

## LLC Strategic Plan 2022

### **LLC Strengths and Accomplishments**

- The Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (LLC) is the most diverse department at UF in terms of the ethnic backgrounds of its faculty and in terms of the variety of our research and teaching expertise. Representing languages and cultures in the Middle East, Africa, the Caribbean, Asia, and Europe, LLC is UF's training ground for R1-level research and teaching involving intercultural competence on global dimensions. Beyond this, and in addition to our more than 120 majors and 150 minors, we strengthen the UF community by offering language and culture competence and enabling completion of state language requirements in 15 different languages and cultures, and this diversity we aim to preserve and strengthen in future years.
- LLC collaborates with and supports the missions of numerous other UF centers and departments (Center for African Studies, Center for European Studies, Center for Jewish Studies, Department of Linguistics, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, The UF International Center, Center for Medieval and Early Modern Studies, the Digital Humanities Working Group, and many more) that contribute to the international reputation of the University of Florida.
- Our department is known for its innovative course offerings, its online and hybrid course development, and its close mentoring relationships between students and faculty. We take pride in our faculty's reputation for excellence in research and teaching. We are especially proud of our outstanding, accomplished students, many of whom end up working for the government, the military, various translation agencies, non-profit humanitarian organizations, the education system, and the mass media, as well as continuing their studies at prestigious graduate and law schools.
- Our new Foreign Languages and Literatures major (implemented in 2016) embodies a dual focus on the cultural and the transcultural. Our students explore cultures embedded within language traditions by means of the language courses and electives they take. They also have the opportunity to develop transcultural strengths by virtue of a 9-credit critical concentration in areas like Comparative Culture Studies, Film and Visual Culture, Literary Studies, and Medieval and Early Modern Studies. Our highly successful Dual Language Major allows students with advanced command of one foreign language to seek expertise in another foreign language and culture that also meet students' interests and career needs. Our new certificate in Translation studies (launched in 2021) has been attracting students from all over campus. Such growing interest in translation competence speaks to UF students' commitment to acquiring advanced language and culture-related skills, which they can apply successfully in our ever-changing world. We offer our students a safe and conducive environment to explore different cultures and languages both at UF and through supervised study-abroad programs.

- In addition to academic rigor and global knowledge, LLC offers to our majors and minors a true sense of belonging. Our impressive student-teacher ratios allow us to create a community of learning in which mutual respect is the norm. Students participate enthusiastically in the various student associations and other extra-curricular activities associated with the various language areas. This atmosphere of care and respect matters in a time in which students deal with intense anxiety due to pressures related to their academic performance and post-graduation plans. LLC's sense of community has been crucial during the COVID-19 emergency as contact with familiar instructors and students became a solid foundation in a time of great uncertainty.

## **Future Development**

- LLC is committed to preserving the breadth and depth of our majors and minors. It is crucial that students at UF, the flagship university of the state of Florida, are afforded the opportunity to select from a broad variety of language programs. The global reach of UF should be reflected in the global range of LLC's offerings. Moreover, students should be allowed to cultivate their embedded knowledge of their chosen language(s)/culture(s) by taking language, literature and culture courses beyond elementary and intermediate language. Crucial too for the health of our offerings is the preservation of the breadth of LLC's research areas. LLC faculty members engage in research that is nationally and internationally recognized, encompassing fields such as Culture/Cultural Studies, Film and Media Studies, Language Pedagogy, Linguistics, Literature, Medieval & Early Modern Studies, and Translation Studies. Our commitment to the future of our major in Foreign Languages and Literatures means that we will need to advocate in the future for hires and resources for our individual language programs. Though this document is not the place to specify such needs, we wish to express our commitment to a vision of our department that nurtures our language area strengths.
- We remain equally committed to maintaining the range and strength of our research production. Our faculty members are nationally and internationally recognized for their important contributions to the multiple academic disciplines and fields relevant to our department. Continued publication with prestigious journals and presses as well as participation in conferences and successful grant application constitute a crucial part of that research. We are committed to nurturing an environment in which faculty is supported in their pursuit and development of these research agendas.
- LLC has the potential to implement an innovative graduate program. We need to start by proposing a standalone M.A. degree in Language and Cultural Studies with tracks in areas such as (a) Languages and Cultures, and (b) Digital Humanities. This will also serve as the basis for our strategic goal, which is the establishment of a 4+1 degree (B.A. and M.A. combined) that will focus on cutting-edge topics in translation and intercultural/transnational studies. This program will cater primarily to our own majors and will foster collaborative research with other departments in CLAS and UF. The 4+1 M.A. degree will be terminal and

