Report of the Academic Program Review Committee Report for the
Department of Applied Linguistics and English as a Second Language (AL/ESL):
Review Period FY2006-FY2008

Report Date: June 9, 2009
Approved by CAP: June 16, 2009

I. Program Summary
The Department of Applied Linguistics and English as a Second Language is a department divided into two major areas: degree programs and English as a Second Language (ESL) Teaching and Testing Program. Degrees/certificates offered by the AL/ESL department include a BA, MA, and PhD in Applied Linguistics and a Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) certificate. In the area of ESL, the department provides ESL credit bearing courses, an intensive English program (IEP), and English proficiency testing. The department has evolved over a 40 year period, with its earliest beginnings as ESL instruction provided to international students through the Department of English. It became an independent department of ESL in 1984 and, in 1989 the department officially became the department of AL/ESL, housed in the College of Arts and Sciences. In 2000, the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies in Language Studies (BIS/LS) was developed and in 2002, the AL/ESL department began offering the PhD. In Fall 2007 the department enrolled the first students in the BA degree program in Applied Linguistics.

Faculty, Staff, Enrollments and Service. At the end of the reporting period, there were a total of 19 full-time faculty, consisting of five tenured faculty (three professors and two associate professors), one tenure track associate professor, three tenure track assistant professors, four senior lecturers, and six lecturers. The department has two full-time categories of faculty appointment: tenure track faculty who are eligible to teach in all of the Department’s programs and lecturers who teach primarily in the IEP and ESL programs. The department is predominantly female (80%) and Caucasian (89%). However, there is diversity in the international representation of four faculty (including 3 tenure track faculty) from Argentina, England, the Philippines, and Sweden. The department employs 4 full-time staff members and one half-time staff member. Total credit hours across all programs increased 30% over the study period with the increase primarily driven by the undergraduate core (110% increase) and lower division courses (89% increase). The graduate program generates the greatest percentage of credit hours (51%), followed by the upper division undergraduate courses (21%), undergraduate core (21%), and undergraduate lower division courses (7%). The increase in credit hour generation has been accomplished without a comparable increase in faculty. The number of tenure-track faculty has decreased from 2002, from 10 to 8. Average credit hour generation by faculty category appears in the table below:
### Faculty Type and average # faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty Type and average # faculty</th>
<th>Undergrad Core</th>
<th>Undergrad Lower Division</th>
<th>Undergrad Upper Division</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenure-track: 9</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>2114</td>
<td>2837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non tenure-track:12.3</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTI: 2.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTA: 9.3</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average total</td>
<td>1038</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>1024</td>
<td>2558</td>
<td>4972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of total</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>07.1%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note: Does not include IEP hours**

Faculty members have fulfilled significant service roles at various levels within the University and in professional associations. One faculty member serves as Coordinator for the International Programs within the CAS and another serves on the CAS Promotion and Tenure committee. Several have served on major committees within the Senate. Several have served as editor/co-editors of journals, accreditation team members, and proposal reviewers.

### Scholarly Productivity and External Funding

Over the reporting period all tenure track faculty published scholarly work. The following table summarizes the scholarly activity of the tenure track faculty.

#### Tenure Track Faculty Productivity for Calendar years 2005-2007*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005 (n=8) total (yearly av.)</th>
<th>2006 (n=9) total (yearly av.)</th>
<th>2007 (n=9) total (yearly av.)</th>
<th>Average per faculty per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refereed articles</td>
<td>2 (.25)</td>
<td>4 (.44)</td>
<td>4 (.44)</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other scholarly works</td>
<td>5 (.63)</td>
<td>8 (.89)</td>
<td>5 (.56)</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>15 (1.89)</td>
<td>15 (1.67)</td>
<td>10 (1.11)</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Grant Funding</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Grant Funding</td>
<td>$63,666 ($7,958)</td>
<td>$228,619 ($25,402)</td>
<td>$61,766 ($6863)</td>
<td>$13,722</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Table based on self-study data presented in Table B-2a

Of note, the lecturers within the department, for whom research and scholarly publications/presentation is not emphasized as part of the faculty role, as a group, had a 3 year average of 1.9 presentations per faculty member per year.

