

**Response to Academic Program Review External Report
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Introduction

This is a response to the report by the external review team submitted November 20, 2007, following the site visit conducted on November 14-16, 2007. Completion of this response has been delayed by a lengthy Latin American Studies (LAS) leadership transition, the restructuring of the relationship between LAS and the Latin American and Iberian Institute (LAI) that followed the site visit, and changes in personnel in the office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences. A draft of this response was circulated among members of the Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies (ICLAS), in June 2009; their suggestions were incorporated into the final version.

The faculty of the Latin American Studies Program thanks the Academic Program Review team (John Lipski, Pennsylvania State University; Ken Roberts, Cornell University; Marianne Schminck, University of Florida; and Cary Morrow, UNM); and all the UNM team who made this process beneficial.

In the introduction to their report, the external review team notes the high quality and dedication of the Latin American Studies faculty, and the importance of LAS as “one of the unique strengths of the University, which has been a component of all recent University long range plans and which has been made a UNM legislative priority at the request of the Governor.” The report also notes the complex LAS/LAI relationship, and the difficulty posed to LAS by its financial dependence on soft monies raised by the LAI, and the budgets of other units.

LAS program strengths

We appreciate the external team’s recognition of the long-term national standing of the academic program, the excellence of leadership and staff, the participation of faculty from across the campus, and the “exceptionally strong library collection.” The team observed the excellence of LAS graduate students, who are competitive with those of other nationally-recognized LAS programs, and the effectiveness of LAS in preparing strong candidates for PhD programs in affiliated departments.

Risks to the continued excellence of LAS

The reviewers noted risks faced by the LAS program, including a precarious funding base, the loss of Title VI funds, the lack of dedicated institutional resources, and the negative impact of these elements on recruitment and student support. They also pointed to the risks faced by a program that relies entirely on affiliate departments to support the program’s curriculum, particularly because the LAS faculty is a group of highly mobile scholars.

Recent faculty retirements and departures, including seven since the external review took place, have had a significant impact on the ability of the LAS program to offer courses and on graduate students' ability to put together committees on studies. Of sixty-four core LAS faculty members, the following eight (12.5%) who have left UNM or retired over the past three years have not been replaced, or in the case of one faculty member (Nagengast), have not been replaced with Latin Americanist faculty:

Magdalena Hurtado, Anthropology, 2007
Judy Maloof, Spanish and Portuguese, 2007
Cynthia Radding, History, 2008
Nelson Valdés, Sociology, 2008
Carole Nagengast, Anthropology, 2009
María Dolores Gonzales, Spanish and Portuguese, 2009
Rena Torres-Cacoullos, Spanish and Portuguese, 2010
Kathryn Hochstetler, Political Science, 2009

Note that three of these departures are in Spanish & Portuguese, creating a particularly difficult situation for that department. Moreover, the most popular concentration in the MA in LAS—Human Rights—has also been particularly affected, as addressed, below. If UNM is to retain its position as one of the leading U.S. institutions for Latin American-related research and teaching, the rebuilding of Latin American Studies faculty must be endorsed by the institution as a high priority.

Opportunities

The review team also saw key opportunities for LAS in recent statements of support from the Governor and the Higher Education Secretary, the Provost's office, the Dean of Arts and Sciences, the legislative budget request, and the importance of international and interdisciplinary programs for the upcoming accreditation and the move toward achieving Association of American Universities status.

The following sections are organized according to the order in which the issues are addressed in the external report, beginning with the team's responses to four specific questions posed by the Director and faculty of the Latin American Studies Program.

Question #1: What recommendations can you offer to both LAS and university administration regarding appropriate recurring financial support for the program?

The review team made five recommendations:

1. **Support of directorship:** "The Director of LAS should be assured of the means of support that are standard for department chairs in the College of Arts and Sciences: a two-course buy-out (at the level such buyouts would be made in a disciplinary department in A&S), an administrative SAC, and a summer SAC or salary support, plus a discretionary supply and expense budget. This would free up the LAS Director's time to implement program development efforts identified in previous and current program reviews."
 - a. **Two-course buyout and Supplemental Administrative Compensation (SAC):** Deputy Provost Richard Holder and Dean of Arts and Sciences Brenda Claiborne have committed the College of Arts and Sciences to a two-course buyout and SAC for the Associate Director, regardless of the

individual's home college (memos dated August 25, 2008 and October 20, 2008). This support was implemented beginning February, 2009.