will allow students to pursue career-oriented goals that the FLL B.A. is often not enough to support.

- LLC is invested in increasing enrollments in our Translation Certificate. We will recruit in a more coordinated fashion from our majors and minors. We would be interested in developing new course options with the goal of increasing the number of participating languages so that all LLC majors and minors are able to complete the certificate. We foresee a significant role for translation studies within LLC's 4+1 B.A./M.A.
- LLC is interested in strengthening the areas of critical concentrations that form part of the Foreign Languages Major. First steps might involve the development of new courses to be offered in each concentration as well as coordinated efforts to encourage our majors to pursue these transcultural avenues of study. In time, we will also consider the addition of new critical concentrations such as Environmental Humanities, Digital Humanities, and Narrative Humanities. These are especially attractive concentrations as they offer the prospect of reaching across disciplinary borders to scientific, agricultural, and medical fields, allowing us to tap into UF's focus on Artificial Intelligence.
- LLC is committed to the further development of online and hybrid course models and the innovative development and employment of new instructional technologies in order to reach remote populations of students in the global "Gator Nation" of the future. In this effort, assuming there are sufficient resources to support the extension of effort it would involve, LLC faculty would seek to develop and cultivate productive synergies with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the University of Florida Online, if and where such synergies might be institutionally productive.

### **Further Suggestions and Strategies:**

To remain sustainable, LLC requires an enrollment situation in which students from Liberal Arts and other colleges will make the department a place of first choice and not a discovery department where they only meet their language requirement. LLC plans to pursue practical measures to grow enrollments in our majors and minors. Some of these measures include:

- Investigating the possibility of having the college encourage completion of the language proficiency requirement by the second year. This measure will be crucial for the success of the combined B.A./M.A. program discussed above.
- Approaching UF Business School with the possibility of creating or injecting a language component into their 5-year B.A./ M.A. degree akin to their Master of International Business program which they refer to as a Combination Degree. Several sections in LLC have developed and taught language-in/for-business courses. We might turn these separate initiatives into a more coordinated/consolidated effort to boost our enrollments and visibility. We might also consider teaching language-for-business classes as part of our B.A./M.A. combined degree.
- Working on coordinated recruitment of students from the International Studies major as well as our own elementary language classes.

- Pursuing greater coordination with Academic Advising in Farrior Hall so that students are actively encouraged to add a major or minor in Foreign Languages and Literatures, especially in those cases where the double major is interdisciplinary. This will allow our department to accommodate students who might originally have chosen to major in the sciences, in engineering, or other fields outside the Humanities. In spring 2022, the chair of LLC's curriculum committee delivered a presentation to AAC in order to show the breadth and diversity of our student body and their choices in double majors.
- We should keep showing how diversity and depth are part of our strength and how this increases students' chances at leading productive and meaningful lives, at seeking successful employment or pursuing academic careers at the post-graduate levels. We suggest reaching out to the Business School's Marketing Department and invite their graduate students to work with LLC as part of their course projects or summer internship. The departmental website and faculty personal pages should be updated at the beginning of every fall semester.
- The Strategic Planning Committee discussed whether there might be support for considering a change of title for our department.

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