

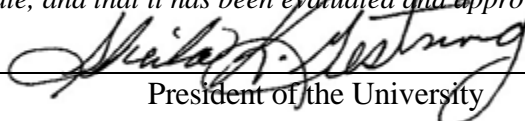


**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS**  
**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FORMS**  
**Institutional Program Review**  
**Report to the Board of Regents**

<b>UNIVERSITY:</b>	<b>USD</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT OR SCHOOL:</b>	<b>Modern Languages &amp; Linguistics (MLL)</b>
<b>PROGRAM REVIEWED:</b>	<b>Modern Languages &amp; Linguistics (MLL)</b>
<b>DATE OF REVIEW:</b>	<b>2/1/2019</b>
<b>TYPE OF REVIEW:</b>	<b>Institutional Program Review</b>

**University Approval**

*To the Board of Regents and the Executive Director: I certify that I have read this report, that I believe it to be accurate, and that it has been evaluated and approved as provided by university policy.*

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 President of the University

5/7/2019

Date

**1. Identify the program reviewers and any external accrediting body:**

Dr. Adriana Gordillo  
 Associate Professor of Spanish and Chair, Department of World Languages and Cultures,  
 Minnesota State University, Mankato

Dr. Rachel J. Halverson  
 Professor of German and Chair of the Department of Modern Languages and Cultures,  
 University of Idaho

**2. Items A & B should address the following issues: mission centrality, program quality, cost, program productivity, plans for the future, and assessment of progress.**

**2(A). Describe the strengths and weaknesses identified by the reviewers**

**Strengths:**

- The faculty and staff of MLL are an asset to the university since they are integral to the institution's commitment to Inclusive Excellence and Diversity. Faculty members are international, dynamic, engaged, invested in supporting the learning experience of students (faculty-led programs, advising, promoting student participation in conferences and application for research grants), and develop a strong relationship with students inside and outside the classroom, all of which is reflected in student retention.

-The German program has great potential for growth. The new German Cooperative Program with SDSU and NSU will make it easier for students to access the coursework required to complete their German majors. German is a heritage language in the region and USD needs to have a strong German program.

-If supported by the university, the French program has great potential for growth. It has a dynamic faculty member with concrete ideas to create coursework that enhances students' use of French for specific purposes. MLL is working to establish a Cooperative program with SDSU similar to the one for German.

-The efforts of the Lakota program are outstanding: creation of textbooks, revamping of courses, support to K-12 Lakota teachers, etc., as well as increased connection with the Lakota community.

- Russian has a charismatic instructor who students admire and support.
- MLL is not just a “teaching department.” MLL faculty maintain an active research program, which is an important component for a vibrant department.

**Weaknesses:**

- Staffing and curriculum. MLL is a small department that offers courses in linguistics and five different languages. There is a small number of tenured and tenure-track faculty, the programs are mostly one-person (four out of five), Spanish relies on instructors and adjuncts, and there is a high rate of faculty turnover.
- Spanish is the most robust program, but two of the three tenured faculty have administrative duties and thus reduced teaching. There are also two Spanish instructors.
- The German and French programs are particularly vulnerable to changes because of the one-person staffing, which affects enrollment negatively.
- The reduction of the language requirement of the BA from four to two semesters in 2014 has forced MLL to rethink recruitment strategies, since lower-division language courses had been the primary feeder for majors and minors. The minimum requirement of 10 students per class and graduation of at least five majors per year has led to reduction in course offerings and threatens the French and German majors.
- The reduction in course offerings has led to a proliferation of independent studies in all programs to ensure that students complete their majors in a timely fashion. In this way, faculty are performing “invisible labor.”
- The support for faculty research is not substantial – there is little to no professional development funding.
- Space: The department has lost half of its office and storage space.

**2(B). Briefly summarize the review recommendations**

- Invest in faculty development, especially for the French program.
- Make sure faculty are progressing on their career trajectories (towards promotion).
- Russian program: Potential for expanding, student interest. However: MLL will need a full-time, permanent instructorship (not just a part-time adjunct).
- Expand MLL’s marketing campaign: the study of languages supports students’ professional goals and enhances competitiveness on the job market.
- Be strategic about scheduling courses due to minimum required enrollment of ten students. The current approach of cancelling under-enrolled courses and meeting student needs with independent study courses is not sustainable (instructors teach beyond their teaching loads and it does not count).
- Additional staffing for the Lakota program to support an outstanding and effective outreach program.
- The Provost and Dean speak highly of the MLL and its faculty and believe MLL is an integral part of studying at USD. Reviewers suggest improving communication between administration and MLL regarding expectations and specific support that administrators can offer the department in its efforts to build enrollments and strengthen program.
- Reviewers perceived low morale, low energy level, and a high level of frustration within MLL faculty. Faculty work very hard and yet they do not see the rewards for their efforts. Faculty should celebrate their successes, assess their failures and move forward with an expectation of a reasonable workload of teaching/research/service.
- Seek cross-departmental support and initiatives to reinforce USD’s commitment to a diverse and inclusive campus.
- Continued administration’s support of MLL’s initiatives in the regional scope, for example, Lakota’s outreach program and instructor’s multiple cultural and academic projects, participation in the Pan-Lingua Undergraduate Research conference, which

