

*Program Review of the Institute of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*

Committee members: Susan C. Quinlan, Romance Languages, Chair (Dean's representative)  
Betty Jean Craige, Willson Center for Humanities and Arts (Director's Representative)  
Luanne Lohr, Agricultural and Applied Economics (PRAC Review Committee)

Review Completed on February 6, 2009

Because of a change of directors, originating with the retirement of O. Brent Berlin (June 2008) and the appointment of interim director Doris Y. Kadish on July 1, 2008, and her subsequent appointment as permanent director in January 2009, the review team postponed its original meeting dates of December 2008 to late January and February of 2009.

During this period Dean Garnett Stokes identified as one of her priorities the search for a long-term nationally recognized Latin American Studies scholar to serve as Director of LACSI.

We conducted interviews with students in the LACSI major, members of the newly elected executive committee, the staff, the director, the former director, members of the advisory committee, and the core faculty after each body had had the opportunity to meet with each other, approve the new bylaws, read the self-study and make further plans. The review committee felt that the new committees put in place by the Dean of the Franklin College needed to meet at least once to determine how the new governance policies might work.

The timeline and the dates for meeting with the various components of the institute are included as an appendix to this document. Faculty members include core faculty (those who teach either required courses or other courses related to the major) and affiliated faculty.

**OVERVIEW**

The Latin American and Caribbean Studies Institute promotes the economic, social, cultural, historical, and linguistic study of Latin America and the Caribbean through research, teaching, and community outreach. The institute also promotes scholarship on the Latin American immigration to the state of Georgia. The University of Georgia is the only state institution to offer an undergraduate major in Latin American and Caribbean Studies.

**FACULTY and STAFF**

The Institute currently employs one faculty member and three staff members. The director's position is paid through an administrative supplement. The academic professional is budgeted through anthropology. The assistant director's position is ¾ time, as is that of the advisor/accountant.

LACSI personnel include:

Doris Y. Kadish, Ph.D, Director, Romance Languages and Women's Studies. Dr. Kadish receives an administrative supplement for her work in LACSI  
66 Core and affiliated faculty not budgeted in the Institute;  
Paul Duncan, MS Assistant Director (budgeted ¾ time by LACSI and ¼ time by the Office of Public Service and Outreach);  
Sérgio Quesada, Ph.D., Academic Professional (budgeted full-time in Anthropology);  
Kathleen Schmaltz MEd, Accountant and Academic Advisor (budgeted ¾ time by LACSI);  
Two graduate assistants (one budgeted through Romance Languages in conjunction with LACSI and the Dean's office as an assistant to Dr, Kadish, one budgeted through the College of Arts and Sciences); and one work-study student.

LACSI personnel have created a positive and energetic environment that students said they much appreciated. Their potential to build a nationally ranked program is limited only by their inadequate University budget.

### **ADVISORY BOARD AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The current Advisory Board has been in place for a long time with few if any changes to its membership since 2006. There are currently four ex-officio members, the director, the assistant director, and five members appointed by the dean of the Franklin College.

The Executive Committee includes the director, two ex-officio members, four members elected from the core, and one member elected from the affiliated faculty. The dean appoints the sixth member.

We noted an incongruence between the roles of the Advisory Board and the Executive Committee in the governance of LACSI and in the planning of the academic and outreach programs. We believe that the Advisory Board membership should be examined in light of LACSI's need for greater clarity of respective responsibilities. The evolving mission also requires reconsideration of the responsibilities of the Director, the Assistant Director, and the staff.

### **TEACHING**

Specifically, LACSI works to coordinate and administer the new undergraduate major in Latin American and Caribbean Studies (LACS) as an academic program of the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences. LACSI facilitates collaboration among UGA's Latin Americanist faculty. LACSI received \$160,000 from the Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program (UISFL) of the US Department of Education to establish an undergraduate major and further enhance Latin American Studies at UGA.

LACSI has also received awards amounting to over \$100,000 from the Tinker Foundation, in collaboration with the Graduate School and the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, to support graduate student travel for research. Executive Committee members stressed the importance of obtaining additional federal grant money. Obviously, this can be accomplished only with the infusion of additional University funds.

The Board of Regents approved the Bachelor of Arts major in Latin American and Caribbean Studies in August 2006.