- b. **Summer SAC:** The current Associate Director for Academic Programs did not request a summer SAC at the time of her appointment in February 2009. However, it is now clear that the position includes significant summer obligations. The LAII Director approved the allotment of \$1,500 of the FY09 and FY10 special legislative appropriation for LAS for the Associate Director's summer SAC. The LAII senior staff suggest that an appropriate summer SAC for the position is \$3,000, and requests that the College of Arts and Sciences provide this SAC.
 - c. **Supply budget:** The special legislative appropriations for FY09 and FY10 provide sufficient funds to the Associate Director for supplies. This appropriation was incorporated into I&G to begin in FY11.
2. **Work-study students:** "salaries should be provided for two work-study students."
 - a. The LAII has taken over some of the administrative functions that LAS graduate students performed before, so there is no need for additional work-study salaries. Additionally, where assignments are appropriately related to academic and professional preparation, graduate assistants provide some limited support to the LAS program.
 3. **Full LAS control over the Academic Program Manager's line:** "We also recommend that the university consider shifting the Academic Program Manager line (with full salary and benefits) from the LAII to LAS, since this position is explicitly designed to serve the academic program."
 - a. **LAII/LAS restructuring:** The restructuring has brought the LAS and LAII together into a single entity and makes this move unnecessary.
 4. **Course buyout credits:** "Three or four course buyout credits within A&S each semester should be made available to the LAS Director to ensure that key LAS courses are taught. When necessary, one of these course buyout credits should be available for use outside of A&S."

The Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies has discussed the need for the following key courses, in order of priority:

- a. **LTAM 400: Introduction to Latin American Society I and II:** multidisciplinary courses from a Humanities and a Social Sciences perspective.

Integrating multidisciplinary perspectives into a single learning experience for LAS students is important to achieving the goals of an interdisciplinary program. Two classes have been developed to address this need. Once funds and course rotation are assured, which are anticipated by F11, the Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies intends to require majors to complete one of these courses.

Federal UISFL (Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program) grant monies supported the development of LTAM 400 Intro to Latin American Society I (Social Sciences). This course was offered in S08, S09, and S10. The class engages students in understanding the differences among historical, economic, political science, and sociological

disciplinary perspectives on the study of Latin America. Student evaluations have been very strong. The Sociology Department has supported the offering of this course as part of Prof. Andrew Schrank's regular offerings. The departments of Economics and Political Science would also be appropriate homes for this course, which could be rotated among faculty and departments.

UISFL grant monies also supported the development of LTAM 400 Intro to Latin American Society II (Humanities). Dr. Suzanne Schadl, the curator of the Latin American and Iberian Collection at University Libraries, offered the course in F09 and will teach it again in F10. Dr. Schadl does not have an academic home department that could support the course on an ongoing basis. At the same time, she is the ideal faculty member to teach it, given her interdisciplinary training in Latin American literature and history, and her expertise in library research. Dr. Schadl is willing to continue teaching the course as an overload for the usual faculty course stipend. Ongoing support for this course has been built into the LAS budget, which has been incorporated into I&G.

- b. **LTAM 500: Pro-seminar in Latin American Studies:** A team-taught multi- and inter-disciplinary gateway course for the MA program in LAS. The LAS budget will provide development money for the course, but requests from the College ongoing support in the form of an annual course buyout for the team member from the social sciences; the current LAS budget will provide a \$1,500 annual stipend for Dr. Schadl to participate on the team. The alternating humanities faculty members will offer the course as part of their regularly assigned course load.
- c. **LTAM 200:** A 200-level introductory LAS course to provide a common knowledge base for LAS students that would serve to recruit majors and that might fulfill a core university requirement, depending on future university-wide curricular reforms. Funding is needed for course development, and may be needed for a course buyout, though LAS will seek to design the course such that it can be incorporated into the regular curriculum of various departments.
- d. **LTAM 4XX:** A capstone course in which undergraduates carry out interdisciplinary research and writing.

