards Campus constituencies.** Following the model of SPAN 300 described above and as we develop more courses for non-majors, we will continue to seek viable courses for the Edwards Campus.

3. **Develop outreach to the state of Kansas focused on Hispanic heritage.** Our service-learning courses constitute a move in this direction, and we would like to develop more of them. With the anticipated growth of Hispanic populations in the state and region, moreover, it is incumbent on us to develop course offerings at the 300 level and above for heritage speakers. We will also expand our undergraduate offerings on migration, exile, or globalization.

4. **Develop interdisciplinary connections.** Through cross listing and team-teaching we will develop curricular connections beyond the Department. For example, connections with Engineering or Medical fields could support special focus undergraduate language or culture courses, much as our development of SPAN 448 (a Business Spanish course) resulted from collaboration with the School of Business. Because of staffing problems, we have been unable to offer this course for the past two years. However, with the recent hire of Santa Arias, who has experience in this arena, we will reinstitute this course.

5. **Increase participation in thematic learning communities.** Following the lead of Yajaira Padilla, we will develop additional learning community seminars focused on the literary and cultural facets of Hispanic studies, Hispanic heritage themes, and topics related to migration, exile, or globalization. We will also support the recent creation of a “Spanish floor” in one of KU’s residential halls (to be piloted in Fall 2008), which encourages students to live together and speak Spanish. Such circumstances will create an ideal environment to explore further cultural initiatives for undergraduates.

6. **Evaluate, strengthen, and diversify study abroad options.** We are concerned about recent enrollment drops in the Fall semester cycle in our Santiago de Compostela program. A solid programmatic infrastructure is in place and KU’s longstanding institutional ties with USC were reaffirmed in an April 2007 site visit by the Director of Study Abroad and the Chair of Spanish and Portuguese. Still, this program with excellent immersion and learning potential—located in a site relatively free of US tourists—is under-utilized for half of the year. We will explore further course combinations for non-majors that can increase participation. Some faculty also have concerns about the Barcelona program’s value for language enhancement, since students live with other American students and Spanish is not the dominant language they hear in public interaction. We may want to explore alternative sites in Spain. To provide students with Latin American experiences beyond Mexico, we will also promote the Costa Rica program—reinforcing our curricular initiatives in Central American Studies—and we may explore more study abroad opportunities in other Latin American countries.

**Portuguese Program**

The Department’s modest but healthy Portuguese program addresses needs of 1) students fulfilling the Basic Language requirement (100-200 level courses); 2) Spanish majors fulfilling upper level language/linguistics requirement and electives (200 level and above); 3) MA and PhD students in Spanish fulfilling a graduate program foreign language requirement, typically through intensive Portuguese courses for Spanish speakers (PORT 611 and 612); 4) PhD
students in Spanish electing to do their 9 hour required doctoral minor in Brazilian Literary and Cultural Studies (500 level and above); 5) students fulfilling requirements for undergraduate and graduate degrees or programs in Latin American Studies, International Studies, and International Business, among others; and, as of Spring 2008, 6) students undertaking an undergraduate minor in Brazilian Studies. The study of Portuguese and Brazilian literature has long been essential to a graduate program with a high profile Latin American component, and doctoral students in Spanish writing a dissertation on Latin America are strongly encouraged to take at least one graduate course in Brazilian literary and cultural studies.

Until his untimely death in 1998, Professor Jon Vincent was the single Brazilianist among regular Department faculty. Since 1998, we have worked hard to maintain the health of Portuguese in the Department with the goal of strengthening the program and making it grow. Since 1998 the program has experienced changes in staffing, and, although Portuguese constitutes a much smaller field than Spanish, in recruiting a strong Brazilianist teacher-scholar to KU we compete with much larger programs offering established undergraduate majors and even graduate programs in Portuguese. Professor Cacilda Rego filled the Brazilianist position beginning in Fall 2001, but she left in Fall 2005. During these changes, Professor Antônio Simões—whose teaching specialty is Hispanic linguistics—has been available to cover key classes. He also directed our summer study abroad program in Vitória, Brazil for 10 years. With the Fall 2007 arrival of Professor Paul Sneed, a tenure-track assistant professor in Brazilian Cultural Studies with several years’ experience in Portuguese program building, we look forward to the future growth and development of our Portuguese program. Since 2001, we have nurtured our program in several ways:

**A. Recent Changes in Portuguese Program**

1. **Developed 8 new undergraduate courses for dual-level enrollment around 4 topics.** With the double goal of expanding the disciplinary reach of our Portuguese courses into Cultural Studies and of maximizing enrollments in Portuguese courses, we developed 4 new topics courses in Portuguese, each with a dual system of 300 and 500 level course numbers so they can meet needs of both undergraduate and graduate students. These include PORT 340/540 (Textual Analysis and Critical Reading of literary and cultural works), PORT 347/547 (a topics course in Brazilian Cultural and Literary Studies); PORT 348/548 (Portuguese Language and Brazilian Culture for Business); and PORT 365/565 (Studies in Brazilian Film). The addition of these courses was crucial for our more recent development of a Brazilian Studies Minor.