### Student Numbers by Degree Programs and Degrees Awarded

The following table summarizes the student numbers data by degree programs and degrees awarded.

#### Majors and Degrees by Year and Averaged

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>FY2006</th>
<th>FY2007</th>
<th>FY2008</th>
<th>3-Year Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Majors</td>
<td>Majors</td>
<td>Majors</td>
<td>Majors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Degrees</td>
<td>Degrees</td>
<td>Degrees</td>
<td>Degrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2
Student and Learning Quality

The average SAT scores of students in the BA program over the past year are 560 verbal, 533 math, and 1093 total. The average GRE scores of students enrolled in the MA and PhD programs are presented in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY</th>
<th>GRE Verbal</th>
<th>GRE Quant</th>
<th>GRE Total</th>
<th>Number accepted</th>
<th>Percent accepted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY06</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>1008</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY07</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>1153</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY08</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>1126</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While there has been a slight increase in the quality of MA students, as indicated by GRE scores, there has been a decrease in the quality of PhD students as measured by the same indicator. There was no comparison of the test scores with those of peer institutions. However, the self study stated that no additional funding for GTA's was received when the PhD program was initiated. The MA program has not been able to attract some high quality students due to lack of assistantships, which were given to MA students, but are now primarily given to PhD students. PhD students teach 4 courses per year. Retention statistics are reported to be better than the overall three year University retention rate of 71.7%. The MA program has a 3 year retention and graduation rate of 93%. PhD retention data are limited for the new program but suggest a 3 year retention rate of 67% and a four year graduation rate of 25%. During the study period, the institutional data indicate 1 PhD graduate but the self-study indicates 3 PhD graduates. Limited data are provided for the characteristics and number of the students in the ESL/IEP teaching activities of the department, except that the numbers are increasing and that 100% are international students and/or non-native speakers of English.

The Mission statement of the department states it creates a multinational, multicultural environment which is “committed to excellence in the preparation of second/foreign language teachers and researchers, in the teaching of English to speakers of other languages and in other applications of applied linguistics theory to the solution of real world problems.” The department prepares educators in multiple roles (teacher, administrator, curriculum designer, and test developer) and also researchers, although preparing researchers is not emphasized as strongly in the Mission statement.

Program learning outcomes for the BA focus on objectives in the areas of analytical skills, critical thinking skills, communication skills, acquisition of knowledge, and analysis of contemporary questions with sub-outcomes that are discipline specific. The learning outcomes for the MA reflect a level of complexity that is greater than the BA program. The learning outcomes for the PhD program are somewhat generic and do not reflect greater complexity than the MA program. Outcomes related to teaching are more apparent than outcomes related to research. For example, outcomes include "familiarity with the current state of knowledge", "ability to design studies" (not conduct and implement studies), "experience as teachers,” and "understand the needs of ESL/EFL teachers.”

Learning outcomes for the MA program indicate 100% coverage of learning outcomes across all the course syllabi. Learning objectives have been met with a variety of assessment activities. MA alumni survey data indicate graduates perceive learning outcomes have been met, except for the areas of use of technology and professional development, where between 61% and
77% rated this area highly, as compared to the other outcomes where 100% rated they had achieved the outcome at a 4 or 5 out of a 5 point scale.

For the PhD program learning assessments are limited to earlier phases of the PhD program trajectory, with the use of the qualifying paper and comprehensive examination to assess learning outcomes. The dissertation is not included as part of the assessment for learning outcomes. Data presented about PhD achievement of learning outcomes are limited, but the self-study states that PhD students are successfully passing qualifying examinations.

II. Assessment
The department has made contributions to the university through its programs in Applied Linguistics and English as a Second Language, particularly the MA degree in its teacher-training. The PhD program (developed in 2002) has consistently admitted students, but has graduated only 1 student during the review period. The department has added a BA degree program during this cycle. The committee, along with the external reviewers, is concerned that this department is trying to maintain too many degree programs given its size and configuration. More importantly, doing so without additional resources risks compromising both the BA program and the PhD program.