This curricular need will remain on the agenda for the mid-term future, as the LAS faculty and the Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies focus on LTAM 400 and LTAM 200, which will build toward the capstone.

- 5. **An adequate LAS budget:** "Ultimately, the LAS budget from state funds should be adequate for it to be able to thrive independently of the LAII. This budget should probably be housed in A&S with the understanding that, at some time in the future, the LAS Director might well not be in A&S for a few years."
 - a. **The special legislative appropriation:** LAII/LAS lobbying efforts at the New Mexico Legislature resulted in the passage of recurring appropriations of \$141,000 for FY09 (adjusted to \$136,921.31 with the rescission), and at \$134,000 FY10. Beginning in FY11, the provost has incorporated this money into I&G at the level of \$134,000. The following table shows a simplified accounting of actual and projected expenditures for FY09, FY10, and FY11.

	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13
GA salaries & tuition	\$77,665	\$72,227	\$72,370	\$72,370	\$72,370
Student Project Assistants Summer 2009	\$6,422	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Student Fulbright (Portuguese)	\$0	\$1,200	\$0	\$0	\$0
Salaries LAII Associate Directors	\$12,379	\$19,070	\$32,630	\$32,630	\$32,630
Salary LAII Director (1 month summer)	\$0	\$4,155	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
Fringe	\$10,818	\$12,750	\$0	\$0	\$0
Associate Director Summer SAC	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0	
Recruitment: publications & campus visits	\$4,659	\$961	\$1,000	\$2,500	\$2,500
Consultant fees (LAS recruitment materials)	\$0	\$860	\$0	\$0	\$0
LTAM 400 course buyout (Schadl)		0	\$4,000	\$0	\$4,000
LTAM 500 course buyout (Schadl)		0	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
Course development money (LTAM500, LTAM200)		\$2,800	0	\$4,000	
Faculty travel	\$11,931	\$7,380	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000
Events	\$5,717	\$987	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Supplies, copying, printing, computers, parking	\$3,575	\$3,478	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Banner tax	\$255	\$132	\$0	\$0	\$0
Rescission	\$4,079	\$8,700	\$0	\$0	\$0
Carry forward	\$2,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTALS	\$141,000	\$134,000	\$134,000	\$134,000	\$134,000

With the legislative appropriation, LAS has increased support for faculty travel, improved graduate student recruitment and provided one-time summer stipends for graduate assistants working on the Title VI grant application. Most importantly LAS has increased by four the number of graduate assistantships offered to Latin American Studies students. In FY08, nine MA students received assistantships, including one graduate assistantship from the College of Arts and Sciences, and two teaching assistantships in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. In FY09 and FY10, the number of assistantships was increased to thirteen.

The special legislative appropriation provides a substantial increase and a much more stable funding base than the program enjoyed in the past. Beginning in FY11, the provost has rolled the LAS budget into I&G thus providing greater stability. The program leadership and faculty are very grateful for this change.

Question #2: How might the LAS program better assess student outcomes, especially in light of the interdisciplinary nature of the curriculum?

- Assessment guidelines:** "The team recommends that the UNM central administration provide all units that are required to implement outcomes assessment clear and explicit guidelines as to the

sorts of measures that are appropriate, and when possible that examples of successful approved outcomes assessment strategies be provided to units requesting such guidance.”