2. **Development of a variable credit supervised independent study course.** PORT 394 maximizes opportunities for individual students to pursue Portuguese.

3. **Strengthened ties with the growing Brazilian Students Association.** Increasing ties with BRASA has helped us increase enrollments in Portuguese programs, particularly through their regular Brazilian table.

4. **Initiated a new study abroad initiative in Brazil.** Working with the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Texas at Austin, which runs graduate and undergraduate degree programs in Portuguese, we have initiated collaboration in their summer program in Salvador, Bahia. Although we sent only one student to their program last year because we had just begun the contact, we are hopeful that the larger range of course offerings in this program and its location in a more popular city, will eventually attract a significant number of KU students and help our Portuguese program grow.

5. **Developed and instituted a new Brazilian Studies Minor.** This interdisciplinary minor, approved in Fall 2007, combines Portuguese course options from our own Department
which courses in Political Science, Business, Latin American Studies, Theatre and Film, Geography, History, and Economics, and constitutes our strongest initiative so far in developing a solid, long lasting Portuguese program in the Department.

6. Organized a major Portuguese recruitment event. Using funds from our CTE Teaching Award, we have scheduled an April 2008 visit to campus of Ricardo Vogt, a musician of Brazilian jazz and bossa nova who will not only perform a concert but will also visit numerous Spanish classes (with his guitar) to promote the study of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies.

B. Goals for Improvement and Change in Portuguese

For a high profile Spanish and Portuguese Department in a Research One university with a Latin American Studies Program, the eventual development of an undergraduate major in Brazilian Studies is not an inappropriate long-term goal. We are not yet approaching that goal, but with Paul Sneed on board we have great hopes for the growth of Portuguese at KU over the next several years. These include:

1. Standardizing skill goals and student learning outcomes for Portuguese courses. We will establish goals comparable to those in our Spanish courses. These norms will ensure the rigor of our Portuguese courses and provide necessary guidance for current and future lecturers and/or GTAs teaching in the program. Paul Sneed has already produced a draft of these that will go through the Portuguese Committee and be considered by the full Department by early in the next academic year at the latest.

2. Building participation in the newly minted Brazilian Studies Minor. With the expectation of increasing enrollments in the Portuguese language courses (22 students are enrolled this semester in PORT 611, the intensive course for Spanish speakers), we are poised to encourage student participation in this new minor.

3. Assess the relationship between regular and intensive basic language courses. This assessment will help increase basic language enrollments in non-intensive courses. Typically enrollments in the intensive Portuguese courses for Spanish speakers are higher, although the regular basic courses in Portuguese address a different constituency of students who have not studied Spanish. Although we have recently staffed these regular basic courses with a half-time lecturer and a part-time GTA, a full time lecturer with time to dedicate to program development may eventually be required for this level.

4. Promote study abroad and immersion experiences in Brazil. These may include further collaboration with UT Austin in the Salvador Program or investigation of other venues.

5. Develop an undergraduate major in Portuguese provided that undergraduate enrollments in Portuguese grow as anticipated. This would require an additional tenure-track position in Portuguese, as described above in hiring plans.

