California State University, East Bay

Five Year Program Review for:
Latin American Studies Program

Self Study Winter 2011

Compiled by Carlos Salomon, Asst. Professor and Director LAST

Self-Study and Five Year Plan Approved by the faculty on: 1/20/2011 (unanimous)
External Reviewers Report Received on: 3/7/2011
2.1 Program Summary

The Latin American Studies Program (LAST) is a multidisciplinary program that offers the Bachelor of Art degree and a minor. As of spring 2006, LAST now resides within the Department of Ethnic Studies under the direction of Dr. Carlos Salomon.

Dr. Linda B. Hall, professor of history at the University of New Mexico conducted the previous Latin American Studies External Review in February of 2006. She found the faculty to be extremely capable and the students to be spirited and dedicated to the field of Latin American Studies. She noted that several new appointments of Latin American experts at CSUEB showed the commitment of the administration in promoting a lively and rejuvenated program. In that meeting, Dr. Hall had the pleasure to meet with former CLASS Dean Reimonenq, Associate Dean James Okutsu, Librarian Kyzyl fenno-Smith, Dr, Norman Bowen of International Studies, Ethnic Studies Chair Barbara Paige, and LAST Director Carlos Salomon

Recommendations of External Reviewer

Dr. Hall believed that LAST had real potential. She made the following suggestions that would strengthen the program.

1. Dr. Hall felt that more faculty needed to be hired with a research focus on Latin America. Outcome: At the time of Dr. Hall’s visit LAST had ten faculty members with specialties in Latin America. Due to a hiring freeze and a budgetary crisis, the University has not been able to fulfill this goal.

2. Dr. Hall noted that the number of Majors had grown but saw the need for further growth. Outcome: LAST has seen a slight fall in the number of majors but a growth in the number of minors. Part of the problem is that the director has no release time to promote the major beyond a webpage.

3. Dr. Hall noted that LAST should seek to strengthen connections with other majors. Outcome: To date no such program exists on campus. However, LAST had begun to work with students in the Spanish department on the translation of immigrant testimonies.

4. Dr. Hall felt that a strong language program was crucial to the growth of the program and recommended the hiring of a Portuguese/Brazilian language expert. Outcome: This goal was also postponed due to the budget crisis.

5. Finally, Dr. Hall added that the program needed curricular development. Outcome: LAST curriculum has added two new courses since that time and has slightly changed the requirements for the program, making it not so reliant on the history department.
Plans Detailed in previous Self Study

The previous Five Year Plan dealt with curricular changes, faculty participation, program development, and non-curricular activities.

Curriculum: At the time the last Five Year Review was taken, the program suffered from an out-dated curriculum and lack of specialized courses. The program was also extremely loaded with requirements from the History Department. We planned to make the program accessible to a variety of learning types and interests by moving some of the history requirements to the elective section and adding new courses to count as requirements.

The last review also saw the need for increased curriculum within the major itself. At the time there was only an introductory course and a special studies course.

Faculty: The last review saw the need to hire new Latin American specialists as critical. At the time we had experts in art, literature, and geography. We especially needed Portuguese/Brazilian specialist, which would have complemented the Modern Language Program. We also needed a full-time Latin American specialist in History and Political Science.

Program Development: We planned on attracting more majors by highlighting the community needs of a strong Latin American Studies Department. We saw the need to advertise our program with a summer study tour to a Latin American nation. Since this is an area studies program, access to Latin America is critical. We also planned to have speakers and literature available. We also wanted to highlight the success of our students in an on-going research project called “Migration Story.”

Progress since previous Program Review

Although budget constraints made it impossible to hire new faculty, or even to replace retired ones, LAS has managed to make important strides. We added two new courses: LAST 3370 – Latin American Social Movements; and LAST 3260 - Latin American Women and Globalization. We added courses on comparative sociology, Ethnic Studies, and expanded the scope of our inquiry of Latin America by offering courses that cover the Latin American immigrant population in the U.S.A. Although lack of funding had forced us to end our summer study tours of Latin America (we went to Caracas, Venezuela, and San Cristobal de las Casas, Mexico),

Program Highlights and Achievements

Despite the drastic cuts to our budget, Latin American Studies continues to serve many students and provides the University with a critical connection to Latin America and the Latin American immigrant population in the Bay Area. Budget cuts have resulted in the loss of the program director’s assigned time. This has made it difficult to advertise, but there are some positive notes. We have added two new courses: LAST 3370 – Latin American Social Movements and LAST 3260 - Latin American Women and Globalization. Although we have
not been able to provide Latin American Study Tours, we have listed an array of local, national, and international internship opportunities on our website. Although the number of majors has remained steady, we have gained a significant amount of minors.

The budget crisis has also made it impossible to hire Latin American specialists in Political Science and History. However, Program Director Carlos Salomon, who has a doctorate in Latin American history, has taught courses for the past two years in the history department.

