December 8, 2009

To: Lauren Adamson, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
    Mary Finn, Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness

From: Fernando Reati, Chair
    Department of Modern and Classical Languages

Re: MCL Academic Program Review (2002-2009)

Please find attached the Self Study done in connection with the 2002-2009 Academic Program Review. I would like to express my gratitude to Drs. Carmen Schlig and German Torres, who took part in the many steps involved in the preparation of this study including the collection of data, meeting with various sections and individuals, the analysis of the information, and working with the Chair to write the final report.

MCL is typical among foreign languages departments in that its major strength constitutes at the same time its major challenge: the large number of language sections, programs and sub-areas it contains turns it into a very complex unit pulled in many different directions and fulfilling numerous roles at the same time. MCL includes 12 languages; 3 BA programs (French, German and Spanish); a joint BA in International Economics and Modern Languages (IEML) with the department of Economics; participation in 3 BIS concentrations (Asian Studies, Classical Studies and Italian Studies); a joint BA/MIB program in Language and International Business with the College of Business; Teacher Certification in four languages; a nationally ranked Translation & Interpretation program offering graduate Certificates in three languages; 3 MA degrees (French, German and Spanish); and participation in a Ed.S. program in collaboration with the College of Education. Additionally, MCL houses two Freshman Learning Communities, five language clubs, five study abroad programs, and the Center for Latin American and Latino Studies. This complexity explains the length of this report, which exceeds the allotted 30 pages.

The brightest spot identified in this report is the phenomenal growth in the undergraduate enrollment. Every year over 7,000 students enroll in MCL’s various courses and programs, a large number of them in fulfillment of the foreign language requirement. The increase in the number of declared majors in the three BA programs is particularly striking when compared to the previous APR period:

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>285%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>186%</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCL total</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
<td>162%</td>
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(There is an additional 159 declared majors in IEML as of Fall 09)
The number of BA degrees awarded also went up substantially, from 41 in 2002 to 67 in 2009 (63.4% growth). The increase can be attributed in part to the implementation of new and creative collaborative programs in recent years, such as IEML and the joint BA/MIB. Also, it can be attributed to better scheduling and to an increase in permanent faculty lines since the last APR (4 more TT and 6 more non-TT positions compared to 2002), which at the same time helped us decrease part-time and visiting instruction.

Another bright area is the significant growth in Japanese and Italian. Both programs are now implementing or considering IEML concentrations, and both offer study abroad options to students. To accompany this growth in the future, this report recommends the addition of a TT position in Italian and a half-VI position in Japanese.

A third significant area of growth is in Teacher Education. The implementation of the Double-the-Double initiative in 2006 to identify and attract students interested in becoming foreign language teachers has been very successful. More and better students are taking ForL and major classes as a result. To sustain this growth in the future it’s imperative that the ForL section remain staffed at least at its present level of two TT and one non-TT faculty.

A major weakness identified in the study is the lack of growth in graduate enrollments due to various factors explained in the report. Although the number of students remains constant (between 50 and 60 per year since 2000 in the three MA programs combined), this is far from satisfactory in the new budget climate and considering the challenge imposed by the required minimum of 12 students per class. To address this lack of growth the report identifies a number of initiatives, among them: the creation of a new MAT in Foreign Language Education program now being developed; the creation of a combined 5-year BA/MA in Spanish; the elimination of concentrations that slow down graduation; and the revision of a proposal for a Ph.D. in Hispanic Studies. None of these will require the addition of new faculty lines.

Another challenge is the disciplinary fragmentation that results from having many languages and programs. To increase intra- and interdepartmental collaboration and outreach, the report identifies various possible initiatives, among them: cross-list more courses within MCL and with other departments; participate more actively in cluster hire proposals; and pursue the creation of a BA degree in European Studies and Modern Languages.

A related problem resulting from the multi-disciplinary nature of the department is the role of LCT (less commonly taught) languages. The Department is committed to working with the College in reexamining the centrality of each LCT. The report recommends the addition of a permanent position in Chinese, a language that needs to grow but can’t do so with the limited resources available. MCL is exploring alternatives that might help fund this position, such as the creation of a CIBER (Center for International Business Education and Research) housed in the Institute of International Business of RCB and with MCL participation, which would include funding for some LCTs; and a Title VI grant application for the creation of a Language Resource Center for Languages and International Business that would also contemplate funding for Chinese. On the other hand, the viability of other LCTs needs to be reexamined in the context of the new budget climate, and to that effect the report identifies some weak areas.

The Self Study for the Center for Latin American and Latino Studies, a very active interdisciplinary group of faculty, is also attached.

Thank you.