Graduate Programs in Spanish

The Department currently offers the MA and PhD in Spanish. Since 2001, we have averaged 18.5 students in our MA program and 28.5 students in our PhD program (with an average total of 47 graduate students. In Fall 2007 we had 18 MA students and 23 PhD students, with a total of 43. According to figures compiled by the KU Office of Institutional Research and Planning, our recent time to degree for the PhD averages 6.6 years, although the vast majority of our students, who support themselves with 50% Graduate Teaching Assistantships, complete the PhD in 4-5 years. The majority of our MA students, most of whom also hold 50% GTAships, complete their degrees in 2 years.
Although our graduate programs had long focused on Literary Studies, since 2001, the orientation toward Cultural Studies has increased and strengthened, particularly at the PhD level. Culminating with written and oral exams based on courses and a comprehensive reading list, the MA degree provides students with a rigorous preparation on major writers, movements, and periods of Spanish and Spanish American Literature in all genres; methods and terminology for critical analysis; and writing and research skills for developing a sustained analytical argument around a central idea. The MA prepares students for PhD work (in our Department or elsewhere), teaching Spanish in two-year colleges or secondary schools, or undertaking work or advanced study in such related fields as Second Language Acquisition or English as a Second Language programs. The goal of our PhD program is to prepare teacher-scholars of Hispanic Literary and Cultural Studies at the college or university level who will contribute original research to the field. Shared features of the two programs include a strong emphasis on writing, the promotion critical dialogue in the classroom, and the encouragement of innovative interpretations and research agendas. A distinctive element of our program is our two levels of graduate courses: more panoramic 700 level courses and more strictly focused 900 level seminars (MA students must take 1 of the latter, PhD students must take 5). Longstanding strengths of our graduate programs include rigorous academic standards; extensive, high quality faculty mentoring; opportunities for graduate students to teach or work in our study abroad programs in Spain and Latin America; preparation of students for professional life and the job search; and a nearly 100% placement rate of PhD graduates in tenure-track positions in colleges or universities. Continuing challenges include the obstacles to recruitment of top students posed by our resources (we compete with institutions offering far more by way of support) and our location (geographical prejudice is hard to overcome). Innovations in our graduate programs since 2001 have 1) diversified our graduate curriculum and exam system at the PhD level in keeping with the Cultural Studies turn; 2) strengthened graduate student preparation in the pedagogy of both language and literature; 3) enhanced graduate student preparation for the job market; and 4) increased our success in graduate recruitment.

A. Changes in graduate curriculum and exams

Our changes in graduate curriculum and exams since 2001 have brought these into line with shifts in the field, created a stronger bridge between PhD exams and the dissertation, and enhanced program rigor. These include:

1. An updated MA Reading List. The new list reflects major changes in the field and the expertise of our growing cadre of new faculty.

2. New PhD Exam content and format. We replaced a traditional set of 3 comprehensive PhD exams, which were in reality simply a longer version of our MA exam, with a combination of 2 exams focused more flexibly around reconceptualized fields of knowledge reflecting changes in the discipline, and a long paper focused on the topic or theoretical approach of the projected dissertation. This change enhanced articulation between the exams and dissertation and significantly speeded up the transition into dissertation writing.

3. A Literary Theory course requirement. We instituted this requirement for all PhD students, also recommended for MA students contemplating dissertation work. To meet this requirement and enhance the diversity of its content, we made a rotational arrangement with the Department of English for offering this course to students from multiple departments.

4. Writing workshops in PhD seminars. Since 2001 we consolidated initiatives by several faculty members to institute collaborative writing workshops for seminar participants as part of their final seminar paper requirement. Students critique and evaluate one another’s work
following structured guidelines as to engaging openings, clarity and originality of focus, dialogue with existing scholarship, and effective argumentation. These workshops train students in collaboration and more effective critiques of their own work and encourage subsequent paper presentation at conferences and revision of presentations into article manuscripts.

5. **Innovative content in graduate courses and seminars.** Since 2001 many of our graduate courses have included a stronger cultural studies component, and one faculty member recently offered a doctoral seminar focused specifically on the theoretical underpinnings, methodologies, and content of Cultural Studies. Recent years have witnessed a parallel increase in graduate courses organized around specific topics that supersede their conventional course rubrics around periods or genres, for example, Violence in Post Civil-War Spanish Narrative, Silences, Secrets and Ghosts in Latin American Literature, and Orality and Literacy in Thirteenth-Century Castille.

6. **Increased promotion of graduate student research and international experience, including graduate student receipt of research fellowships.** The Department’s annual Alba V. Ebersole award for a distinguished graduate student essay encourages graduate student research achievement. In addition, since 2001, our graduate students received 9 Tinker awards for field research in Latin America or Spain and 4 Summer FLAS fellowships from the Center of Latin American Studies; 8 graduate students received academic-year FLAS fellowships, and 4 graduate students received AY Graduate School Dissertation Fellowships. In addition, through selective use of Department funds we have occasionally been able to subsidize graduate student presentation at conferences, thus supplementing the support toward one trip (in their graduate career) that they can receive from the Graduate Studies program at KU. Each year, moreover, 4-5 graduate students have participated as GTAs in our summer study abroad programs in Spain, Mexico, and Brazil.

**B. Enhanced teacher training for graduate students.**

Through initiatives in the pedagogy of both language and literature, since 2001 we have enhanced the training of our graduate students as teachers. A Fall 2001 workshop in the Pedagogy of Literature, as part of our MACHL conference, marked a more integrated and comprehensive approach to our training of graduate students, which was greatly enhanced with the arrival of our Second Language Acquisition specialist in 2004.

1. **Updated methodology course.** Amy Rossomondo has reworked the required SPAN 801 to provide Graduate Teaching Assistants a solid foundation in up-to-date SLA theory and methodology. Through the supervision they receive as GTAs, graduate students play an increased role in developing innovative materials for basic language courses, a process that illuminates the link between the cultural studies in the courses they take and the context-embedded approach in their instruction of basic language.