- a. Since the outside review occurred, the College of Arts and Sciences has appointed a Special Assistant for Assessment, who has consulted with individual departments and programs.
- b. The former Director of LAS prepared a three-year assessment plan in S08. Following consultation with the Special Assistant for Assessment, the current Associate Director has revised the plan and presented it to the Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies (ICLAS), which approved it with modifications. One central element of this discussion was the emphasis on assessing, first, the students’ Latin American knowledge base and their ability to write and carry out research within a single discipline. Once assessment has progressed in this area, and once we have moved forward with requiring the LTAM 400 multidisciplinary courses and the LTAM 500 interdisciplinary gateway course, we will focus greater efforts on students’ achievement of interdisciplinary integration in their studies. Implementation of the assessment plan begins in S10:
 - i. **Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes in the BA**, for the next three years will look at knowledge base, research skills, and writing. The instrument will be a research and writing assignment, which will be assessed by the Associate Director, three members of the ICLAS, and a graduate student, aided by a shared rubric, and finalized through a group discussion, with results reported to and addressed by ICLAS each fall.
 - ii. **Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes in the MA** will be based on two instruments:
 - The MA exam assesses knowledge, critical thinking, and the construction of a persuasive argument in two separate disciplinary or interdisciplinary concentrations. Exams will be assessed by members of the students’ Committee on Studies with the use of a standard rubric and results reported to ICLAS.
 - The MA thesis or professional paper, completed by some MA/LAS students, assesses interdisciplinary research and writing. Theses will be assessed based on a standardized rubric by members of the students’ Committee on Studies and reported to ICLAS. ICLAS discussions will focus first on the strength of Student Learning Outcomes within a single discipline in the MA exam and the success of interdisciplinary integration in the MA theses, and will build toward the achievement of interdisciplinary integration by all MA students after the first two years of assessment.
 - iii. **Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes in the PhD** will be based on two instruments, one direct and one indirect:
 - The PhD thesis will be assessed by a student’s dissertation committee, and the defense will be attended additionally by the Associate Director and two members of ICLAS, who will subsequently discuss the success of interdisciplinary integration in the project.
 - Data will be gathered and kept on the participation by PhD students in professional development events, conferences, workshops, and fieldwork through the presentation of a talk or publication of an article. The data will be discussed by ICLAS in relation to program goals.

Question #3. What recommendations do you have regarding how Latin American Studies might be included in the University's core curriculum?

7. "Given its geographic location, demographic composition, and strategic priorities, the university should incorporate lower-level LAS courses into its core curriculum for undergraduate students."

"We also recommend that the university provide the modest course buy-out support needed for departments to release LAS-affiliated faculty to develop an interdisciplinary introductory course in Latin American Studies (which could also be appropriate for the core curriculum). Such a course would provide a common intellectual foundation for LAS majors and minors, and it would greatly enhance the recruitment of undergraduates into the LAS major, which we see as a major priority of the undergraduate program.

- a. The LAS faculty agrees that LAS courses should be included in the core curriculum. The core curriculum task force's consideration of a competencies-based model favors inclusion of an LAS course or courses. Courses that are already taught regularly and that would be appropriate for such inclusion are HIST 181 and 182. The planned LTAM 200-level course might also be incorporated into the core. LAS leadership will continue to stay abreast of the core curriculum developments and consider how we can best participate.

Question #4. Should the Ph.D. in Latin American Studies continue to be offered at UNM?

8. "We do not see a compelling case for the value-added of the Ph.D. program. Although there are a handful of students who seek such interdisciplinary degrees, and a small number of (generally non-academic) positions for which students with these degrees may qualify, we do not believe there is a market that is unique to these qualifications. . . . If the program opts to maintain this degree option, we recommend that it be redesigned to target a very small number of experienced, mid-career professionals who have decided that they need a specialized but interdisciplinary doctoral program. A look back at the Ph.D.'s that have been awarded over the past ten years with an eye to what kind of alternative program might have met their needs could be helpful."

- a. In spring 2008, the Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies (ICLAS) placed a moratorium on admissions to the PhD program. ICLAS conversations regarding the PhD are ongoing. Issues include the comparative advantage of re-opening the PhD track, recognition for faculty members on LAS PhD committees, and the admissions selection criteria and process. Current LAll leadership supports better implementation of the program's original design, which coincides with the recommendations of the external report for "redesign." The issue will be taken up again with the Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies in F10.

LAS Program and Curriculum

9. **Interdisciplinary gateway course:** "At the graduate level, a gateway interdisciplinary course, preferably team-taught, would also enrich the intellectual experience of students and enhance the interdisciplinary (rather than multi-disciplinary) character of the program."
- a. On 12/2/09, the Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies approved a plan to seek summer course development money, a faculty member, and a course release to develop a required gateway course for MA students, to define a core of shared material including historical and geographical knowledge. The Associate Director for Academic Programs has

recruited faculty to teach the course in S11. The team will meet in June to begin course development. Budgetary issues are addressed in 11 (a) below.

