### Program Information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Assessed</th>
<th>M.A in Hispanic Studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>World Languages and Cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Chair</td>
<td>Susan Byrne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Coordinator</td>
<td>Margarita Jara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Submitted</td>
<td>1/25/2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Contact Person for This Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Margarita Jara</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>202-895-1690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:margarita.jara@unlv.edu">margarita.jara@unlv.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The following is the list of the learning outcomes established for the M.A. in Hispanic Studies in the Department of World Languages and Cultures:

1. demonstrate an ability to write academic texts in Spanish with a superior level of language proficiency;
2. discuss and analyze academic and non-academic materials in Spanish, read on a superior level, and write analytically on literary and cultural topics in Spanish;
3. be familiar with basic concepts of linguistics and main topics of Hispanic linguistics, with an emphasis on the acquisition of Spanish as a second language, the teaching of Spanish, and Spanish sociolinguistics;
4. be familiar with major literary movements and the history of Spanish or Latin American literature along with the most prominent authors;
5. understand the nature and development of the culture of Spain or Latin America;
6. learn the process of advanced scholarly research;
7. be familiar with the history, theory, and application of translation;
8. acquire broad linguistic, cultural or literary knowledge and acquire substantial knowledge in three sub-areas of Hispanic Studies based on reading list provided by the department. Students must not only show a broad yet detailed knowledge of their subject on a
comprehensive written examination, but also be able to discuss their chosen fields in an oral examination;

9. students qualifying and choosing the project option are expected to familiarize themselves with relevant theories and bibliographical material on their chosen topic. They must be able to develop a theme or thesis based on appropriate methodology, sound arguments, and insightful discussion. Finally they need to demonstrate their ability to write correct and polished Spanish and to defend their project in an oral examination.

LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSED
During the academic year 2017-2018, eight classes were offered in the M.A. of Hispanic Studies Program (SPAN 709, SPAN 720, SPAN 740 (x2), SPAN 696, SPAN 650, WLC 714 and WLC 715). In these classes, outcomes one, two, three, four, five, six and seven are both goals and object of assessment. In general, depending on the three areas of concentration that a student chooses, a combination of outcomes number one, two, three, four, five, six and seven are assessed.

HOW LEARNING OUTCOMES WERE ASSESSED
Assessment in these courses is made on a continual basis through class discussions, written assignments, annotated bibliographies, examinations, and semester research projects. Through small writing, analytical, and investigative assignments throughout the semester, students prepare themselves to synthesize and analyze a sizable amount of information and a variety of texts or data for their annotated bibliographies and research projects in most of the graduate seminars offered. These projects are analytical papers that require students to conduct scholarly research and develop their skills in critical thinking, reasoning, and coherent and cohesive exposition.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES
The following aspects were analyzed: student engagement in research and scholarship, activities requiring critical analysis and expertise, and the development of extensive knowledge in the field under study. From the eight courses taught during the evaluation period, two courses taught in the spring 2017 are assessed in this report: Span 696 (elective taught in Spanish) and WLC 715 (elective taught in English).

SPAN 696. The SPAN 696 class of spring 2018 was a successful graduate seminar. This was a cross-listed class that served as a place of communication between undergraduate and graduate students. The students improved markedly over the course of the semester and acquired appreciable skills in academic writing and scholarly research, as well as her knowledge of Spanish dialects, which included socio-historical, demographic and geographical information as well as linguistic characteristics.

Their comprehension of the subject matter was tested through two exams, articles reading, an annotated bibliography and an outline. In addition, their ability to create scholarly research was revealed in their final semester project. In the latter they showed they had learned to write a research paper, incorporate meaningful bibliography, to
establish a unified and focused thesis, to develop arguments supported by textual evidence, and to analyze linguistic data.

**WLC 715**
The WLC 715 was a successful graduate seminar. Students were required to read and analyze a significant number of texts on translation theory, selected *ad hoc* for their historical relevance in the field of translation studies. Additionally, students were asked to verify the applicability of the theories discussed by analyzing a number of literary and non-literary translations. The process of comparing original and translated texts was specifically meant to foster communication, inquiry and critical thinking, as defined in the UULOs.

**UULOS/GRADUATE COMPONENT**
In the classes offered in our M.A. in Hispanic Studies program the students engage in research and scholarship. Each of the eight classes offered in the academic year 2017-2018 involved either a literature review and/or a written project. Students are assessed in their ability to produce research papers. They acquire the ability to explain complex matters, and to communicate and support opinions by developing cogent arguments and hypotheses. Students are required to organize and prioritize ideas to convey to the reader what is significant. The relationship among ideas is consistently clear, due to organizational and developmental principles (e.g., cause and effect, comparison, chronology). All these skills foster intellectual breadth and are essential to critical thinking and communication.

Students develop knowledge of global and multicultural societies. In literature, culture, linguistics and translation classes, students not only gain ability to decipher meanings, and perspectives in literary and non-literary texts; but also understanding on the linguistic structures and the social impact of bilingualism and dialect contact.

All three major areas of concentration in the MA in Hispanic Studies subscribe to these outcomes in varying degrees, but they all are taught with equal rigor and adherence to the best pedagogical practices of the profession. Final results, of course, vary from year to year. While best results are desirable and even expected from all students, year to year performances derive from individuals’ capacities and effort. Most of our students persevere in their progress toward a degree.

**RESULTS**
Students are assessed not only on the depth of their knowledge, but also on their ability to write accurate Spanish in a focused and coherent manner. The instructors report that all the students progressed in the exposition of their ideas, improved their grammar and vocabulary, and learned the mechanics of conducting research in the humanities with the aid of the technology available today in this field. Some students struggled in their analytical papers to combine the findings of their research and their own ideas, but all in all students acquired a clear understanding of the mechanics of writing an analytical research paper.

- **SPAN 696**: Their final papers had a great quality considering that they have only taken one linguistics class before. They were able to organize the paper following the
traditional scheme of a linguistic research paper, to write in an excellent academic Spanish and to provide solid arguments.

- **WLC 715**: Course grading was based on a series of practical assignments, oral presentations, and final project that mirrored the content and purpose of the material covered, such as the study of equivalent effect, functional theories, shifts, coherence and cohesion. Assessment of students’ understanding of the material was based on: 10 assignments (30%); 15 presentations (30%); 1 final project (40%). Results were positive for all 5 graduate students enrolled, with 3 students scoring 90% and 2 87%.

Overall, the students have probed textual characteristics, and literary or cultural phenomena. Although not all students have written with the same depth and insight, they all have mastered the basic process of scholarly research, and the majority achieved an advanced level of theoretic application, interpretative capability, and critical thinking.

As a result of the students’ efforts in their classes, in the academic year 2017-2018, six graduate students presented their research in regional conferences, and 2 in local research forums; additionally, 5 completed the Research Certification at the UNLV Professional Development Academy. Also, last year at least one student had his work published and two other have their work under review.

**RESPONSE TO WHAT WAS LEARNED**

No major changes were recommended for each graduate course because the students performed very well through the year. Results will be shared with faculty and we will continue encouraging our students to polish their best research papers and submit it for publication.