2. **Opportunities to teach more advanced courses.** Graduate students have had increased opportunities to teach the gateway courses to the Spanish major—SPAN 324 (Grammar and Composition) and SPAN 340 (Textual Analysis and Critical Reading) through the organizational and supervisory changes in these courses described above. In Fall 2003 Danny Anderson and Jill Kuhnheim taught classes at the undergraduate and graduate levels (respectively) on a related topic, whereby graduate students team taught several sessions of the undergraduate class. Vicky Unruh provided graduate students individual apprenticeships through informal co-teaching arrangements in SPAN 462 (Family Feuds and Family Ties in Spanish American Literature).
3. **Instructional technology training.** All GTAs are trained to use Blackboard and computer assisted language learning software. In Fall 2006 GTAs were encouraged to innovate with technology in the classroom in their required SPAN 801 (methodology course) by creating a video or Web-based activity to facilitate cultural learning for first year students. Participation in the Basic Language Program technology initiatives described earlier also increased graduate student sophistication in this pedagogical arena.

4. **Rewarding good teaching.** We encourage teaching distinction among our Graduate Students through the Department’s annual Granberg Award for Excellence in Teaching and in recent years our students have also won the KU Carlin GTA Award and the KU Outstanding GTA Award.

C. **Enhanced job market preparation.**

Since 2001 we have provided more rigorous and varied workshops to prepare students for MLA interviews and on-campus interviews, including sessions on 1) identifying jobs and preparing the CV and the cover letter; 2) preparing for the MLA job interview; and 3) preparing for the on-campus interview. We also organize faculty led mock-interviews for every candidate attending the MLA and a separate job talk practice sessions for those headed to on-campus interviews. We encourage students to attend the initial workshop ahead of their job search year. Since 2001 we have consistently had 100% job placement, mostly in tenure-track positions, for graduate students who have completed the PhD. (The cases of those who don’t immediately obtain a tenure-track position are typically marked by the personal decision to limit the search by geographical location or other factors.) While our students’ first tenure-track positions are not necessarily their final professional destinations, these jobs sometimes serve as a bridge to an upward move. Our students obtain jobs in a variety of institutions ranging from small liberal arts colleges to first tier research institutions. The PhD students completing our program since 2001 have obtained positions at the following institutions: Rollins College, Marlboro College, St. Mary’s College of Maryland, Colorado College, Southwestern University, Assumption College (Massachusetts), Creighton University, University of Puget Sound, Western Washington University, Rutgers University, University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Evansville, Texas A&M University, Kansas State University, St. Vincent College (PA), and University of North Carolina (visiting position).

D. **Graduate recruitment**

Since 2001 we have had to redouble our graduate recruitment efforts to attract our top applicants. With the multiple retirements of senior scholars since 2001 and an increased ratio of assistant professors to more experienced scholars, a temporary downturn in graduate students drawn to our Department to study with specific people was predictable. This situation will likely reverse itself as the national profiles of our junior faculty grow. Although our applicant pool ebbs and flows, several top candidates in recent years have turned us down even, on occasion, when competing successfully for KU Honors Fellowships or First Year Fellowships; the main reasons cited are better financial packages (including health benefits) and a wish to be in more desirable (sometimes urban) locations, often on the West or East coasts. Applicants turning us down in recent years have gone to Brown University, UCLA, U of Virginia, U of Minnesota, Rutgers U, U of California-Irvine, U of California-Santa Cruz, U of Kentucky (due to proximity to home), and U of Texas at Austin. Since 2001, positive developments enhancing our graduate recruitment include:

1. **Recruitment Fellowships.** Since 2001, 6 graduate students in our program have held KU Honors Fellowships (including one student who held the highly competitive Self Fellowship
when it was still awarded to students in the Humanities) or First Year Fellowships. We have also competed successfully 3 out of 4 times for the Graduate School Supplemental Fellowships, which have been awarded to and additional 3 students. We have also supplemented the Graduate Teaching Assistantships of selected students with Department fellowships such as the Osma Award, the John and Carolyn Brushwood Teaching Assistantship Award, and the Fox Award.

2. Improved GTA salaries and benefits. We are able to award half-time Graduate Teaching Assistantships to all of our graduate students who do not receive fellowship support, which is the vast majority. With the settlement in Spring 2007 of a new Memorandum of Agreement between KU and the GTA Union, our GTA salaries have become more competitive. This year’s base salary for an entering MA level 50% GTA is $14,700 and $16,000 for an entering PhD GTA, and next year’s incoming GTAs will receive at least $15,000 at the MA level and $17,000 at the PhD level.

