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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION	Senate	**DATE**	February 11, 2020
FROM	Jon Driver, Vice-President, Academic and Provost *pro tem*, and Chair, SCUP	**PAGES**	1 of 1
RE:	External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Linguistics (SCUP 20-08)		

At its February 5, 2020 meeting, SCUP reviewed the Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Linguistics which resulted from its 2016 external review. The report is attached for the information of Senate.

CANADA'S ENGAGED UNIVERSITY

SFU OFFICE OF THE
VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC

MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION: Jon Driver, Chair, SCUP	TEL
FROM: Wade Parkhouse, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President, Academic	
RE: External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Linguistics	
DATE January 20, 2020	TIME

The External Review of the Department of Linguistics was undertaken in March 2016. As per the Senate guidelines, the Unit is required to submit a mid-cycle report describing its progress in implementing the External Review Action Plan. The mid-cycle report and the Unit's assessment of its Educational Goals are attached for the information of SCUP.

c: Nancy Hedberg, Chair, Department of Linguistics
        Lisa Shapiro, Acting Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Dr. Nancy Hedberg, Chair
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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION	Glynn Nicholls, Director, Academic Planning and Quality Assurance	**DATE**	January 7, 2020
FROM	Nancy Hedberg, Chair, Department of Linguistics	**PAGES**	10
RE:	2020 Mid-Cycle Report for Department of Linguistics		

Attached, please find the Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Linguistics. This report details our progress with the Action Plan stemming from the 2016 External Review. The assessment of our Educational Goals is also attached.

Sincerely,

Nancy Hedberg

Nancy Hedberg

External Review Update for the Department of Linguistics	
Action	**Progress Made**
1. Programming	
1.1.1 Undergraduate	
• The department recognizes that the current syntax and phonetics/phonology sequence has certain redundancies and that consolidating the two levels of syntax and phonetics/phonology would be a good way to facilitate the streamlining of our major and minor programs. However, before proposing to simply delete LING 221 and LING 222, we need to make sure that a revised lower-level curriculum can provide the prerequisite knowledge needed for our upper-division curriculum (e.g., knowledge of basic phonetics). It is crucial to learn how our two future lower-division courses (LING 280 and LING 282WQ) can contribute such prerequisite knowledge, as well as how any important remaining non-redundant content can be incorporated into higher-level courses. The department will study this issue over the next two semesters.	LING 221 and LING 222 were deleted from the calendar after 1184. LING 282WQ became a required course in all Linguistics programs and became a prerequisite for all upper-division Linguistics courses. The transition appears to have caused a decline in AFTEs (i.e. beyond the expected effect of replacing 2 courses with 1), but enrolment has become quite strong in LING 282WQ: <table><tr><td></td><td>15-16</td><td>16-17</td><td>17-18</td><td>18-19</td><td>19-20</td></tr><tr><td>221+222</td><td>232</td><td>243</td><td>323</td><td>65</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>(221+222)/2</td><td>116</td><td>121.5</td><td>161.5</td><td>32.5</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>282WQ</td><td></td><td>29</td><td>20</td><td>110</td><td>142</td></tr><tr><td>Adjusted Total</td><td>116</td><td>150.5</td><td>181.5</td><td>142.5</td><td>142</td></tr></table> The number of Program Students does not appear to have been affected: <table><tr><td></td><td>15-16</td><td>16-17</td><td>17-18</td><td>18-19</td><td>19-20</td></tr><tr><td>Majors</td><td>190</td><td>214</td><td>217</td><td>213</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Minors</td><td>54</td><td>43</td><td>58</td><td>53</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>244</td><td>257</td><td>275</td><td>266</td><td></td></tr></table> Faculty firmly believe that the writing skills of students in upper-division courses have significantly improved.
• The next offering of LING 363 will be in 2018-1. Enrolment in the Certificate has resumed at a modest rate.	Enrolment in the Certificate in Teaching ESL has recovered. We only had to skip one offering (1171) of LING 363 Practicum in Teaching ESL to Adults. Enrolment was strong in 1181 (at 21) and in 1191 (at 17). Enrolment continues quite strong (14 so far for 1201). We have an excellent Limited Term Lecturer in place to teach LING 363 in 1201 and 1211 (as well as LING 362), but we need to get a Senior Lecturer replacement position approved for the senior lecture who taught LING 363 and LING 362) and who retired in August 2019.
• LING 282WQ has been approved and is currently scheduled to be taught once a year for the next	See above, for signs of the apparent success of centralizing the role of 282WQ in the curriculum.