10. **MA credit for methods courses:** “We recommend that graduate students be allowed to get LAS credit for a methods course in one of their areas of concentration. Methods training is crucial for many students who will be conducting research during or after their degree programs, particularly those who plan to write a thesis.”
 - a. Currently, half of the disciplinary concentrations allow or require students to take a course in methodology (Art History, Brazilian Literature and Culture, Community and Regional Planning, Sociology, Spanish American Literature, and Spanish Linguistics). Students in the other concentrations may petition to apply a methods course to their MA degree. The discussion is ongoing, and the implementation of assessment discussions among members of the Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies will inform this discussion and future plans.
11. **Course buyouts:** “Given that courses with Latin American content are scheduled by individual departments, there is no guaranteed consistency in the number, level, and breadth of courses available to LAS students from semester to semester. We recommend that when circumstances so dictate, the discretionary funds recommended for the LAS directorship be used for buy-outs to ensure that key courses are offered.”
 - a. LAS has set aside \$5,500 annually to support LTAM 400 II and the research librarian involved in LTAM 500 (see above budget). LAS requests from the College of Arts and Sciences an additional \$4,000 annually to ensure that LTAM 500 can be offered in S11 and every fall semester thereafter.

12. Human Rights Concentration

An important curricular issue the review team did not address was the singular stress experienced by the MA concentration in Human Rights, with the recent loss of Carole Nagengast (Anthropology), and the faculty losses in Political Science, which pressure the teaching load of one of the remaining core Human Rights faculty, Bill Stanley. The Human Rights concentration is far and away the most popular in the MA in Latin American Studies program and it plays a vital role in attracting LAS students to UNM. Realizing that half of the MA/LAS students pursue this concentration, the Human Rights core faculty on the Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies met in F09 to work on a draft advising document regarding core content for the concentration. However, in looking at course rotations, the core faculty faced the reality that there are insufficient faculty with expertise in Human Rights and availability to teach courses and serve on Committees on Studies to sustain the concentration. At the same time, this concentration is one of the factors that distinguish Latin American Studies at UNM. The Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies (ICLAS) has approved a moratorium on accepting new concentrators until additional Human Rights faculty members can be hired.

13. Guarantee regular LAS course offerings

To ensure that essential LAS offerings are available on a regular basis, the Deputy Provost and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences have suggested that the deans of two additional colleges be

assigned on a rotating basis to work with the Arts and Sciences Dean and the Associate Director for Academic Programs (LAI) to insure adequate LAS course offerings (see par. 6, 8/25/08 memo). The LAI/LAS request that this plan be implemented. The LAI/LAS also requests that the Dean of Arts and Sciences support the critical faculty needs in the area of Human Rights, in the immediate hiring plans for the College, and seek to replace the LAS faculty named on p. 2 above, within the next four years.

14. **Building on unique curricular strengths and strategic areas.** In addition to the curricular areas addressed in the external report, LAS has undertaken curricular initiatives to build on current strengths of the program and its faculty and seek to distinguish UNM through unique areas of strength. These initiatives include the following:
 - a. **MA Concentration in Communication:** There is interest and LAS strength in Communication and Journalism, and this is a logical concentration for MA in Latin American Studies students. A Form C for the new concentration was submitted in F09.
 - b. **MA in Latin American Studies/Public Health dual degree:** builds on strengths and interest by faculty in the Public Health program, and provides an alternative concentration in the health sciences for the discontinued dual degree with Nursing. A Form C for the new degree was submitted F09.