3. Enhanced campus visits. Typically we have succeeded at sealing the deal with graduate recruits who come to campus before making their decision. From feedback we later receive from students who elect to come here, we attribute this to the fact that visiting recruits pick up on the strong mentoring and supportive environment. In the last year or two, however, we noticed that a campus visit was not as certain a strategy. We attribute this change to the substandard, depressing conditions—prior to the first stage of the Wescoe move in June 2007—of the offices inhabited by GTAs on Wescoe’s first floor. With the relocation of our GTAs into the daylight and physically healthier environment of Wescoe’s third floor, we expect to be more successful this year with those recruits visiting campus. In addition, the College award of funds for graduate recruitment is making it possible for us to pay expenses of our top graduate recruits visiting campus. This is a first that is certain to make us more competitive over time.

4. Improved recruitment materials. Since 2001, our enhanced Department Website has helped us disseminate more effectively to prospective students large amounts of information about our program. Most recently, using additional College funds for graduate recruitment, we have been creating a recruitment video (filming is now completed and editing in process) that includes brief interviews with graduate students and faculty and will also be available on our Website.

E. Goals for Change and Improvement in the Graduate Program and Recruitment

Over the next several years, we plan to enhance the quality of our graduate program and increase its size (by perhaps 10-20 students) in the following ways:

1. Develop a pro-seminar for new students, primarily new MA students but also PhD students coming from other programs. For years we have relied on faculty teaching 700 level courses in the fall semester to teach certain “boot camp” research and writing skills designed to initiate students into graduate study. With the diversification of our faculty, this experience is less likely to be consistent for all entering graduate students, which makes a pro-seminar more urgent.

2. Increase the number and variety of graduate courses offered. The changing ratio of faculty to graduate students since 2001 brought about by an increase in faculty and a concomitant small decline in the number of graduate students has challenged us in insuring a varied rotation of graduate courses for students and graduate teaching opportunities for faculty. We will seek ways to vary our offerings. For example, in order to increase the opportunities for 900 level seminars—necessary for doctoral students to complete their requirements—we will experiment beginning with offering two seminars per semester (rather than one) but with lower enrollment caps.. This will allow us to offer more graduate courses in more areas, allow more
professors to teach these small, intensive classes, and preserve the unique status of seminars in our program. We will also experiment with 8 week courses and with team-taught courses, taking advantage of the more flexible course models recently instituted by the College.

3. **Increase graduate student-faculty co-teaching opportunities at the 300 level and above.** Given that the College has indicated that it may allow graduate students and faculty members to be co-listed as instructors of record for an advanced course, we will seek to ensure that every PhD student teaches a literary-cultural studies course at the 300 level or above before going on the job market.

3. **Begin job search training sooner.** Beginning in 2008 we will add a permanent workshop to the schedule: in the spring of each year we will have a preliminary meeting for all graduate students at which we (and graduate students who have recently been on the market) offer an explicit two-year timeline for job market preparation. This additional meeting will encourage students to take a long-term approach to the job market.

4. **Enhance recruitment and program rigor through faculty “clusters.”** A new way to attract graduate students is to move away from the single-professor mentoring model and identify “clusters” that students could emphasize as they complete PhD coursework. An example that would draw from a variety of faculty would be a performance studies cluster. Students could take, for instance, a course on performance and poetry with Jill Kuhnheim, a course with Rob Bayliss on performance and Golden Age drama, and courses with Stuart Day and/or Vicky Unruh on Latin American theatre/performance. Similarly students could elect a faculty “cluster” of courses with Isidro Rivera, Patricia Manning, Robert Bayliss, and Santa Arias around Medieval and Early Modern Studies on both sides of the Atlantic. Similar clusters drawing on faculty expertise could be formed around Cultural Studies, Gender studies, Film Studies, Mexican Studies, or Caribbean Studies, among others. Such clusters would encourage recruits and continuing students to conceptualize their training and research in more multi-faceted ways.

5. **Improve data management for enhanced advising and time to degree.** Two years ago we developed a basic spreadsheet that allows us to track our students (advisor, year in program, etc.). We are currently creating a more sophisticated database that will provide more detailed information. For example, we will easily be able to pull up a list of third-semester PhD student to remind them that they need to form their Advisory Committee. In addition to the primary goal of better serving our PhD students, we will use the database to provide information grant competitions (e.g., through Latin American Studies), the next NRC survey, etc.

6. **Increase international opportunities for graduate students.** We currently have opportunities for graduate students to work as GTAs in Spain (summer and year) and Mexico. Over the next several years we would like to increase these, either at our current sites or in other regions, for example, Brazil. (Until we closed the program in 2006, graduate students also had the opportunity to work in Brazil.) We are also considering the possibility of having MA candidates study in our own Mexico summer program or in other summer or study abroad programs. Although most of our graduate students come to us with significant experience in Hispanic countries, some arrive at KU lacking depth in this background.