AL/ESL had a BIS degree program, but does not provide data nor include the graduation information in the self-study because the BIS had been superseded by the BA and was being deactivated at the time of the self-study. The IEP and ESL program explanation is included in the self-study, but there are no data that detail the success of these programs for students, except as they influence assistantships for graduate students, and that information is not very clear. The department mentions six peer institutions (UCLA, Northern Arizona University, Michigan State, Penn State, Portland State, and SUNY Buffalo) and describes in a chart similarities in their programs. They compare their publication average, in general terms, as parallel to two of the schools (did not mention which ones) but not as productive as Penn State. Another peer institution comparison made has to do with program curriculum, but no quality data are included (Appendix D 2a). External reviewers note that faculty members are publishing and presenting at conferences at a “limited basis.” They are concerned primarily about the low quantity of refereed publications, and the committee agrees. There is no discussion in the self study about the quality of the journals. The external reviewers were concerned that the PhD program seems focused more on the students becoming teachers rather than becoming scholars in the field. APRC concurs with the external reviewers that the overemphasis on teaching in the doctoral program is contrary to the mission statement and goals of the department. While APRC recognizes the relative newness of the Ph.D. program, the lack of clearly defined research areas for faculty negatively impacts the progression of the PhD students toward graduation.

1. Academic Quality

   Instruction: Little assessment data is provided within the self-study, therefore the committee generated the following analysis. Student learning outcomes reported since 2005 cover both the MA and PhD degrees, and the 2007 report adds the BA degree information. The Mission Statement for the BA program as reported in WEAVEonline (but omitted in Appendix D1) does not focus on undergraduate learning, but rather a departmental mission. In addition, the department describes 13 student learning outcomes for this program, and attempted only two measures, one of which was not completed. The Weave reports mention inclusion of learning objectives in syllabi as a way to measure student learning outcomes, but this is not a measure of student learning. Rather, syllabi indicate an intent and expectation from faculty. For the PhD program, student learning is measured through qualifying papers and comprehensive exams, along with teaching. While these measures could be viable, there is no criteria stipulated, and a grade or a “pass” is not adequate for assessment purposes as it doesn’t indicate what and how much students really learned or which courses contribute to their learning. At the MA level, student learning assessment is better developed. Although there are still a few
learning outcomes that are not really about student learning (the syllabus example and whether or not something was completed), several of the measures of various outcomes are based on a scale or rubric that describe more clearly what students can do or have learned in the courses and program.

The department also provides several indirect methods of assessment through surveys. Students at all levels report that they are satisfied with the courses, instructors, and program overall, though the undergraduate students expressed concern about the “lack of breadth of department course offerings.”

**Research:** The department reports an average of 0.39 refereed publications per tenure-track faculty per year. This publication rate is not consistent with the department’s goal of developing a national and national reputation for scholarship. Their presentation rate for refereed and invited presentations is higher (1.6 per year). Many of the publications listed in CVs have a pedagogical focus, though some are scholarly in the discipline, and half of the faculty (4) publish most of the articles, books, and reviews. Internal funding guides courses and pedagogy, as does the external funding, which seems to be focused on speaking engagements and student programs rather than research in the discipline. As an applied field, grants that deal with training and tutoring languages are appropriate, but in a department with a PhD program, all of these numbers are lower than expected. External reviewers concur that “a stronger articulation of faculty research concentrations is needed to promote the research strengths of the PhD program and the department.”

**Service:** Faculty contribute through departmental and university committees and service, as well as some external funding for international programs for their students and faculty. In addition, several hold high-level position on editorial boards for journals in the field.

**2. Centrality of program to university.** The AL/ESL Department serves a genuine university need in helping students whose first language is not English as well as preparing teachers to work with these students. Student diversity goals are in line with the university’s strategic plan; however, faculty demographics do not indicate the same kind of diversity.

**3. Viability of program.** Enrollment has increased 30% overall in the last two years. This growth is due to the newly offered BA program and the PhD program. The MA program is stable. The department is mostly funded internally, which will likely continue and which may not be sufficient to sustain degree program goals. In addition, PhD graduation rates are lower than expected for a program that has been in effect for 6 years at the time of the self-study report.