three years. The first offering will be in 2017-1 on the topic of structural ambiguity, garden paths, and "funny headlines" with an enrolment cap of 40. Additional offerings of the course with higher enrolment are anticipated if the first offerings are successful enough for us to decide to make it a requirement. In addition, many professors continue to incorporate writing-to-learn practices into even their non-W courses.	
• A course proposal for LING 280, a no-prerequisite topics course, was approved at a department meeting in July and is going forward this fall so as to be entered into the calendar as soon as possible. An experiment of one-course-per-year scheduling has been incorporated into our 9-semester course planning, with more frequent offerings foreseen if the courses are successful. The first offering will be in 2017-3 on the topic of "language and social media" with an enrolment cap set at 125.	LING 280 courses have been very successful but thus far have been small in enrolment. To address the latter, we would like to find a way to streamline the course name to make it easier for students to see the topic of the course at registration time, e.g. by listing the course exclusively under the Subtitle instead of under the unwieldy: "Interdisciplinary Topics in Linguistics: Subtitle."

Subtitle	Semester	Enrolment
The Language of Social Media	1177	27
Indigenous Languages of Canada	1191	21
The Representation of Dialects in Television and Film	1201	34
Working in Language Sciences	1204	
Indigenous Languages of Canada	1207	
Computational Text Analysis	1211	
Metaphor	1217	
Working in Language Sciences	1221	
Indigenous Languages of Canada (new course: 230)	1221	
Computational Text Analysis (new course: 250)	1221	

The course number has been very useful in allowing us to pilot courses in advance of creating them as regular courses. Such will soon already be the case with two of the courses that have been scheduled as LING 280:

First, with the support of FASS, the Department has proposed a new course, LING 250 Computational Text Analysis, which will be cross-listed with SDA 250, as a core course in the newly proposed Minor in Social Data Analytics (a collaboration

	between Political Science, Linguistics, Economics, and Philosophy). A second proposed computational linguistics course will be taught in the Social Data Analytics minor: LING/SDA 450 Computational Linguistics. These two courses, as well as the Minor, will greatly contribute to the Department's goal of training our students for satisfying and successful careers. Second, again with the support of FASS, the Department will propose LING 230: Indigenous Language of Canada. This will be a very important course across the university to support indigenization of the curriculum, which will be of great interest to all Linguistics and First Nations Studies students, among many others.
NEW: EAL students	An important area of progress since the external review in 2016 has been the recent outcome of the recognition by FASS that Linguistics has the second-highest (in the faculty) proportion of international students enrolled after Economics. The Associate Dean commissioned a report on EAL students from CELLTR, modeled on the one commissioned by her for Economics. In response to that report, the Department fast-tracked the plan to centralize the role of our lower-division writing course (LING 282WQ), as well as to establish a Department-staffed Writing Centre providing writing tutors to students, funded by our FIC revenues. As mentioned above, faculty teaching upper-division courses believe that these efforts have already been highly successful and promise to be even more successful. But much work remains to be done. We welcome the invitation of an Associate Dean in FASS to request funding from them for a postdoctoral fellow to assist our Department and e.g. Economics to better support our EAL students. **Undergraduate Majors & Minors - % International (IRP)**

Undergraduate Majors & Minors - % International (IRP)

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Economics	52	55	58	62	64
Linguistics	32	31	29	30	29
Psychology	8	8	8	9	11
English	2	2	3	2	3
FASS	18	18	20	20	21
FAS	27	28	28	28	28