Most importantly, our website, Migration Story, has continued to inspire our students and get them out into the community. We have collected over seventy testimonies from Latin American immigrants to the Bay Area. The website has been used in research for independent scholars and the work of five of our students has been selected for an exhibit in the Ellis Island Museum.

2.2 Curriculum and Student Learning

A. Mission Statement

What does it mean when a student earns a Bachelor’s degree in Latin American Studies at CSU East Bay? It means that the student is well underway to becoming an engaged and globally-oriented citizen. Each graduate has developed a broad, yet detailed, and integrated background in the historical, political, cultural, environmental, economic, and social reality of Latin America. They will use this academic background to form sound political, ethical, and moral perceptions about Latin America that reflect their own personal convictions and life experiences.

Latin American Studies goes far beyond classroom learning and the undergraduate years. Through study in this major, graduates become life-long learners who treasure the value of examining the world from diverse and multicultural perspectives. They will develop a foundation of effective oral and written communication skills in Spanish, Portuguese, and/or other languages of the region that they will further hone over their subsequent careers. These linguistic skills will allow them to seek out and comprehend what Latin Americans themselves have to say about their world and the significant issues confronting them. In this way, graduates will be able to impart their understanding of and passion for the region to their peers and to future generations. By doing so, they will take a modest, but important step at improving the overall political, geographical, cultural, and economic relationships between the United States, Latin America, and the world.

Program Goals

1. To provide students with an in depth and general understanding of the histories, geographies, literatures, cultures, economics, and societies of Latin America.

2. To provide students with an understanding that Latin America is a multicultural and multiethnic region of the world.
3. To provide students with an understanding of the salient political, social, and economic issues facing Latin America today: i.e. globalization, nationalism, regionalism, democratization, social justice, economic development and environmental conservation, and gender and ethnic equality.

4. To provide students with an understanding of Latin America’s long relationship with the United States and its growing ties with the rest of the world.

5. To encourage students to learn how insignificant national borders have become and recognize that there is a strong Latin American presence here and vice versa.

6. To encourage students to understand that Latin Americans themselves are capable of addressing and resolving the ills of their region.

7. To provide students with the understanding that Latin American civilizations are not an American variants of European civilization, but rather the products of a long and complex cultural and economic interplay between indigenous, European, and African civilizations.

8. To encourage students to develop an appreciation of Latin American high and popular culture in all its manifestations, such as plastic and performing arts, letters and poetry, music, dance, cuisine, and sports.

**Learning Outcomes and Indicators**

Students should have a basic knowledge of Latin American history, including a grasp of major events, details, and timelines as well as an interpretive approach to understanding Latin America’s past.

**Indicators:** We will know students have this knowledge when they:

- Complete HIST 3600 and 3605.
- Pass the Pre and Post tests for HIST 3600 and 3605
- Submit essay test or interpretative term paper from HIST 3600 or 3605 to be evaluated by program director/advisor and class instructor.

Students should develop an understanding of the geographic diversity of Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean Islands, and South America, including a background in the geographic dimensions of the physical and human environments, natural resources, their distribution, exploitation, and consumption in Latin America today.

**Indicators:** We will know students have developed this understanding when they:

- Complete GEOG 3510 and/or 3515.
- Submit essay test or interpretative term paper from GEOG 3510 or 3515 to be evaluated by program director/advisor and class instructor.

Students should develop an understanding of the diverse cultural, anthropological, and/or sociological background of Latin America.

**Indicators:** We will know students have developed this understanding when they:

- Complete ANTH 3250, 3510, and/or ES 3800.
• Submit essay test or interpretative term paper from ANTH 3250, 3510, and/or ES 3800 to be evaluated by program director/advisor and class instructor.

Students should develop an understanding and appreciation of the rich and diverse cultural heritage and life of Latin America, especially in literature, theater, and the plastic and performing arts.

Indicators: We will know students have developed this understanding and appreciation when they:
• Complete ART 3010, and/or MLL 3461, 3463, 3495, 4495.
• Participate in cultural activities on and off campus (e.g. concerts, theater, films, museum exhibits, conferences, performances, events, etc.) and submit to program director/advisor a written Summary of Cultural Activities in which the student will summarize and evaluate this participation and its contribution to an appreciation of Latin American culture.
Students are to integrate their geographical, historical, economical, social, political, and cultural knowledge of Latin America in an interdisciplinary and comparative way.

Indicators: We will know students are able to integrate knowledge in an interdisciplinary fashion when they:
• Complete LAST 3000 or LAST 3370
• Submit an interdisciplinary research project attached to LAST 3000 or 3370 to be evaluated by program director/advisor.
• Submit two research papers, each analyzing the same issue from the perspective of two different disciplines to be evaluated by program director/advisor.

To encourage students to develop good communication skills in Spanish, Portuguese, and/or other languages of the region, so that once they travel to Latin America they will comprehend what Latin Americans say about themselves and the world.