Graduate student support and advising

The external review also recommended:

15. **Control of Graduate Assistantship lines by LAS:** "That GA lines be administered directly by LAS, rather than being transferred from LAI."
- a. The Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies continues to screen and rank MA in Latin American Studies applicants for assistantships. In spring 2008 the LAI and LAS directors collaborated on the assignment of the Graduate Assistantships. The restructuring has further institutionalized this collaboration.
16. **Appropriate GA assignments:** "That holders of the GA-ships be assigned appropriate research or teaching duties consistent with their areas of research."
 - a. Since F08, all graduate assistants have been given academically-related assignments, either with projects and programs of the LAI or to assist Latin American Studies faculty with their research projects or teaching. In 2008-09, three graduate assistants were assigned to faculty research projects. These assignments were especially successful, benefiting both the faculty and students; among others, the students made vital contributions to two contracted book manuscripts projects, and one student co-authored a paper with the supervising faculty member. In 2009-10, four graduate assistants are assigned to assist in faculty research related to their areas of study.

17. Improvement of dual-degree advising

- a. **Dual-degree liaison personnel:** “That specific liaison personnel be designated in the appropriate colleges and professional schools and in OGS, and that constant communication be maintained with LAS advisors.”

These relationships have been established in the past and will be continued, renewed, and reestablished with the turnover in personnel in both LAS and the relevant colleges and professional schools.

- b. **Creation of an advising document:** “That a concise written document be prepared that provides explicit information on the logistics of dual-degree programs, with reference to specific program requirements.”

These documents already exist.

Dual degree programs are inherently difficult to oversee as they involve the policies and procedures of two distinct academic programs. In closing discussions, the external review team noted that they had received favorable comments on the advisement structure of LAS-related dual degree programs, but one student's concerns in particular led the team to encourage LAS to reflect on its advisement procedures and that ensure best practices are in place.

With the recent elimination of the MA in Latin American Studies/MSN (Master of Science in Nursing) dual degree, there are now four dual degree programs (with Anderson School of Management, Community & Regional Planning, Law, and LLSS (Language, Literacy, and Socio-Cultural Studies) in Education). We are in the process of creating a new one with Public Health.

Detailed advisement worksheets exist for all dual degree programs, clearly delineating the credit hour distribution and requirements for both portions of the dual degree. As with all other LAS students, dual degree students are required to receive LAS advisement at least once a semester. LAS also maintains regular contact with faculty and staff who are the most involved in advisement for the other degree. Additionally, the Associate Director for Academic Programs is developing Excel worksheets that will facilitate students' ability to track their own progress toward completing the requirements in the dual degree programs.

The most complicated dual degree is the MA in Latin American Studies/JD. Since the Law School maintains a slightly different calendar and operates under a separate Registrar, this dual degree program requires the most vigilant oversight. In addition to increased regular communication with representatives from the Law School, we also provide a separate "MA in Latin American Studies/JD Student Handbook" to all MA in Latin American Studies/JD students. The handbook outlines the recommended curriculum sequence and provides detailed information on the various exit requirement options available to students. The design of this dual degree also allows students to complete one of their LAS comprehensive examinations after their first year of study (as recommended by the external review committee). This option was introduced to minimize the stress on students as they near the completion of both degrees and begin to prepare for the bar exam. Innovative practices like this indicate the commitment that LAS has to providing flexibility for its dual degree students while ensuring academic rigor.

With the turnover in key staff at the School of Law in fall 2009, including the registrar, the Associate Director of Academic Programs and the Associate Director for Program Development

will again meet in S10 with Law School staff and will plan an advising meeting for the current JD/LAS cohort during the semester.

- c. **LAS/JD comprehensive exams:** “That advisors recommend that LAS/Law dual-degree students take their comprehensive exams in LAS before beginning their coursework in the Law School.”

This is current practice.

- d. **Compilation of dual degree student experiences:** “That relevant student experiences in pursuing dual-degree programs be compiled and made available to students contemplating such a program.”

The LAS advisors appreciate the value of this recommendation and will pursue its realization as time allows.

Additional recommendations

- 18. **Development fund for discretionary budget:** “The LAS program is encouraged to initiate a development effort for creation of a Director’s account in the Foundation that is independent of the LAII Director’s account. The College and University should provide resources for this effort initially, but it should become self-sustaining.”

- a. The LAS will consider this recommendation as time allows.

- 19. **LAS/LAII leadership:** “Although we were not charged to evaluate the LAII, we are aware of concerns regarding the leadership transition. The resources provided by the LAII are important to the stability of the LAS faculty, the best of whom are highly mobile and could be lost if the LAII is not stabilized in a timely fashion. It is therefore important for the administration to support efforts to reestablish a stable leadership.”