	Beedie	31	32	31	30	32	
	SFU	18	19	20	20	21	
NEW: First Nations Language students	Perhaps the most dramatic progress since the March 2016 external review has been in the area of First Nations Languages. Support was then being recognized for the Squamish Language Academy (which has provided an immersion **CFNLP** now for 3 2-semester cohorts, taught for 2 years at SFU Harbour Centre and this year on-site in the Squamish Nation). Over **40** students have graduated, and **14** are currently enroled. Later, provincial funding for an immersion cohort of Hul'q'umi'mum' students was obtained and carried out in 2017-18 in Duncan, with **15-17** students graduating. To follow up on that, FNLP faculty recognized that proficiency would require a second certificate, to be called a "diploma" to respond to the norm of Indigenous policy to fund only one certificate. A Diploma in First Nations Language Proficiency **(DFNLP)** was approved in spring 2018. Federal funding was obtained to support three cohorts (Hul'q'umi'num' [9], Sḵwx̲wu7mesh [22], and Secwepemctsin [c. 12]) who will graduate in 2019 or 2020. A Minor in First Nations Languages **(FNL Minor)** Is undergoing the approval process, which enable the CFNLP/DFNLP students to continue on at SFU for a BA with two minors (e.g. the Linguistics Extended Minor). Already, one group of DFNLP graduates have obtained spring 2020 admission into the Linguistics Extended Mino).
1.1.2 Graduate	
• We have struck a committee to investigate computational linguistics master's programs and other course-only linguistics programs. Our first step is to hire a graduate student RA this fall to investigate such programs at other universities as well as the actual job market potential for students trained in aspects of computational linguistics. A crucial complicating factor is that UBC is already in	After additional discussions with UBC, we decided not to go forward with proposing our own computational linguistics master's program. The premium-fee ($31,835 domestic, $43,133 International) UBC Master of Data Science in Computational Linguistics is currently accepting applications for Fall 2020: "Over 10 months, the program combines foundational data science courses with advanced computational linguistics courses—equipping graduates with the skills to turn language-related data into knowledge and to build AI that can interpret human language." Instead, we are strengthening our support for training our students for careers

the process of proposing a computational linguistics professional master's program. SFU Linguistics is in communication with UBC Linguistics about their initiative. If we decide to NOT go ahead with proposing our own program, we will consider seeking ways to collaborate in their effort, e.g., by arranging for our highly qualified faculty to possibly teach joint courses and by exploring ways to involve our graduate students in initiatives that will improve their employability. We are waiting to adopt this as a goal until we can come to agreement on the role of computational linguistics in our graduate program and until we see what happens at UBC. If we do decide to pursue a computational linguistics master's program, we will need to hire a faculty member to develop it and teach in it. UBC is planning to hire 3 faculty members. Since we already have multiple faculty with expertise in aspects of computational linguistics (as well as two computational linguists in Computing Science), we would probably only need to hire one faculty member. We highly value our current two-year, thesis-based MA program. Hence, we may seek, in the end, to continue to develop the existing MA instead of developing a separate master's program in computational linguistics.	involving computational linguistics: 1. Offering our graduate course in Computational Linguistics (LING 807) more often (at least every two years). 2. Continuing our involvement in the Computing Science and Linguistics Joint Major (BA or BSc). 3. Continuing our involvement in the Cognitive Science Major (BA)/Honours/Minor). This collaboration between Linguistics, Psychology, Philosophy and Computing Science has been strengthened by the September 2019 appointment of a Lecturer - 50% Linguistics/50% Cognitive Science. 4. Participating in the new Social Data Analytics undergraduate minor (a collaboration between Political Science, Linguistics, Economics and Philosophy), through the proposal and annual offering of two new computational linguistics courses: LING/SDA 250 and LING/SDA 450.
• Enrolment in our graduate program is back up after last year's decline. This fall, we have 7 incoming graduate students. Enrolment in stand-alone graduate courses is strong this fall: 9 in one (MA-required) course and 7 in the other (elective) course. Plus, there is a graduate piggyback course that has	Our graduate program has indeed resulted in a very small set of incoming members. S 2013-14: 4 MA, 2 PhD 2014-15: 3 MA, 1 PhD 2015-16: 0 MA, 2 PhD