Indicators: We will know students have this skill when they:
• Organize class presentations or attend lectures conducted in Spanish or Portuguese.
• Participate in one of our International Programs in Mexico, Spain, or Chile.
• Complete and submit subjective essay examinations and/or group oral projects in Spanish or Portuguese to program director/advisor.
• Test or demonstrated fluency as determined by program director.

Students should approach course material in a manner that fosters critical thinking, reflection, and the organization of ideas.

Indicators: We will know students approach the material in this way when they:
• Complete the Capstone Requirement and write a lengthy research paper or project evaluated by program director/advisor and at least two LAS faculty.
• Participate in a debate/series/presentation on an issue dealing with Latin America or the Mexican American/Latino communities in the US.
Students should understand that ethnic, racial, and gender issues are important prisms through which to view Latin American civilization.

**Indicators:** We will know students have this understanding when they:
- Complete ES 3201, 3202, 3210 or 3805.
- Submit to program director/advisor a research paper from any course that addresses issues of ethnicity, race, and gender in Latin America or within the Mexican American/Latino communities in the US.

Student should understand that Latin America does not exist in a vacuum, but rather is in the center of a dynamic interplay of global forces.

**Indicators:** We will know students have this understanding when they:
- Complete INST 3100.
- Submit essay test or interpretative term paper from INST 3100 to be evaluated by program director/advisor and class instructor.

Students will have an understanding of the pre-Columbian heritage of Latin America.

**Indicators:** We will know students have this understanding when they:
- Complete ART 3055 and/or ANTH 3250
- Complete MLL 3461 and submit to program director/advisor a subjective essay examination, group oral project, or research project dealing with the pre-Columbian literary heritage of Latin America.

Students will have knowledge of major developments in Latin America since 1945.

**Indicators:** We will know students have this knowledge when they:
- Complete HIST 3620.
- Submit to program director/advisor a subjective essay examination, group oral project, or research project dealing with the impact of the Cuban Revolution and the Cold War on Latin American societies.

Students will develop an understanding that Latin American immigrants in the United States were “pushed and pulled” by forces operating on both sides of the border.

**Indicators:** We will know students have developed this understanding when they:
- Complete ES 3201, 3202, 3805, HIST 3515, and/or SOC 3416.
- Participate in a student or community organization that interacts and/or provides support or services to immigrants from Latin America.

Students should develop a personal familiarity with diverse cultures in Latin America.

**Indicators:** We will know students have developed this familiarity when they:
- Participate in an on or off-campus student organization with multicultural emphasis.
• Regular participation in cultural activities on or off campus (see Summary of Cultural Participation, Learning Outcome 4).
• Travel or study in Latin America and submit a reflective paper describing the process of becoming cognizant of the culture and the impact of this personal experience.

Comparison of LAST to similar CSU Programs and Top Programs in the U.S.

1. CSU Chico offers a B.A. in Latin American Studies. The program has a similar orientation as ours, requires the acquisition of a second language, and assists students with study abroad opportunities. The course offerings are far more developed, with almost no generalized courses as requirements. In this way the student benefits from the interdisciplinary nature of the program, which is set entirely within the context of Latin America.

2. San Diego State University offers a B.A. and M.A. in Latin American Studies. They have also added two joint programs to their masters program – the MA/MBA – with the School of Business, and a MA/MPH with the Department of Public Health. SDSU also houses the Center for Latin American Studies which provides for research oriented activity. The orientation and course offerings of the program are similar to ours.

3. With its vast resources, Stanford University’s Center for Latin American Studies is a top program in the nation. The program offers a BA and MA and has over 60 affiliated faculty members. The university has a separate and distinguished collection of Latin American reading material including a large collection of archival documents. The Center invites top Latin Americanist scholars from around the world to hold symposiums and to live in residence as visiting faculty.

4. Latin American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin is perhaps the leading program of its kind in the country. It offers the BA, MA, and Ph.D. The program has over 115 affiliated faculty members dedicated to the study of Latin America. UT Austin has one of the finest collections of Latin American reading materials in the country. It also boasts of the Netti Lee Benson Archives. UT Austin houses the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies and has six separate centers including the Argentine Studies Center, Brazil Center, Center for Environmental Studies in Latin America (CESLA), Center for Indigenous Languages of Latin America (CILLA), Center for Latin American Social Policy (CLASPO), the Latin American Network Information Center, and the Mexican Center.

2.3 Students and Faculty

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Admittedly, Latin American Studies is a small program which takes few resources to run. We do not have to deal with the planning of over 90% of the curriculum since it is taught in other departments. We only teach two courses per year at this point. Both are taught by the program director.