7. **Revisit our Language, Literature, and Culture MA.** With an eye toward a focus on Hispanic Linguistics, if we are able to recruit an additional linguist, we will revisit our currently dormant second MA track.

8. **Increase cultural diversity of our graduate student cohort.** Although since 1992 we have relied on an exchange with the Department of English Philology at the University of Santiago de Compostela in Spain to insure a steady influx of native Spanish speakers to our
program, changes at the USC have caused a decline in the number of students we receive from this source. Since 2001 our graduate program has included students from Spain, Portugal, Bulgaria, Mexico, Guatemala, Brazil, Nicaragua, Colombia, Argentina, Puerto Rico, and Ecuador, but we are constantly challenged in attracting and retaining international students more frequently drawn to programs on the East and West coasts. We will develop contacts in Latin America and Spain to increase our international graduate student population.

III. Facilities and Instructional Resources

A. Department and Instructor Office Space

The June 2007 move of Department administrative, faculty, and lecturer offices to the newly completed wing of Wescoe Hall and of the majority of GTA offices from Wescoe’s first to third floors constituted a significant improvement in quality and flexibility of space for those constituencies. Although our GTAs did not move into new space, their move from the highly deteriorated first floor to a smaller number of offices on Wescoe’s third floor provided a trade-off in quality for quantity. In the administrative suite of the new wing, our 3 full-time office staff members and our student-hourly enjoy higher quality working conditions that allow them to conduct their separate tasks more efficiently while still having easy access to one another. The relocation of our Advising Specialist into the administrative suite also facilitates easier on-the-spot communication with the chair and office staff, and the concentration of faculty and lecturer offices and our seminar/conference room in a single hallway promotes easier faculty and student interaction. The structural provisions for community light and windows for all faculty offices have provided a major morale booster for all of those occupying the new wing. While available space will continue to be at a premium as we make new faculty and lecturer hires and as we accommodate our GTAs, in the context of KU’s larger space crisis, we are fortunate indeed.

Our largest immediate challenge is the nomadic situation of our GTAs necessitated by the ongoing Wescoe renovations and the upgrading of heating and cooling systems. After a year in their cozy new offices (3-4 per office) on the third floor, they will again be relocated, this time to Wescoe’s 4th floor where they will have two classrooms for the entire group, with 3 available one-on-one consult rooms to be shared with GTAs from other Wescoe Departments. Although it is very helpful to know that this situation is temporary (in one year they will return to the 3rd floor offices), our immediate challenge will be accommodating computers, phone, lines, and desks in these two rooms while still providing adequate space for instructor-student consultation and support in conditions that meet KU privacy guidelines.

B. Instructional Space, Equipment, and Technology

For classroom facilities, the Department’s new wing includes a conference room that accommodates approximately 20 students and is fully equipped with a projector, computer, video and sound capabilities. Given the smaller size of this room, it is usually used for graduate courses or upper-division undergraduate classes. The Department is also able to request classrooms across the campus that are fully equipped with projectors, computers, video and DVD players, visual presenters, and audio; however, these rooms must be requested up to a year in advance and are shared by multiple KU Departments. When the first floor of Wescoe is fully renovated (projected completion date: August 2008) we will have a fully-equipped media classroom there. Two classrooms for which our Department gets priority scheduling have “light” media (a projector, DVD/VCR combination, and visual presenter); the other 10 classrooms we are typically assigned have no media capability, requiring instructors to wheel in a video/computer cart when they wish to use technology in the classroom. In our main classroom building (Wescoe...
Hall) we are typically able to schedule at least one composition course per semester in a room that has computer workstations for each student.

In addition to individual instructor computers and printers, to support our research and teaching, the Department has acquired some crucial pieces of equipment in the past few years. We now own three different scanners, one for text, one for film and slides, and one for microfilm; these enable faculty to access documents in different media, to save them for use in teaching and research, and to make pdf files when necessary. We also have recently acquired 10 video iPods with iTalk accessories (and will soon acquire 10 more) to support our Basic Language Program, enabling instructors to show students timely streaming media, for example, and to record oral presentations or other course interactions. In addition, we have 4 laptops that instructors can check out for instructional needs (we will soon acquire two more), and 2 DVD/tape players that can be checked out for classroom use.

C. Department Web Page

The Department’s Web page (http://www2.ku.edu/~spanport/) is our public face on the Internet. We have been fortunate to have a faculty member, Isidro Rivera, who possesses the necessary skills and has been willing to maintain and update the page regularly. Since Fall 2006 he has also worked with our office staff member Iliana Raber, training and supporting her in skill acquisitions for assisting with this ongoing task. The Web page now offers an overview of our graduate program to prospective students; an explanation of the undergraduate major; and a description of the Basic Language Program, among many other features. Downloadable checklists facilitate quick advising for students, as do course descriptions of undergraduate and graduate courses. The Web page also posts news about faculty and student activities and events of potential interest to students and visitors.