attained an enrolment of 5. This fall, such enrolment includes a master's student from computing in two courses.	********************* 2016-17: 6 MA, 1 PhD 2017-18: 5 MA, 0 PhD 2018-19: 1 MA, 1 PhD 2019-20: 3 MA, 4 PhD (1 MA visa delayed, 2 PhDs postponed to 1204)
• A major reason for the increase is that the three assistant professors have accepted graduate students for the first time.	After 6 years in the Department and approved for tenure/promotion, an Assistant Professior resigned from SFU in order to accept a position at the University of Toronto. It is crucial to the graduate program that a replacement be hired. Stand-alone graduate courses in syntax, phonology, and experimental research methods are taught once a year and have long been required courses for all MA students (and more recently for most PhD students). Hence, it is essential that have two research professors who can teach graduate syntax, just as we have two research professors who can teach graduate phonology, and two research professors who can teach graduate experimental research methods. (See also "research" section below.)
• Our current 10-semester course-planning model successfully schedules 5 or even 6 stand-alone graduate per academic year (the 6th one supporting tentative First Nations linguistics programming).	In addition to the 3 required courses, our goal is to offer at least two additional stand-along graduate courses per year. We recruit talented undergraduates to satisfy the minimum of 5 students in stand-alone graduate courses. It is unusual to obtain a large-enough incoming cohort to justify the scheduling of stand-alone graduate courses, but those that do get offered are highly successful. Approximate headcounts are shown below (which doesn't count regular program graduate students who enrol in LING graduate courses taught in MA-LFNL cohorts). | Ac. Yr	800	801	851	Stand-alone	Stand-alone	Piggyback	Total
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2013-14	8	8	7	802 - 7	850 - 6	13 (4)	40
2014-15	4	6	5	803 - 7		15 (5)	27
2015-16	-	-	-			16 (7)	16
2016-17	6	9	6	802 - 6	807 - 8	7 (2)	37
2017-18	6	7	6	810 - 16		7 (2)	37
2018-19	-	7	-	806 - 5		4 (2)	11	
• In addition, this fall, we are actively seeking to recruit some of our most talented third-year undergraduate majors into applying for our new	Our first accelerated MA student began in Fall 2019.

concurrent BA/MA program.	
• Such cross-cutting content-based courses can be offered as elective stand-alone graduate courses, perhaps team taught if we can find a mechanism to award appropriate teaching credit for that.	The Department obtained permission from the Dean for two Linguistics faculty members to team-teach a graduate course in Fall 2017, with a full on-load teaching credit awarded to each instructor. LING 810 Psycholinguistics of Chinese. enrolled 7 graduate students + 1 graduate auditor + 8 undergraduate students. The course was considered highly successful by everyone involved.
• In addition, we are developing required second-year writing workshops where students can discuss and get feedback on their ongoing theses or other writing projects. Such workshops will have the added benefit of exposing students to multiple methodologies. However, it will be necessary to find ways to award faculty members facilitating such workshops some sort of teaching credit.	This was an initiative led by the former Assistant Professor who resigned and not yet been replaced. The Department continues to work on supporting graduate student (as well as undergraduate student) writing.
• We are also seeking a path towards integrating into our existing MA program future graduates of our new Graduate Certificate in the Linguistics of a First Nations Language. The Graduate Certificate was approved by Senate on Sept. 12, 2016. Planning is now underway to admit two cohorts to begin study in the summer of 2017. One cohort of approximately 15 Hul'q'umi'num' students has the goal of ultimately obtaining master's degrees. Hence, we are currently seeking ways to accommodate such students into our existing MA. The Certificate as well as the future MA students will need funding to cover tuition as well as travel and accommodation expenses for coursework and thesis consultation/defenses that take place in locations other than their own communities.	Two cohorts (Duncan/Hul'q'umi'num' + Burnaby/Mixed language) of GC-LFNL students started in 1174, who transferred to the MA-LFNL after it was approved as a cohort special arrangements program in summer 2017. 25 students have now graduated: 2 in 1187, 22 in 1191, and 1 in 1194. A second Duncan cohort of 6 MA-LFNL students were admitted in 1191, with 1 added in 1194. This cohort took classes cross-listed with the Duncan DFNLP cohort, and will be writing their MA projects in spring and summer 2020. Also, there are 4 current LFNL PhD students in Individualized Interdisciplinary Studies, in addition to 4 planned applications for 2020. Happily, FASS has approved funding for a .625 graduate secretary position in the FNLP, who can assist the 7 MA-LFNL students. It would good if that staff person could also assist the 8 current/pending INS PhD students as well. Future cohorts of the MA-LFNL are under consideration, first via extension of the current special-arrangements cohort program, but later a permanent MA-LFNL will need to be established. It also might be worth establishing a PhD-LFNL program in the future.