The APR Summary (above) does not accurately reflect the number of majors nor does it list the number on minors. Currently we have four majors, after having graduated 4 last year. However, we have 10 minor degree students. About half of our students are transfers. Are students are typically Hispanic, though not exclusively. Latin American Studies tends to frighten away non-Hispanic students due to the foreign language requirement. Students must pass a written exam or must take at least two upper division courses in Spanish.
Our two main courses, LAST 3000, The Latin American World and LAST 3370, Latin American Social Movements, are both upper division courses. They both fulfill GE requirements for social science.

2.4 Faculty

The LAST Program at CSU East Bay has no full-time faculty nor has it been granted a tenure-track position.

2.4 Resources

The LAST Program has access to administrative support from the Ethnic Studies Department. We also have a small yearly budget for supplies.

2.6 Requirements

LAST does not require more than the typical number of units.
The last Five Year Plan relied heavily on the assumption that the university would continue to enjoy a healthy budget. We assessed the need to hire at least three faculty in the area of political science, history, and Portuguese or Brazilian studies. We also saw the need for a Latin American economist. We also saw a continued and expanded program of Latin American study tours was seen as central to our ability to attract students. Finally, we say the need of a slightly expanded administrative expense account. Unfortunately the state’s fiscal crisis saw the need for deep austerity measures, which not only doomed our plan for expanding the faculty and increasing student access to Latin American study tours, but it also meant that the director would have to give up the course release time used to effectively run the program. Although we were able to make positive changes to the curriculum, as outlined in the last Five Year Plan, we were unable to accomplish many of our goals. Therefore it is necessary to deal with the reality of our situation. Latin American Studies is important to the health of any four year university. It provides students and the community with vital information and a pathway to work with our neighbors. This Plan will make proposals that will improve our program while taking into account the reality of our budget.

3.1 Curriculum

The Latin American Studies major consists of 60-84 units; the B.A. degree requires a total of 180 units.

As formulated now, the Latin American Studies Degree is divided into three sections: Lower Division Requirements, Upper Division Requirements, and Distribution Requirements. One of the problems with this format is that much of the first section has nothing to do with Latin America. I propose to eliminate areas A-C and concentrate on Modern Language and Literature

I. Lower Division Requirements (12-36 units)

Select one course from each group:

A. ANTH 1000 Introduction to Anthropology (4), or
   ANTH 1300 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (4),
   or
   SOC 1000 Introduction to Sociology (4), or
   ES 1001 Introduction to Ethnic Studies (4)

B. ECON 1000 Economics in Public Issues (4), or
   ECON 2301 Principles of Microeconomics (4)

C. GEOG 2300 Cultural Geography (4), or
   GEOG 2310 Economic and Resource Geography (4)
D. Modern Language Requirement
Demonstrate proficiency in Spanish or Portuguese by completion of the third quarter of intermediate language at CSUEB, or by an examination administered by the Latin-American Studies Program.

PROPOSED CHANGES
1. Modern Languages and Literatures of Latin America (12-16 units) (prerequisites exist for sequence courses unless you obtain consent from instructor. At least one literature course must be taken)
   A. Intermediate Spanish I, II, III, MLL 2401, MLL 2402, MLL 2403 (12-16 units)
   B. Intermediate Spanish for Bilingual Speakers I, II, III (4-12)
   C. Spanish Conversation MLL 2410 (4) 3461
   D. Introduction to Spanish-American Literature: 1492 to 1900 - MLL 3461 (4)
   E. Introduction to Spanish-American Literature: 1900 to the Present –MLL 3463 (4)
   F. Spanish-American Culture and Civilization - MLL 3495 (4)
   G. A Single Movement, Country or Theme: Spanish American Literature - MLL 4495 (4)

The next section only needs updating and reorganization:
KEEP THIS SECTION AS IT IS EXCEPT FOR THE ADDITION OF ONE NEW COURSE
II. Upper Division Core Courses (16 units)
Select four courses from the following:
LAST 3000 The Latin American World (4)
LAST 3260 Latin American Women and Globalization (4)
LAST 3370 Latin American Social Movements (4)
LAST 4005 TEACHING IN A BILINGUAL-BICULTURAL SETTING – NEW COURSE (described in section 3.2)
LAST 4010 INTERNSHIP CAPSTONE (NEW)
HIST 3605 Modern Latin America (4)
INTS 3100 Global Systems (4)

REORGANIZE THIS SECTION
A. Art and Literature (8 units)
   Select two courses from two different disciplines:
   - ART 3010 Latin American Art (4), 3055 Ancient American Art (4);

B. Society and Environments (8 units)
   Select one course in Geography and another in either Anthropology or Ethnic Studies:
PROPOSED CHANGES

III. Art, Literature, and Society (16 units)
Select four courses from two different disciplines:
ANTH 3250 Precolumbian America: Aztec, Inca, Maya (4)
ANTH 3510 South America (4)
ART 3010 Latin American Art (4)
ART 3055 Ancient American Art (4)
E S 3800 Peoples of Central America (4)
GEOG 3510 Geography of Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean Islands (4)
GEOG 3515 Geography of South America (4)
MLL 3461 Introduction to Spanish-American Literature: 1492-1900 (4)
MLL 3463 Introduction to Spanish-American Literature: 1900 to the Present (4)
MLL 3495 Spanish-American Culture and Civilization (4)
MLL 4495 A Single Movement, Country or Theme: Spanish-American Literature (4)