supports the university's vision to promote inclusion and diversity. Support of the Spanish Graduate Certificate in Translation, which can be an asset to the university because of the need of translators.

**2(C). Indicate the present and continuous actions to be taken by the college or department to address the issues raised by the review. What outcomes are anticipated as a result of these actions?**

- a. The new German Cooperative Program among South Dakota State University, Northern State University, and the University of South Dakota will go into effect in the academic year 2019-2020. We will align our curricula and share faculty, resources, expertise, and infrastructure, with the goal of reducing duplication and improving efficiency.
- b. The student learning outcomes and the assessment methods for the SLOs in French and German will mirror those in Spanish (see documents in Nuventive).
- c. MLL has contacted SDSU in order to negotiate a similar collaboration for the French Program.
- d. This year, we requested that the Graduate Certificate in Spanish-English Translation be delivered online starting 2019. At this point, we have not received authorization to do so and for that reason we have not been able to advertise it. We will have to wait until 2020-21 to offer the program online.
- e. In Spanish, we are in the process of revising the curriculum in order to offer our majors a better applicability and practice of their language skills, gain real-world experience, and increase their marketability in a diverse, multicultural world. Our plan, provided there are sufficient funds and resources, is to introduce two specializations for the major: A Culture and Literature Track and a Translation Track. The Culture and Literature Track is based on our canonical major without the Linguistics requirement (even though students can still take Linguistics courses as electives). The Translation Specialization will resemble the Graduate Certificate in Spanish Translation offering, but at an undergraduate level. It will help USD students acquire a more solid understanding of both Spanish and English, gain a greater awareness of the influence of culture on language use, and increase their marketability. Students will explore the theory, ethics, and practice of Spanish-English translation, as well as Spanish linguistics. Through an internship, students will put into practice what they learn in the classroom.
- f. The Office of Institutional Diversity at USD selected MLL to attend the retreat BE SMART: Creating Inclusive Program Goals, which took place on August 8, 2018. Four MLL members attended the retreat. Based on what we learned during the workshop, we are revising our Goals in Diversity and Inclusive Excellence. We are in the process of drafting a document which we will revise and upload to Nuventive.
- g. MLL is working with SDSU to negotiate a graduate student teaching assistantship position in Lakota, based at SDSU, who would be able to provide teaching and learning support for the SDSU students taking the LAKL courses through DDN from USD. This effort will involve some small course design changes that will make the two first-year Lakota courses at USD and SDSU much more collaborative and dynamic.
- h. We are striving to adjust our course curricula and content to meet the needs of 21st century student, by integrating new technologies in the classroom and discussing the relationship between technology and language. The German program recently conducted a survey among 100-level students to gauge their interests for intermediate and advanced courses and will adjust course content accordingly.

- i. We plan on implementing more extracurricular activities to improve community outreach, such as embassy-sponsored events with high school participation.

MLL strives to make our programs more attractive and marketable to students by improving our offering without sacrificing quality. As result of these actions we expect to:

- Strengthen our Spanish curriculum and make it more attractive to students who would like to gain real-world experience and increase their marketability, by offering a specialization in translation at the undergraduate level. Increase USD's presence at the UC in Sioux Falls by offering elementary Spanish courses. Attract high school Spanish immersion students in Sioux Falls to USD by teaching a capstone course to their seniors.
- Strengthen our German program through the German Cooperative Program with SDSU and NSU
- Strengthen our French program through negotiations to revive the French Cooperative Program with SDSU. Also, to offer a certificate on Business French.
- Promote student retention in the Lakota program by having a graduate student teaching assistantship based at SDSU to support Dr. Mirzayan with the Lakota DDN classes.
- Collaborate with DSU's Cyber Security workforce development by offering Russian courses through DDN.
- Continue promoting languages in high schools and in the community in general.

MLL also strives to increase faculty satisfaction by avoiding teaching overload (especially excessive independent studies), advocating for a safe workplace, and supporting faculty research. If faculty feel appreciated and valued, they will have a higher level of motivation to improve their performance.