D. Future Challenges in Facilities and Instructional Resources

Although the high likelihood of the KU space crisis continuing for the foreseeable future makes it difficult to predict future needs with precision and although developments in instructional technology always outpace the capacity to anticipate them, we can envision the following areas that will need addressing:

1. Improved technology access in the classroom. As noted in the sections of this report on the Basic Language Program, the primary limitation experienced by the Department in its widespread innovative use of instructional technology is the shortage of properly equipped classrooms. The need for fully equipped media classroom for all of our courses is a top challenge for the Department’s future instructional development and innovation.

2. Ongoing acquisition and replacement of instructional equipment. The use of video iPods for oral testing and other instructional feedback is an area likely to grow. In order to make this fully functional, we will need to acquire additional iPods and have a plan for periodic replacement. Until all our classrooms are fully media equipped, we expect our need for laptops for instructor check-out will steadily increase.

3. Improved GTA working conditions. Although our GTAs recent and upcoming nomadic status has a specific end-date, once they are resettled on Wescoe’s third floor and barring the sudden acquisition of a capacious new Humanities building that meets the space needs of all units, we need to think long term about creative new models for GTA work space that maximize opportunities for course preparation, collaboration with other GTAs and course coordinators, and consultation with students. We have heard of the Provost’s interest in proposals for innovative models that make maximum use of available space through technology, and we may want to consider advancing such a proposal in the future.
4. Web page manager position. We have been fortunate to have had a regular faculty member willing to manage our Web page as part of his service to the Department, but we should not count on this as a regular faculty job component long-term. Although a current office staff member can assist, she has neither the full skill set nor the time (in the context of her other duties) to take this on. With Websites constituting an integral part of daily operations whose importance will only grow in the future, we need to conceive of new position models (perhaps to be shared by multiple Departments) of Website managers.

IV. Governance and Leadership

A. Trends in Governance and Leadership since 2001

In April 2005, the Department faculty approved its first known set of Department By-Laws. A copy of these is included in the appendices to this report. These By-Laws formalized practices already in place in the Department and initiated new ones. Since 2001 the Department has also revised or established such documents as the Faculty Evaluation Plan (including expectations and guidelines for promotion and tenure), grievance procedures, and grade appeal procedures.

Since 2001, the Department has continued to follow the committee-of-the-whole model (rather than the executive committee model) of unit governance, with all searches and personnel decisions in the hands of the appropriate level committee-of-the-whole. All tenured or tenure-track faculty vote on faculty hires, and all tenure and/or promotion committees are constituted by the full ensemble of faculty at the next level: all tenured faculty constitute the committee for promotions from assistant to associate professor with tenure, and all full professors constitute the committee for promotions from associate to full professor. The Department Chair, selected by the Department faculty and appointed by the Dean of the College, is the executive officer of the Department, and the Chair appoints an Associate Chair, with the confirmation of the Dean. Department leadership responsibilities are broadly shared by the Chair, Associate Chair, and the Chairs of major standing committees in consultation with their committee members. This principle of distributed leadership responsibilities characterizes key committees as well. Rather than the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) model followed by some departments at KU and institutions at large, for example, in our Department the duties of a typical DGS are divided among the Graduate Studies Committee, the Graduate Admissions Committee, and the Awards Committee, with the latter running internal competitions for GTA summer teaching assignments and the nomination to and or selection of recipients for recognition awards for graduate teaching and academic achievement. Similarly, rather than a Director of Undergraduate Studies, the Department distributes the responsibilities such a position might entail among the Graduate Studies Committee, the Study Abroad Committee, the Awards Committee, which handles some undergraduate recognition awards, and the Sigma Delta Pi committee. In addition to the committees enumerated in our By-Laws and list of committee assignments (also included in the appendices), additional Department service activity regularly undertaken by faculty include graduate and undergraduate advising and participation in the preparing and grading of MA and PhD exams—all considered part of our collective work as teachers—and directorships of summer study abroad programs.

Since 2001, the Department aimed to rotate committee assignments and committee chair assignments as much as possible, while factoring in both faculty preferences and Department needs. The guiding principle has been to provide opportunities for faculty to develop knowledge and skills in a range of Department functions while at the same time pursuing avenues of
particular interest or demonstrated skills. With the dramatic demographic shift in the ratio of tenured to untenured faculty we have been challenged in ensuring that committee responsibilities are fulfilled while aiming to keep the degree of service responsibilities to a level consistent with faculty rank. On the one hand, we want to protect junior faculty from service overload; on the other hand, we try to assign junior faculty sufficient service opportunities to provide an early sense of participation in Department life and prepare them for post-tenure service responsibilities so that these will not come as a major surprise once they are promoted.