C. History and Contemporary Politics (8 units)
Select at least two courses from two different disciplines:
ES 3103 The African Diaspora (4)
ES 3230 Oral Traditions (4)
ES 3130 Slavery in the Americas (4)
HIST 3138 Imperial Spain (4)
HIST 3600 Colonial Latin America (4)
HIST 3622 Mexico since 1810 (4)
HIST 3632 Film and Society in Latin America (4)
POSC 3280 Political Systems of Latin America (4)
D. Latino Experience in U.S. (8 units)
Select at least two courses:
ES 3202 Latino/a Writers (4)
ES 3210 Latinas in the United States (4)
ES 3805 Latin American Immigration (4)
HIST 3515 Mexican-Americans and the American Southwest (4)
SOC 3416 Sociology of the Mexican American Family (4)
The Latin American Studies Minor degree program has already been changed and requires no change.

3.2 Students

Although the number of majors has not increased, we have seen a higher number of minors. Part of the problem has been the lack of release time for the director to actively recruit students and implement effective planning. Nevertheless, we must seek innovative ways to attract students to
our program. Our courses are very popular. They fill up and students keep coming back. The first step is to increase the presence of faculty-student interaction. I have successfully guided the students to create a Latin American Studies student club. This club receives $1500 per quarter to spend on outreach and student activities. I am working with the officers in order to make an effective list of activities. This club, once its presence increases, will be an effective recruitment tool.

I also plan on increasing the connection between the Latin American Studies Program and the Spanish Department. I have also collaborated on a small grant, from the Warren Allen Fund, with Jesus Diaz Caballero, to translate some of the stories on the Migration Story student led project. This project not only gets students out into the community to engage in field work and practice oral history interviews, but Diaz is also training his top students in the translation of the stories to Spanish. This project is located at www.migrationstory.org and is geared toward the stories of immigration to the Bay Area from Latin America. Furthermore, I have talked with the Spanish faculty and LAST students about a greater integration of Spanish courses within the Latin American Studies major. All involved in this conversation felt positive about this proposed step.

I believe that it is time to begin talking more seriously about how to train educators to deal with the growing presence of Hispanic students in the area and the need for more bi-cultural and bilingual teachers. I believe that the Spanish Department, the Latin American Studies Department, and the Education Departments can and should revisit the idea of training a new generation of educators who can meet the demands of this demographic in the twenty first century. Therefore, I propose the creation of a class that begins to link students with the practice of teaching in predominantly Hispanic Communities, such as Hayward. To implement this idea LAST would need to collaborate with the Department of Teacher Education and with the Hayward Unified School District. This will give our students a direct path to a future career. All students, however, do not want to pursue teaching. However, training students for careers and graduate school is important. Therefore I propose the creation of a capstone course that would require students to complete an internship with a local Bay Area development or non-profit agency that caters to Latin Americans. I have already made many connections in this regard.

3.3 Faculty

There is still a need for faculty in the area of Latin American Studies. At the least we need a political scientist, a full-time historian, and an economist. But the reality of the situation is that these vacancies will remain unfilled for an uncertain amount of time. We must continue to provide the best education possible with what we have available. I have been teaching one course per year in the History Department. I have also talked to Jesus Diaz Caballero about teaching courses on the African presence in Latin America. These types of cross-departmental collaborations will insure the progress of our program.

3.4 Resources
Currently we receive a 20% allocation from the administrative support person who resides in Ethnic Studies. We also have a small supplies budget. We need a slightly increased budget to meet the needs of our plans. But the reality of the situation dictates that this may be impossible. LAST needs to collaborate with other departments on raising outside funds, preferably through grants. I see the Migration Story project and the teacher training project of two areas that can generate grant funds.
On February 18, 2011, I conducted the external review for the Latin American Studies program at CSU Hayward. I had the pleasure of meeting with several dedicated faculty members, including Latin American Studies program coordinator Carlos Salomón, Ethnic Studies chair Nicholas Baham, and Foreign Languages professors Iliana Holbrook and Jesús Díaz Caballero. I also met with Interim Dean Kathleen Rountree and Interim Associate Dean Jiansheng Guo of the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences. I had an informative conversation with librarian Kyzyl Fenno-Smith and shared lunch with a few Latin American Studies students.