	Going forward, it would be extremely beneficial if LFNL students could qualify for graduate funding (i.e. BASS funding to the FNLP). It is usually the case that students receive band funding covering tuition+fees+living-allowance, but some students are not eligible for such funding.
2. Research	
• We...have put forward a proposal for precisely such a targeted hire in our current Faculty Renewal Plan. In addition to crucial local First Nations language revitalization and documentation activities, this new hire is essential for renewal of our fourth-year/graduate field methods, universals and typology, and structures of Aboriginal languages courses, as well as to develop a popular LING 280 course on languages of BC. Also, this faculty member would be tremendously helpful for teaching and supervising students in the new graduate certificate and subsequent master's work of its graduates.	In August 2017, we succeeded with that targeted hire. The Assistant Professor serves as Associate Director of the First Nations Languages Program, and to date has devoted his teaching to support CFNLP (Squamish Language Academy)/DFNLP programs in the Squamish Nation, with an initial future MA-LFNL cohort in mind.
	(See "graduate" section above). The assistant professor who resigned in in Summer 2018 to take up a position at the University of Toronto provided key expertise in our core area of theoretical syntax, with expertise in both formal and experimental methods. It is essential especially to the graduate program, but also to the undergraduate program, that we receive approval for a tenure-track replacement position. The experimental expertise of such a theoretical syntactician could be in the area of **neurolinguistics** or acquisition, instead of psycholinguistics as had been the case with the professor who resigned.
3. Administration	
• The IELTS Test Centre was closed down completely on August 3, 2016.	No change.
• We have a permanent, part-time technical support assistant. We hope to be able to make more use of that technician's time for additional	In July 2019, we were able to hire a Communication and Events Coordinator (shared with the First Nations Languages Program) to provide website and other communications support, as well as a half-time Research Technician to provide

lab support now that he no longer has to provide support to the IELTS Test Centre. In the process of working out his duties, we will document the need for additional technical support for laboratories. This fall, we have hired a former staff member to help upgrade our website and document the time and expertise that it will take to maintain the revamped website adequately. That assessment will enable us to determine whether we should seek to hire a permanent (part-time) communications coordinator to maintain the website and allow us to establish a presence on social media.	technical support for the labs. In addition, in November 2019, we were able to hire a half-time Research Grants and Projects Coordinator.
Under consideration.	Due to the fact that almost every Linguistics Department faculty member is highly active in externally-funded research (66.7% of tenure-track faculty, average size $66,739), as well as highly involved in the governance of the Department in the context of new information-based economy + accountability demands, we see the need to develop a **system for faculty members to accrue points to apply towards course** releases so as to adequately reward the supervision of graduate students, direction of research labs and/or other major externally-funded projects, and curriculum development.
New: First Nations Languages Program	**Successes:** (1) Establishment of the First Nations Languages Program as an autonomous unit within the Linguistics Department FNLP, with course release for executive committee, staff (manager, program coordinator, budget coordinator), and operating budget; (2) award of an honorary doctorate in June 2019 to our primary Elder Linguist collaborator from the Hul'q'umi'num' community surrounding Duncan. **Promises:** (1) FASS approval of .625 graduate secretary (could also handle 8 ISS PhD students), (2) ARC funding of postdoctoral fellow line. **Needs:** (1) Burnaby campus staff space, (2) regular SFU graduate student funding, (3) remote site space/admin support funding, (4) space for FNL Centre/Language Documentation Lab.