In the last three years, LACSI's enrollment has exploded to 57 majors. We were dismayed that LACSI does not receive credit for the contact hours for LASC prefix courses. This accounting

situation may explain the under-allocation of budgetary resources for instruction in LACSI.

The major includes LACS 2001 and 2002 (proseminar courses) and LACS 4911 (senior capstone course), as well as GEOG 4270 (the geography of Latin America), in addition to language and history courses. Faculty expressed interest in restructuring the core courses for the major. The Executive Committee saw a need for a more heterogeneous and self-reflective introductory course to Latin American Studies. Executive Committee members reported that since the first meeting of the entire faculty (December 2007) their two priorities in education were to improve the existing major and to define the Institute. They expressed an interest in creating a graduate program (either a certificate or Masters degree)

## **RESEARCH**

Core and affiliated faculty are productive in their research and are prominent in their professional associations. Faculty are represented on the governing boards of the important international associations and on the editorial boards of the important journals.

## **SERVICE AND OUTREACH**

LACSI received grants totaling \$270,000 from the Exposition Foundation for the establishment of the Latin American Ethnobotanical Garden, the promotion of LACS activities with EARTH University in Costa Rica, and faculty/student research in Latin America.

LACSI received a gift in the amount of \$100,000 from the Katherine John Murphy Foundation for creation of the Latin-American Ethnobotanical Garden. Paul Duncan oversees the garden with the help of an undergraduate student funded through the Exposition Foundation.

We ask LACSI faculty to consider the way the Ethnobotanical Garden may fit into the evolving mission of LACSI.

LACSI has actively collaborated with other units across the campus such as CLASE (Center for Latino Achievement and Success in Education). LACSI's offers non-credit Spanish and Portuguese language conversation courses at no charge to interested members of the university and the community. LACSI has sponsored such notable conferences of interest to the Latino/a community as Black and Brown Bridges: Building Successful Partnerships Among African Americans and Latinos in the New South (2007) and Brazilian-Americans in Georgia and Beyond (2008). Each summer since 2006, LACSI has also developed workshops for Georgia middle and high school teachers to strengthen LACS instructional ties to Georgia performance standards.

We viewed the diverse interests and experiences of LACSI faculty as a basis for identifying outreach priorities consistent with LACSI's current mission.

## **FACILITIES AND TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Institute occupies a cheerful house on Hull Street. While office space is generally adequate, the single lecture room is tiny, as is the library. The addition of a classroom in the future would greatly enhance student interaction between staff and students. Currently there is no office space for either the teacher of the capstone course or for any visiting faculty.

The assistant director is in charge of the commendable listserv. A part-time work-study student handles the webpage. The Institute could use the help of a part-time technology specialist in the

future.

We saw an under-representation of Latin American materials and media services in the University Libraries, which needs to be corrected if LACSI is to become nationally ranked.

***REVIEW COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS***

- 1. That the Dean maintain her stated priority of recruiting an outstanding Latin American Studies scholar to be the Director of LACSI.*
- 2. That LACSI be given EFT's sufficient to pay for instruction of LACS-prefix courses.*
- 3. That a more efficient and representative governing structure be established in keeping with LACSI's evolving mission.*
- 4. That LACSI define its mission clearly with respect to Latino-related activities in other units on campus. What is the mission of Latin American studies in relation to Latino studies?*

Our review committee took pleasure in seeing the accomplishments and envisioning the future of this outstanding unit on campus. LACSI is one the University's hidden gems. If the University of Georgia is to be a major player in the global society of the twenty-first century, the University must vigorously support research, teaching, and service in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

[The Review Committee accepted all of Dr. Kadish's editorial suggestions but one. The Committee did not substitute the word *expanding* for *evolving*, as suggested by Dr. Kadish, in two instances, because we believed that the core mission of LACSI is evolving rather than expanding. –April 10, 2009]

## Appendix

### LASCI Review Meetings

Thursday, January 22	Staff	1:30-3:00
Monday, January 26	Executive Committee	2:00-4:00
Tuesday, January 27	Students	2:00-4:00
Friday, January 30	Advisory Committee	2:00-3:00
Monday, February 2	Affiliate Faculty	2:00-4:00
Friday February 6	Core Faculty	2:00-4:00
Monday February 9	Review Committee Meeting	To be determined

All the meetings except Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> will take place at LASCI either in the conference room or the Library.