Since I have been teaching in the CSU since 1998 and have coordinated Chico State’s Latin American Studies major and minor since 2007, I am acutely aware of the state’s budget crisis and the pressures that faculty and administration currently face to eliminate programs with low enrollments. At first glance, the Latin American Studies program would appear to be “low-hanging fruit,” i.e., a logical place for administration to make cuts. However, little would be gained by cutting a program that is currently costing so little. I strongly believe that a great opportunity would be lost to improve CSU East Bay’s relationship with the surrounding (largely Latino) community and the larger global community, of which we are all a part. Without question, this program can be revived at a limited cost to administration.

Before I go further, allow me to explain the Latin American Studies program at Chico State. We currently have between 40-45 majors and roughly 15 minors. Every year, we graduate over twenty majors. While it’s true that our student population is slightly larger than East Bay’s, with about 14,600 students enrolled this year, only about 9% of the population is Latino, compared to 15% at East Bay (a figure which, arguably, should be higher, given the demographics of the surrounding community). At Chico State, roughly half of our Latin American Studies majors and minors are Latino; the other half are Anglo students who take Spanish language classes at Chico State. Nearly all of our students study abroad for a semester or a year. Recent grads have taken jobs in the state and federal government, become teachers and nurses, gone on to law school, pursued MAs, become firemen, worked for NGOs in the US and in Latin America, worked in the travel industry, or become social workers. In short, the Latin American Studies program at Chico State is a viable part of the university curriculum, despite suffering under the same crippling budget climate as the rest of the CSU system.

Given my familiarity with the CSU’s budget climate, I will not simply recommend that CSU East Bay immediately hire Latin Americanist faculty in history, economics, and political science (hires that are urgently needed, incidentally). Instead, I will focus my suggestions on how the program can improve using existing resources.

Alignment of the Latin American Studies program with CSU East Bay’s stated mission, values, vision, and strategic mandates

CSU East Bay’s mission as it appears on its website contains a pledge to provide a “multicultural learning experience” that would prepare students to be “socially responsible contributors to their
communities, locally and globally.” These commitments are reaffirmed as part of the university’s values and vision. To cite the values statement, “We value engagement in the civic, cultural and economic life of the communities we serve—locally, regionally, and globally. We value critical and creative thinking, effective communication, ethical decision-making, and multi-cultural competence.” The university’s Seven Strategic Mandates (2007) restate the commitment to multiculturalism and commit to what is called “regional stewardship.”

A healthy Latin American Studies program will clearly help the university meet its stated mission, values, vision, and mandates. It can provide constructive linkages to the local, regional, and global community, foster multiculturalism, improve recruitment of Latino students and faculty, and prepare students for careers in the increasingly competitive global marketplace. A vibrant Latin American Studies program can also bolster existing campus programs in History, Foreign Languages, Ethnic Studies, International Studies, Women’s Studies, and International Business. Additional linkages to Education, Criminal Justice, Nursing, and Social Work should be explored.

**Assets and achievements**

Before discussing my recommendations, I would first like to point out the program’s many assets and achievements. Among them:

--The Latin American Studies program coordinator, Carlos Salomón, is very capable and committed. Last year, the University of Oklahoma published his book, *Pío Pico: The Last Governor of Mexican California* (Oklahoma, 2010). This publication should strengthen his case for tenure and will put him in a better position to lead the revival of the Latin American Studies program.

--Professor Salomón’s Migration Stories project (www.migrationstories.org) is an excellent platform for student and community involvement, and could be leveraged to bring in outside funding. It is a tremendous asset both for the department of Ethnic Studies in general and Latin American Studies in particular.

--The Ethnic Studies department chair, Nicholas Baham, emphatically supports Professor Salomón and the Latin American Studies program. This kind of support is crucial if Latin American Studies is to survive this dire budget crisis. Faculty and administration discussed whether Latin American Studies belongs in Ethnic Studies, but it appears that there are no clear alternatives, and given Professor Baham’s support, I believe that Latin American Studies should stay where it is currently housed.

--The Foreign Languages department appears cooperative and helpful. I found professors Iliana Holbrook and Jesús Díaz Caballero to be very engaged and willing to collaborate with Latin American Studies. Professor Salomón is proposing that Foreign Language faculty teach more courses in the Latin American Studies major and minor. Additional collaboration should be explored.

--The Latin American Studies student club, while small, is very well funded, to the tune of $1,500 a quarter. An active, flush student club will help to raise student interest in the Latin American Studies degree programs. The Bay Area offers plenty of opportunities for field trips (e.g., the Olmec exhibit currently at the De Young) that will attract students.

--CSU East Bay’s location provides a wealth of opportunities for internships and collaboration with locals and local communities.
Major, structural recommendations

1. Streamline the major and improve course offerings.

As an outsider, I found the major and minor requirements as they stood to be onerous and highly confusing. Fortunately, Prof. Salomón has already taken steps to streamline the major. Gone are the classes that had little or nothing to do with Latin America. Also gone are classes that had not been taught for years. The lower division requirements are concentrated now on language and literature.