**4. Strategic focus.** The department’s strategic plan is to increase the number of faculty with a focus on a wide range of applied linguistics specialties in order to expand the course offerings at the BA and PhD levels. This plan enhances the mission of the university in terms of its strategic plan regarding international and interdisciplinary programs, as well as teaching. However, as the external reviewers point out, building both the BA and PhD program may be more than the department can handle. The committee concurs that “the AL/ESL department will need to prioritize program initiatives so that they can develop an exceptional reputation in one or two areas.”

**5. Financial Resource Analysis.** The self study and the external reviewers’ report identified several areas of concern with respect to financial resources. A pressing financial need concerns the level of support for M.A. and Ph.D. students with regard to funding and teaching workload.

**6. Progress on strategic goals and objectives.** Efforts to achieve goals set in the first academic program review in 2003 resulted in the following progress:

**Teaching:** The department addresses progress on the various teaching goals from the previous self-study with information about the addition of the PhD program (with GAs who teach in the IEP, ESL course), and the BA program. For assessment, the department mentions being able to better track IEP students through Banner and exit surveys for BA and MA students; however, no evidence is presented in the Appendices.
Research: The department has not been able to secure a computer classroom, or a dedicated classroom in which they can conduct their language research. They have sponsored several lectures and discussions of current research as well as hired a senior faculty member and 3 assistant professors. Faculty hires have helped meet some of their research goals. Senior faculty continue to apply for international grants.

Service: The service goals have been met to an extent through the international education programs the department sponsors. Faculty serve in high-profile positions in professional organizations, as well as co-edit a prestigious journal in the field (TESOL Quarterly).

7. Evaluation of goals. Self Study Section H contains the following goals for teaching, research, and service:

T1: To double the undergraduate program to serve an average of 120 majors
T2: To ensure that PhD students are progressing satisfactorily towards the degree

Success of goal T1 depends on the department’s ability to increase faculty strength and numbers before it can build the BA program, including offering more electives. (These numbers do not coincide with current numbers – doubling the major will allow for approximately 54 undergraduate majors.) The committee finds T2 to be appropriate, but a more focused faculty research agenda will be necessary to help students progress. Overall, the department cannot currently continue to accomplish all goals and simultaneously support all programs, which calls into question the viability of the program.

R1: To enhance AL/ESL’s national and international reputation for scholarship
R2: Strengthen departmental program connections to heighten the intellectual environment for scholarship
R3: Enhance the departmental infrastructure for conducting research

The committee finds the research goals, R1, R2, and R3 reasonable and appropriate. We concur with the department and the external reviewers that the goal for increased scholarship and research for Ph.D. students and faculty are essential. In addition, a focus on increased refereed publications is necessary.

S1: Increase the utilization of departmental expertise within the university
S2: Increase the utilization of departmental expertise within the larger Atlanta community

The committee finds Goals S1 and S2 to be reasonable and appropriate. Expanding their reach within the university and the larger Atlanta community through partnerships and grants are worthy goals.

III. Recommendations

In addition to our feedback on the department’s goals the committee makes the following recommendations:

1. The department must focus on getting the current group of PhD students graduated.
2. The department is trying to maintain too many degree programs, given current faculty strength and available resources. We concur with the external reviewers that the department needs to limit the number of key programs they support.
3. Quality and quantity of refereed publications needs to increase to be competitive with peer institutions. Also there needs to be an increase in the number of tenure track faculty publishing in refereed journals.
4. A stronger articulation of faculty research concentrations is needed. The external reviewers have made excellent suggestions for three possible focal areas for the faculty: (1) Applications of corpus linguistics to explore research issues in language teaching and discourse variation, (2) issues centered on English for Academic Purposes (EAP), and (3) development of L2 reading and writing abilities in university contexts.
5. Faculty should attempt to obtain external research grants, in addition to grants focused on speaking engagements and student programs.

6. The department needs to reformulate learning objectives, tailoring them to each degree program, in language that makes explicit what students will be able to do once they have mastered the objective at a level of detail that would permit diagnosing and remedying specific learning weaknesses.

7. Additional faculty hires should be based on the department’s decisions about their academic program priorities and the research focus of the department.

8. The department needs to revise the mission statement of the department with a stronger emphasis on faculty research, to be consistent with the aspiration of Georgia State to become one of the nation’s premier research universities.