4. Working Environment	
• We agree with the recommendation to have more than one meeting per semester. We have already implemented the policy of having two faculty meetings per semester (six per year), with a third one to be called for when needed.	We have continued the practice of having two department meetings per semester instead of just one as had formerly been the practice. We also now regularly have a separate faculty meeting to discuss graduate admissions. In addition, during the 2019 calendar year, we have held 5 one-hour faculty mini-retreats to discuss evaluation of teaching, utilization of teaching assistants, research infrastructure, faculty workload, and chair succession; and we are planning one for early 2020 to discuss the structure of the graduate program.

The Department of Linguistics began the process of assessing Educational Goals shortly after preparing the list of the goals themselves in 2015.

Lower Division

In September of 2015, the UCC took on a project of conducting a pilot assessment of the Educational Goals.

For this purpose, three courses were selected: LING 220 (Introduction to Linguistics), LING 221 (Introduction to Phonetics and Phonology), and LING 321 (Phonology).

The instructors in each course worked closely with the UCC in order to constructed specific problem sets that would test a small subset of the educational goals that are associated with the teaching of phonology, and whether these improve or not with further instruction at higher level courses.

We present the results of how students performed in the three courses by categorizing according to educational goal.

Goal 1. Pattern Extraction

LING 220 (110 students)
There were two questions in the LING 220 exam that test this Educational Goal (1 and 2). There were 54 correct answers for the first question (.49), and 98 correct answers for the second one (. 89)

LING 221 (39 students)
There are four questions that test this goal in this problem set (1, 2, 3b and 3c). For Q1 the average percentage of correct answers is (.46), for Q2 it is also (.46), for Q3b it is (.48), but for Q3c it is (.26)

LING 321 (39 students)
Questions 1 and 4 test this goal. For Q1, the average percentage of correct answers is (.67), while for Q4 it is (.69)

Goal 2. Data Description

LING 220
There were four questions that test this goal (1, 2, 3 and 4). There were 54 correct answers for the first question (.49), and 98 correct answers for the second one (.89). For Q3 there were 71 correct answers (.64), while for Q4 there were 78 (.70).

LING 221
The questions that test this goal were (1, 2, 3b). For Q1 the average percentage of correct answers is (.46), for Q2 it is also (.46), for Q3b it is (.48).

LING 321
Questions 1 and 4 test this goal. For Q1, the average percentage of correct answers is (.67), while for Q4 it is (.69)

Goal 3. Rule Formulation

LING 220

Questions 3 and 4 also test this goal. For Q3 there were 71 correct answers (.64), while for Q4 there were 78 (.70).

LING 221
Question 3a, 3c and 4 test this goal. For Q3a, the average percentage of correct answers is (. 63), for Q3c it is (.26), and for Q4 it is (.39)

LING 321
Questions 5 and 6 test this goal. For Q5, the average percentage of correct answers is (.74), while for Q4 it is (.81)

Goal 4. Hypothesis Testing

LING 220
Questions 5 and 6 test this goal. For Q5 there were 68 correct answers (.61), while for Q6 there were 46 (.41).

LING 221
This goal is tested by questions 1, 2, and 3c. For Q1 the average percentage of correct answers is (.46), for Q2 it is also (.46), but for Q3c it is (.26)

LING 321
Questions 2 and 7 test this goal. For Q2, the average percentage of correct answers is (.75), while for Q7 it is (.60)

Goal 5. Organization of Language

LING 220
All questions test this goal. As an average there were 69.1 correct answers (.68)

LING 221
All questions test this goal. The average percentage of correct answers is (.47)

LING 321
Q3 tests this goal. The average percentage of correct answers is (.97)

Discussion

It will take time and more tests to fully understand how to assess these results. But the evidence does suggest that we can get some measure of assessment of how well our Educational Goals are being achieved by including questions that target these goals in Final Exams.