Prof. Salomón is also proposing a dual capstone option for the major and minor. LAST 4005, Teaching in a Bilingual-Bicultural Setting, will allow for teaching internships in local schools. This has the advantage of strengthening ties with the Department of Education and especially the B-CLAD program. The other capstone option, a new course that Prof. Salomón is calling “LAST 4010: Internship Capstone,” is also highly promising, since it would connect interested students with the many Latin American- or Latino-based NGOs in the Bay Area.

Both capstones should be writing intensive, and both have the potential to greatly enhance the experience of Latin American Studies students, will draw majors, and will help CSU East Bay meet its stated goal of providing “regional stewardship.”

2. Improve Study Abroad

One of the ways that Latin American Studies has been able to survive and thrive at Chico State is that we have a very active study abroad program. According to Tasha Dev, Chico State’s Study Abroad coordinator, more than 10% of Chico State students study abroad before they graduate, well above the national average of 5%. A healthy study abroad program not only provides students with invaluable experiences and with opportunities to improve their language skills, it also helps relieve student demand for scarce campus resources and classes.

When I went to the website of CSU East Bay’s Office of International Education, I was surprised to find the website devoted almost exclusively to foreign students coming to CSU East Bay, as opposed to East Bay students going abroad. I found the link to the CSU’s International Programs (IP), which requires a yearlong commitment and a GPA of roughly 3.0, but noted that CSU East Bay has apparently not formed a relationship with an outside provider. A weblink directs students to a whole host of study abroad options, but from what I could tell, students are then responsible for the rather tedious and time-consuming process of getting study abroad credits to transfer.

Here at Chico State, many students take advantage of the IP yearlong option. But those who cannot make this commitment often go aboard for a semester or a summer session with the University Study Abroad Consortium (USAC), run out of the University of Nevada, Reno. Chico State is one of the founding members of USAC, so it may be that Chico State students receive somewhat privileged treatment through USAC, but I would recommend that CSU East Bay explore this and other options to make it easier for students to go abroad. (Other CSU’s who are part of the USAC consortium include Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, CSU Dominguez Hills, CSU Fresno, and CSU Stanislaus.) USAC has roughly forty programs
around the world, five in Latin America (Mexico, Chile, and three in Costa Rica). It also has four programs in Spain. USAC isn’t cheap, but there is some financial aid available. And since USAC does not require a yearlong commitment (or even a high GPA!), students on a budget can go away for a shorter period of time.

In years past, CSU East Bay’s Latin American Studies program offered annual “study tours” to Caracas, Venezuela and San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico. Professor Salomón is to be applauded for organizing and leading these trips, but I think there is no substitute for another semester- and year-long study abroad opportunity.

3. Explore ways to link Latin American Studies to GE

Another way that Latin American Studies has survived at Chico State is that we are well-integrated into the GE system. Currently, at Chico State, the GE Upper Division requirements are grouped into 20 “themes.” I coordinate Theme I, which is called “Mexico and Central America.” Once Theme I students have taken one course in the Upper Division Humanities, one in the Social Sciences, and one in the Natural Sciences (thereby fulfilling the state of California’s requirement for graduation), they are well on their way to getting a degree in Latin American Studies, particularly if they have Spanish or Portuguese language skills. I understand that CSU East Bay has no such system. But if something like the “themes” were adopted, or if the current freshman “clusters” were expanded to include GE, it would be a great way to direct students toward undersubscribed majors like Latin American Studies.

4. Improve linkages with other programs on campus

Latin American Studies program coordinator Carlos Salomón is taking a step in the right direction by strengthening the foreign language component to the major. In a meeting with Foreign Language faculty, he also proposed that Foreign Language faculty teach two LAST courses that have been difficult to cover. Salomón also believes that the Migration Story project presents an excellent opportunity for improved collaboration with Foreign Languages. For their part, Professors Holbrook and Díaz expressed the desire to meet more often and learn about what other Latin Americanist faculty on campus are teaching, in order to avoid duplicating course content.

Program director Salomón might also explore a closer relationship with CSU East Bay’s International Studies program, which currently does not include any Latin American Studies courses in its electives for the major and minor.

I would also encourage exploring closer ties with professional degree programs such as Nursing, Criminal Justice, Social Work, and Education.

5. Apply to become a certified Hispanic Serving Institution through the federal Department of Education.

This past fall, Chico State was granted this distinction with a Latino student body population of less than 10%. Although I am unaware of what exactly constitutes a “Hispanic Serving Institution,” I think CSU East Bay should investigate this possibility, for not only might it
help the university attract Latino students, it can also open the door to a series of federal grants.

In this vein, the university might also explore the possibility of applying for additional grants through Title VI, as suggested by Thomas Davies, who performed the external review in 2000. Such an effort is currently underway here at Chico State.