- a. The external review was conducted at a time of growing tensions between the leadership of the LAS and the LAII. Subsequently the Deputy Provost and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences appointed an LAS/LAII Study Committee to analyze the situation and make recommendations regarding the LAS/LAII relationship. This relationship was then reconfigured in fall 2008, through a process involving the Study Committee’s Report and the Deputy Provost and Dean’s response, in consultation with the Latin American Faculty Concilium. The result was the full integration of the LAII and LAS into a single unit, in which the former position of Director of LAS has been replaced by an Associate Director for Academic Programs. The Associate Director reports to the LAII Director who, in turn, reports on academic issues to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and on other programmatic issues to the Deputy Provost. In spring 2009, the Interim Director of the LAII was made LAII Director and a new Associate Director for Academic Programs was appointed, and a constructive collaboration has begun between the LAII and its academic programs, including LAS.

Additional recommendations contained in the “Panoramic summary of recommendations”

20. Increase number of graduate assistantships for recruitment: The university should also seek resources to expand the number of GA lines and augment their stipends to make them more competitive with the awards offered by peer institutions. Although LAS has been successful in recruiting high-caliber graduate students, its recruitment efforts are clearly hampered by the small number of awards it can offer and the modest financial support they provide.

- a. The Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies ranked as highly desirable 13 of 41 MA in Latin American Studies applicants who competed for financial assistance for F09. With a total of 14 assistantships for both current and incoming MA in Latin American Studies students, we could only make offers of assistance to 7 incoming students. The remaining 6 top-ranked students accepted offers from other institutions. By 2012, LAS seeks to increase the total number of assistantships to 17, including 3 research assistantships and 3 teaching assistantships, through funding from I&G.

VI. Summary comments

Latin American Studies is vital to the University of New Mexico's mission; this centrality comes from UNM's border location and proximity to Latin America, the history of the state of New Mexico, the long-standing strength, reputation, and leadership role played by the LAII and its academic programs nationally, the excellence of its faculty, and the exceptional quality of its Latin American library holdings as well as the outstanding reputation of several participating departments. The LAS program also contributes vitally to the achievement of six of UNM's seven vision goals, especially those of International Engagement and Strength through Diversity.

The report of the external review team recognizes this history of excellence and the importance of LAS to UNM's mission. It praises the program's continued excellence, notes tensions that have negatively affected the program, makes recommendations on curricular issues, and addresses a series of risks the program faces and for which it requires financial and administrative support.

In the time since the external report was submitted, the change in leadership, and the restructuring process have more fully integrated the Latin American Studies programs into the Latin American and Iberian Institute. Together with past and present leadership, the Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies has begun to address a number of the programmatic and curricular weaknesses laid out in the external report, including the development of interdisciplinary undergraduate courses and assessment plans; it will continue to do so in 2010-2011. Moreover, the S10 submission of the Title VI grant proposal seeks to address weaknesses and build areas of unique strength in the academic programs, including LAS. The special legislative appropriation that was secured through the efforts of the former LAS and current LAII Directors, and the renewed commitment of support from the Provost, the Deputy Provost and the Dean of Arts and Sciences, have gone far in responding to the grave need for financial support that the external review team emphasized. In particular, the appropriation increases the number of graduate assistantships, the incorporation of LAS funding into I&G gives stability to LAS funding, and the College of Arts and Sciences has committed financial support for course buyouts and the SAC for the Associate Director.

The Latin American Studies Program continues to need crucial institutional support to ensure course offerings and to rebuild the faculty to its levels of five years ago. In this regard, the LAS requests the implementation of the process recommended by the Deputy Provost and Dean of Arts and Sciences Dean to involve the deans of two other schools/colleges on a rotating basis to help to ensure course

offerings and faculty hires in Latin American Studies. In order for Latin American Studies to continue to play a leadership role nationally, and to sustain the excellence of its faculty and graduate students, it is vital that the LAll receive the kind of institutional support recommended by the external review team.