On the one hand, there are strong indications that we are able to test whether students have acquired a particular skill: In 321, when there are two or more questions testing the same skill, the percentages are similar.

On the other hand there are cases where the results are very different. For example, in Pattern Extraction in LING 220, Q1 is at .49, while Q2 is at .89. Interestingly, Q1 asks students about distinct phonemes, whereas Q2 asks about allophones of the same phoneme. Perhaps if we had asked several questions for each type of distribution, we would get similar results, indicating that we are more successful in the teaching of one type of analysis, but not of another.

We see clear progress from LING 220 to 321 in all aspects. This is expected as LING 220 devotes about two weeks to phonology only. The results for LING 221 are harder to read. The instructor informs us that the students' performance was uncharacteristically low and so may not be representative.

Spring and Summer 2016

As suggested by the external reviewers, we conducted a more focused assessment with only one educational goal. Together with Marion Caldecott we developed a set of 2 questions, one of which was appropriate for the material taught in LING 220 and one which was appropriate for the material taught in LING 221. The hypothesis was that LING 220 students would do well in question 1 but not so well in question 2, whereas LING 221 students would do really well in question 1 and well in question 2.

The questions were embedded in the last midterm of each course, and they were not presented consecutively.

In LING 220, the results were:
Q1: 71/79 students got it correct (89%)
Q2: 29/79 students got it correct (36%).

In LING 221, the results were:

Q1: 37/37 students got it correct (100%)
Q2: 17/37 students got it correct (46%).

Although there is slight improvement, the results are not significantly different (p @ .5 in both cases). However, the reasons are different: In question 1, it is the performance of LING 220 students that is unexpectedly high (the question was constructed to be challenging to students), whereas in question 2, it is the performance of LING 221 that is lower than expected.

The results of these assessments provided some evidence corroborating our instructors' general impression, that courses such as LING 221 were not effective in helping students deepen their understanding of the subject matter.

At the same time, during Spring and Summer 2016 Dr Pappas with support from a TLDG grant was investigating whether a writing intensive approach with regard to the material of LING 220 could improve student understanding and retention of fundamental concepts in linguistics. The results which have been published (Pappas, Taboada, and Alexander 2019) were encouraging. Since the external reviewers had recommended removing LING 221 and LING 222 from the curriculum, and since our goal assessment indicated that LING 221 was not very effective, while a writing intensive approach seemed more promising, we removed these two courses. In their stead we offer LING 282QW, a writing intensive course which helps students achieve a deeper understanding of fundamental concepts by training them in reading and writing about the argumentation process that employs these concepts.

After having waited for this new course to be offered a few times, we will proceed with another comparison between LING 220 and LING 321 in terms of phonology, and LING 220 and LING 322 in terms of syntax in order to gauge student improvement.

Upper Division
Our program lacks a true capstone course in which we could use student essays in order to assess student improvement in academic writing, which is an important goal for our program.

However, we believe that we can achieve an effective evaluation for this goal by examining student electronic submissions to Canvas. There now exist online tools (Tool for Automatic Analysis of Coherence, Crossley, Kyle, & Dascalu, 2018; Crossley, Kyle, & McNamara, 2016) which can help us measure the complexity of the submitted texts. A pilot study we conducted in 2019 indicated that students' writing did indeed become more complex by the end of the upper division writing course LING 309W. More complex writing is seen as an improvement in the coherence and cohesion literature, because it signifies that the students are using more technical vocabulary and sentence structures that try to synthesize contrasting views. Our plan is to continue with this approach, and conduct a similar assessment for courses in the 400 level which have a significant writing component, in order to evaluate student improvement.