6. Make a hire in the History department sometime during the next two years.

One reason to do this is that Professor Salomón, a trained historian housed in the Ethnic Studies department, is stretched far too thin. He cannot be expected to revive Latin American Studies with his current workload. By my count, he has prepped and taught nine class over the past five-plus years: two history preps (“HIST 3605: Modern Latin America” and “HIST 3632: History of Mexico”), five courses for Ethnic Studies (“ES 1201 and 1202: Ethnicity in American History,” parts one and two; “ES 3800: The People of Central America”; “ES 3805: Latin American Immigration”; “and “ES 3230: Oral Traditions”), and two courses in Latin American Studies (“LAST 3000: The Latin American World” and the very popular “LAST 3370: Latin American Social Movements”).

In 2006, Professor Linda Hall strongly urged a hire in History, and I believe that this course of action remains essential today. (In the interest of full disclosure, both Professor Hall and I are historians.) If History hires a Brazilianist, particularly one who works on slavery, the university could not only meet the need for a full-time Latin Americanist in the History department, it would also provide important linkages to Ethnic/African-American Studies and International Studies and might help revive the moribund program in Portuguese. Over the last few years, Brazil has become the most important country in Latin America. It is now what Mexico appeared to be more than fifteen years ago—the country that had the resources and the potential to join the developed world. Let’s not forget that Brazil is also slated to host the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 summer Olympic Games. If CSU East Bay can make this hire sometime in the next two years, it will attract students to its majors in History, Latin American Studies, Ethnic Studies, and possibly Portuguese, and would enable connections to the local community, especially the Bay Area’s growing Brazilian population. Last of all, a hire in History would allow Professor Salomón, who is assigned to the Ethnic Studies department, to devote more of his talents to reviving and managing the Latin American Studies program.

Recommendations for the short- to medium term

1. A .2 annual release for the Latin American Studies program coordinator

Notwithstanding the pressure to collapse programs in this time of austerity, Latin American Studies affords the opportunity to bring the university into closer compliance with its stated commitment to regional stewardship, multiculturalism, and global competency. To help the university meet its goals, I recommend that Interim Dean of the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences, Kathleen Rountree, fund the Latin American Studies program coordinator with a .2 release every year for the next three years, with the understanding that if Latin American Studies does not have, say, a combined 35 majors and minors by the end of the three-year period, the course release will be rescinded and the program could well fade away.
If the program grows as I expect it will, the dean could consider eventually boosting her commitment to Latin American Studies with a .2 release every semester.

At Chico State, I receive a course release each semester to coordinate the major and minor. Among my duties are the following: advise students, fill out major and minor clearance forms and do course substitutions, do scheduling, spearhead curriculum and catalog changes, evaluate faculty, write an annual assessment report, and recruit majors. This last task is perhaps the most important. Every semester, I recruit in LAST classes and Spanish classes. I find that many students are either not aware of our program, or they do not know how feasible our major really is, especially when combined with a major in Spanish, International Relations, or History.

The key to this work is the course release. Without it, most of the work required to keep the major afloat and healthy would not get done. So again, my recommendation is to offer the coordinator of the program a .2 release for each of three years, then determine whether the investment has paid sufficient dividends.

2. Update the website for Latin American Studies
It looks like the website was last updated in spring 2008. Rightly or wrongly, an outdated website suggests a moribund program. A tech-savvy student worker (paid out the $1,500 that the student club receives quarterly?) should be able to straighten this out in no time.

3. Update the assessment plan for Latin American Studies.
As it stands, the assessment plan looks cumbersome and unfeasible, sure to cause resentment among overworked faculty. I recommend program assessment, rather than the assessment of individual classes. At Chico State, we perform program assessment in the capstone seminar, a writing proficiency course that is offered every spring to graduating seniors with majors or minors in Latin American Studies. At the start of the semester, we identify which of our “student learning outcomes” we will test in the seminar. Two faculty then assess the final papers to gauge whether that year’s student learning outcome had been met. We also issue an exit survey to our students in that class.

4. The program’s Mission Statement should be strengthened.
Since students want to know the practical applications of their program of study, I would emphasize how Latin American Studies helps students participate in the global community of which they are a part. I would also stress how Latin American Studies can further one’s professional development as a nurse, social worker, businessperson, educator, grassroots activist, environmentalist, etc. I might also mention the program’s service-learning component.

Here at Chico State, I am trying to add a link to our program website entitled “What can I do with a major in Latin American Studies?” I plan to profile four of our recent graduates.

5. The capstone(s) need to be taught.
6. Given the library’s budget situation, the commitment to Interlibrary Loan must be maintained.

Concluding remarks
The Latin American Studies program at CSU East Bay is not particularly healthy at the present moment, given the lack of faculty hires and the lack of administrative support for the program coordinator. However, with the help of some modest administrative support, this program can help the university meet its declared mission, values, vision, and mandates. A hire in History would go a long way to reviving this program, but other, more modest steps can be taken to increase connections with other majors, minors, and certificates and the community to draw attention to the practical, professional nature of this program.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you.