Since 2001, the Department has had 3 chairs. Danny Anderson served a 5 year term from 2000-2001 through 2004-2005; Jill Kuhnheim served as Chair for 2005-2006 before stepping down to care for her toddler child; Vicky Unruh began a 3 year term in 2006-2007, which she will complete in 2009-2010. During 2008-2009, Kuhnheim will serve as Interim Chair while Unruh will be on leave. Before assuming the role of Chair, Unruh (2001-2002 and 2002-2003) and Kuhnheim (2003-2004 and 2004-2005) each served 2-year Associate Chair terms while Danny Anderson was Chair. Isidro Rivera served for one month as Summer Chair during the transition from the Kuhnheim to Unruh terms as chair. Since Spring 2007, Lee Skinner has served as Associate Chair. Although the Department had made intermittent use of the Associate Chair role prior to 2000, since then it has become a consistent feature of Department leadership, key for providing support to the Department Chair and also for training faculty for the possible future assumption of the Chair role.

The Department committee structure and the Chair-Associate Chair model encourage broad based participation of Department faculty in leadership responsibilities and a strong ethos of service to the unit and the university. In addition, since 2001, Department faculty have continued to play key leadership roles in the College and University as a whole. Department members have served on the College Committee on Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure, the College and University Sabbatical Committees, the College Committee on summer GRF Awards, selection committees for University fellowships, the College Academic Council, the Committee on Undergraduate Studies and Advising, the College Budget Committee, the College Academic Misconduct Committee, the Executive Committee of the Center for Latin American Studies (and various LAS subcommittees), the Executive committee of the CIBER Advisory Board, the Executive Committee of the Hall Center for the Humanities and multiple Hall Center subcommittees, leadership roles in Hall Center Faculty Seminars, search committees for other departments, the College, and the University, review committees on General Education at KU, and tasks forces on Tuition Enhancement Funds and International Studies, among many other service roles. In addition, one of our faculty members currently serves as an Associate Dean for the College.

B. Future Challenges in Governance and Leadership

1) Chairing. A large challenge for a Department with a shallow senior bench (only 3 full professors, one of whom is an Associate Dean) and a disproportionate ratio of untenured to tenured faculty will be ensuring the ongoing availability of faculty—required by current College policy to be identified within the unit itself—who possess the requisite strengths and preparation to serve as Chair. In our case this has been complicated by the fact that the 3 people who will have led the Department for the 10 years between Fall 2000 and Spring 2010 are also highly active teacher-scholars at KU and the profession at large and, during the same period, have collectively carried by far the largest number of doctoral dissertations. We have been working at distributing multiple roles more widely in the Department. The Associate Chair model helps prepare faculty members for other leadership roles, but we also need to protect faculty from
having to assume the role of Chair before the appropriate time. Ideally only full professors should need to assume this level of service, but realities have interfered with this model. (Danny Anderson, for example, served part of his Chair term while still an Associate Professor.) The challenge the Department faces in this arena is not unique to our unit, not only because the generational shift is widespread at KU and in the profession, but also because the Chair position has become increasingly challenging for a single individual and involves some responsibilities for which few in academia are professionally trained. On the one hand, through the Associate Chair role in particular—but also through other Committee leadership functions—the Department will need to continue to build a pool of faculty members who might eventually serve as Chair. At the same time, it could be helpful for the College and the University to review the distinct functions that the Chair role requires of faculty in order to consider other models for the managerial component of the job in particular, and to think creatively about ways to make it a more viable role that allows faculty to maintain their identity as teacher-scholars while serving their departments.

2. Equitable service distribution and balancing leadership with teaching and research. The parallel challenge for a Department that includes many active teacher-scholars is to ensure that service activity as a whole is distributed more equitably among all of us over time, consistent with our rank and individual skills strengths. Faculty members possess different strengths that point to diverse roles—not everybody is an appropriate fit for every task—but the load should be shared over time as fairly as possible. In addition, as noted earlier, if we are to maintain a strong Department research profile, we need to help faculty avoid chronic over-extension in the leadership and service arenas.

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In sum, we are currently a dynamic Department with an ensemble of human potential, and we have been carrying out multiple and wide-ranging jobs for the College, the University, KU students, and the profession. As detailed here, we have identified multiple arenas for improvement and change in the coming years. We also foresee significant challenges. The greatest of these may be determining the appropriate levels and balance of Department activity in all three areas—teaching, research, and service—necessary to ensure the long term professional health of the Department as a whole and that of its individual members in the context of a Research One University.