Proposed description for Spanish and Latin American Studies (SaLAS) major:

In today’s globalized world, and in light of the increased use of Spanish in the United States and around the world, the ability to communicate and interact with people of other cultures is more important than ever. As part of the Department of Modern Languages, SaLAS is a major designed for students interested in immersing themselves in a variety of Latin American and Spanish literatures, cultures, and linguistic variations of the Spanish-speaking world. The major emphasizes the acquisition of cultural and linguistic skills for application in a globalized context.

Students of all backgrounds pursue this major for various valuable reasons. Some may want to learn or better understand their family history. Some may enjoy the study of literature and the broad historico-cultural contexts of Spanish-speaking countries and communities, past and present. Others may enjoy the study of language and wish to further understand its system from various linguistic and sociolinguistic and cultural lenses. Others may intend to travel, study, or do business in Spanish-speaking communities. Whatever the reason, students who choose the SaLAS major will gain proficiency and in all modalities of the language, speaking, reading, writing, and listening and build a base of knowledge and values related to Spanish and Latin American communities. Moreover, the program offers a multidisciplinary understanding of the language, literatures, history and cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Our courses prepare students for a wide range of careers, whether they be more traditional such as academic scholarship and teaching or translation and interpretation, or whether they are using the skills, knowledge and values of this major to pursue positions in law, medicine, business, government, the private sector, non-profit organizations, both at home and abroad.

We have also revised the major to create pathways and alignment with other disciplines. Combining a SaLAS major with another academic discipline gives students an advantage in today’s job market, which is highly interconnected and interdependent both culturally and linguistically. Therefore, our proposed revisions aim to assist students to pursue a double or split major with SaLAS and a wide array of other majors, such as Ethnic Studies, Psychology, Justice, Community and Leadership, History, Global and Regional Studies, Health Science, or Women’s and Gender Studies, among others.

In addition to preparing students for careers, the SaLAS major prepares students who wish to pursue graduate education. It constitutes a strong preparation for M.A. and Ph.D. programs in Spanish and Latin-American letters. A graduate degree in Spanish is practical as many colleges and universities are in need of professors in the concentrations we offer. In developing the revised major concentrations, we have worked to assure that this program of study is informed by and serves the mission of the College. Similar to the discussions about the SMC core curriculum, the revised coursework in SaLAS is guided by learning outcomes that are developmental and integrated across courses. The concentrations also support the recent intentions to become a Hispanic Serving Institution, and foster inclusivity and effective engagement in a diverse environment for all students. Additionally, while completing coursework for the major students satisfy many requirements of Core Curriculum.

Our goal is to offer students a vibrant, flexible, challenging and engaging curriculum offered by a faculty that is international, diverse and dynamic, who keep up with innovations in the field and offer courses that are appealing and exciting. SaLAS concentrations cultivate skills in
communication, research, and analysis essential for a lifetime of intellectual engagement in language, cultures, and literatures of Spain, Latin America, and of Latinos in the United States.

I. PROPOSED Spanish Major outcomes

Students who complete this major will be able to:

1) Demonstrate a career-ready proficiency in all language modalities (speaking, writing, listening, reading) for a variety of purposes and a range of content and contexts. [language proficiency]

2) Develop an understanding of the linguistic nature of Spanish including its primary fields (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, sociolinguistics and dialectology, language acquisition, second language pedagogy, and historical linguistics). [linguistic understanding and analysis]

3) Demonstrate knowledge of literary texts and traditions across time, including major literary and intellectual movements, genres, writers, and works, and discuss and analyze literary texts from a variety of media. [literary knowledge and analysis]

4) Demonstrate knowledge of Hispanic cultures across time and geography, and articulate an understanding of global perspectives, practices and products of those cultures. [cultural understanding and analysis]

5) Demonstrate understanding of power/solidarity relations that develop among languages, cultures and literatures of multilingual societies, as well as the dynamics and tensions at play in Latin American and Spanish communities in today’s world. [cultural synthesis and dissonance]

Description of Hispanic Literary Studies Concentration (possible catalog language)

This concentration is designed for students wishing to gain knowledge of the literatures and cultures of the Spanish-speaking world while achieving competency in Spanish. Students completing this course of study will gain knowledge of the rich literary and cultural texts and traditions from the Americas, Spain and the Caribbean, discuss major literary and intellectual movements, genres, writers, and works, and use literary and cultural texts from a variety of media. As students discuss works of literature, they will learn about history, politics, human rights, social activism, and gender roles through the lens of fictional and non-fictional characters, including the voices of writers who represent diverse class and ethnic backgrounds.

Hispanic Literary Studies Concentration (learning outcomes)

In addition to achieving the outcomes for all majors, students who complete this concentration will be able to:

1. Grasp the defining characteristics of the major periods (medieval, conquest, etcetera) and movements (the baroque, romanticism, modernismo, etcetera) of Spanish and Latin American literature.

2. Identify the major authors of Spanish and Latin American literature and be conversant in their most representative texts.
3. Appreciate the distinguishing features of literary genres (i.e. poetry, prose, narratives, theater) and the ways in which they often connect and are in dialogue with each other.

4. Demonstrate an understanding of appropriate literary and theoretical lexicon and use it effectively in class discussion and written assignments.

Description of Hispanic Linguistics Concentration (possible catalog language)

This concentration is designed for students interested in the study of the linguistic fields of Spanish language and an increased understanding of language use and change. It is an excellent preparation for those whose career goals include graduate study in language and linguistics, work in education and teaching, or interpretation, and translation. This concentration is also designed for those who wish to combine language study for the professions with another discipline (e.g., Education, Health Sciences and Psychology, Business, Justice, Community and Leadership).

Hispanic Linguistic Studies Concentration (learning outcomes)

In addition to achieving the outcomes for all majors, students who complete this track will be able to:

1) Demonstrate an understanding of the main fields of linguistics (morphology, phonetics and phonology, semantics and syntax, sociolinguistics, bilingualism and applied linguistics).

2) Explain and use diachronic and synchronic approaches to the study of Spanish as they relate to these fields.

3) Utilize the understanding of these concepts to complete individual linguistic research and fieldwork.

4) Apply linguistic proficiencies in professional applications, such as interpretation, translation or Spanish for the professions.

Description of Hispanic Cultural Studies Concentration (possible catalog language)

This concentration is designed for students interested in gaining a multidisciplinary understanding of the culture, languages and other artistic artifacts of the Spanish-speaking world. Considering a variety of perspectives and employing diverse analytical tools, this program of study provides students with an understanding of the history, cultures, and contemporary issues of Latin America, including the presence of Latinos in the U.S. Students in this track can take courses in literature, film, music, politics, art, and history, among others. Students gain knowledge of Hispanic cultures across time and geography, practices and products of those cultures, and explore how these interface with larger social, economic, political, and historical processes.

In addition to achieving the outcomes for all majors, students who complete this concentration will be able to:

1) Demonstrate knowledge of Hispanic cultures across time and geography.
2) Recognize Hispanic cultures as a dynamic, interrelated system and employ a variety of processes to identify, analyze and evaluate cultural themes, values and ideas.

3) Articulate an understanding of global perspectives, practices and products of Hispanic cultures.

4) Discern the variety and nature of cultural practices and artifacts of Spanish-speaking communities, such as art, architecture, film, literature and music.

5) Grasp the political and sociological dimensions of cultural practices and artifacts classified under rubrics of race, class and gender in Spanish-speaking communities.

Rationale for all the changes

We propose these revised learning outcomes and curriculum for students studying Spanish for the following reasons:

1) During our program review process, we identified gaps in our curricular offerings, especially in the areas of linguistics and cultural studies. All students graduating with a major in Spanish today should have a basic knowledge of the primary fields of study: literature and literary analysis, linguistics and the nature of language change and use, and the broad array of culture (including history, geography, traditions and perspectives) across the Spanish-speaking world.

2) We also reviewed our outcomes and curriculum in light of the California State single subject matter preparation for teachers of Spanish, and although we do not offer a formal program at this time, our graduates should have an educational experience that prepares them to pursue K-12 credentialing and/or graduate work in the field of education.

3) We have reorganized the major into three areas of concentration in order to better serve students with specialized interests and professional goals.

   a. With respect to the literary studies concentration, we revamped our previous major in order to make the major more robust and attractive to students who wish to study literature within a broader social and cultural context. This track is designed for students wishing to gain knowledge of the literatures and cultures of the Spanish-speaking world while achieving fluency in Spanish. Students completing this course of study will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the rich literary and cultural texts and traditions from Latin America, Spain and Latino communities in the U.S., discuss major literary and intellectual movements, genres, writers, and works, and use literary and cultural texts from a variety of media. This track lends itself to students wishing to combine study of literature with another complementary major like Politics, History and Sociology, for example.

   b. With respect to the linguistics concentration, we offer a curriculum that meets the needs of students interested in increasing their understanding of language use and change; studying the linguistic fields of the Spanish language; exploring the areas of interpretation and translation; or combining language study for the professions
with another discipline (e.g., Education, Health Sciences and Psychology, Business, Justice, Community and Leadership).

With respect to the Hispanic cultural studies concentration, we created this concentration for students interested in an understanding of the history, cultures, and contemporary issues of Latin America, including the presence of Latinos in the U.S. Students in this concentration can take courses in literature, film, music, politics, art, and history, among others. Students in this concentration can also combine this course of study with majors in other departments.