

Latin American and Latino Studies Program  
Academic Assessment Report – 2016  
Prepared and Submitted by  
Kirstin Erickson, Director of LAST

The following points address LAST co-majors' and minors' learning outcomes as evaluated by the LAST program's faculty and director; my comments correspond to the various "means of assessment" described in our Academic Assessment Plan.

## Results

### **A) Evaluation of Skills and Areas Acquired in the Capstone Course:**

Our LAST 4003 Colloquium serves as our program's capstone course. Our program is highly interdisciplinary (currently served by 17 core teaching faculty and spanning 10 disciplines), and the responsibility for teaching the capstone course has rotated among our faculty. During the 2015-16 school year, we offered four capstone classes: "Migration and Belonging in Latin/o American Film," "Latin American Environmental History," "Literature and Post-Conflict Latin America," and "The Latin American City."

**1) Assets of the Capstone Course. While each faculty member develops his or her own, highly focused, senior-level course, our capstones all share the following assets:**

i) Interdisciplinarity: Students acquire knowledge of, and the ability to deploy, a variety of approaches to a focused set of questions or topic of inquiry. In "Literature and Post-Conflict Latin America," students explored how literature and art become vehicles for the expression of memory, trauma, and reconciliation in post-conflict milieus. Their understandings of literature/art were grounded in a variety of approaches, including: legal studies, psychology, moral philosophy, history, and politics. In "Migration and Belonging in Latin/o American Film," students use gender studies, cultural studies, and literary, sociological, and anthropological approaches to analyze the ways in which immigration is represented in film (both fictional and documentary). In "Latin American Environmental History," students drew from history, environmental studies, journalism, and literature to examine the ecologies of Latin America as well as current environmental crises affecting the region. And in the "Latin American City," students critically examined cities from Buenos Aires to those along the U.S.-Mexico border, the ways in which cities represent political, cultural, and environmental change over the course of Latin American history, and how cities dynamically interact with rural regions. Students used approaches from history, geography, and film studies, and they deployed methodologies from the digital humanities to scrutinize a variety of films: locating the film's city (and the city's film) on a map and revealing a patchwork of stories, perspectives, and relationships to present the Latin American City. This innovative project can be viewed using the following link: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/uploads.knightlab.com/storymaps/5d8ff7580d42a9eb0c24df15a1e7d57b/literature-and-cinema-in-the-latin-american-city/index.html>

ii) Diversity of perspectives: All capstone classes inculcate a diversity of perspectives and seek to foster cultural awareness and competency. Diversity includes geographic and cultural breadth (from the local and communal to the hemispheric or even global), an awareness of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity, as well as exposure to the various different strata of social interaction. For example, "Literature and Post-Conflict Latin America" considers cases from Chile, Argentina, El Salvador, and Argentina. Students in "Latin American Environmental History" consider cases from Mexico, Brazil, and Panama, and view indigenous perspectives as a counterpart to those of environmental historians. "Migration and Belonging in Latin/o American Film" focuses on the different experiences of Bolivian, Central American, Mexican, and Colombian migrants. Finally, "The Latin American City" draws its case studies from North America to the

Caribbean and the Southern Cone while also considering the ways in which Latin America's cities manifest perspectives from urban and rural areas, diasporas, and a plurality of ethnic groups and social classes.

**2) Skill Sets.** *Our capstone classes also foster a valuable set of skills. The following skill sets are acquired by students enrolled in our various capstone courses:*

i) Students acquire the ability to construct research bibliographies. Students learn how to identify, locate, and use primary sources, and/or how to identify valid, peer-reviewed secondary sources. The construction of a bibliography teaches students the vetting of sources, how to utilize search engines on library servers, modes of bibliographic formatting, and how to synthesize a writer's arguments into a succinct abstract.

ii) Students conduct first-hand ethnographic fieldwork. In the course of planning for, designing, and conducting ethnographic fieldwork, students: acquire valuable communication skills; learn how to network with consultants, cultivate and build upon trust relationships; learn how to discern and gather empirical information on the ground; gain cultural competency; learn to apply rigorous ethical standards in human subjects research.

iii) Students write in-depth research papers. Students design and conduct research (ethnographic, archival, and library-based) for their research papers. They learn the value of outlining and how to build an argument; they acquire the ability to articulate a thesis statement; they develop a sustained argument; they learn the importance and use of supporting data/examples; and they gain valuable practice in articulating their ideas in succinct prose.

iv) Students write short, critical reviews. Through book reviews, film reviews, or directed review essays, students learn various modes of interpretation, the application of discipline-based theory to primary-source materials. They acquire valuable practice in analytical thinking and learn to articulate an informed, balanced, and well-supported critique.

v) Students make formal presentations of their work. Through a public presentation of their work (with graded visuals, e.g. PowerPoint/Prezi) to classmates, students learn the value of, and techniques required to generate high-quality visual aids and graphics, and slides with compelling images and succinct prose. They gain experience in public speaking, which prepares them for graduate seminars and/or work world presentations. Furthermore, as audience members, classmates learn how to listen actively and articulate constructive criticism.

**3) Evaluation by Comparative Rubric:** *We developed a quantitative rubric to be used when evaluating LAST students' final projects, in order to have a numerical point of comparison across all of our LAST 4003 colloquia. This rubric was used for the first time in Spring 2016, in two sections of LAST 4003 (N = 24). Each student's work was rated on a 1-to-5 point scale (1 = unsatisfactory; 5 = excellent). Results are as follows.*

1. Student demonstrates adequate knowledge of Latin American or Latina/o context relevant to his/her research project.

\*average score: 4.2 (out of 5.0)

2. Bibliography construction: ability to select and effectively utilize relevant primary/secondary sources.

\*average score: 4.2 (out of 5.0)

3. Thesis statement: ability to formulate an identifiable thesis or research question.

\*average score: 4.3 (out of 5.0)

4. Ability to develop her/his central and contingent arguments. The paper or presentation is well organized and has a clear direction.

\*average score: 4.3 (out of 5.0)

5. Ability to effectively apply and integrate supporting examples (empirical data, quotes, textual evidence, etc.)

\*average score: 4.2 (out of 5.0)

6. Student shows ability to apply the critical concepts/theory/conceptual tools appropriate to his/her particular research project.

\*average score: 4.0 (out of 5.0)

## **B) Latin American and Latino Studies Exit Survey Results:**

This year, for the second time in our program's history, we administered an Exit Survey and Questionnaire, in order to gather evaluative feedback about our program. The Exit Survey was administered to graduating seniors and provides qualitative and quantitative measures of student exposure to various disciplinary approaches to the Latin/o Americas, as well as an indication of their engagement in study abroad opportunities. The following results are germane to this assessment. (Note: Please see the following documents: the LAST "Exit Survey" and the "Exit Survey Results"— appended to this report.)

i) Declaration of the LAST co-major: Survey results demonstrate that the majority of graduating LAST students (46%) declared the LAST major in their Junior year in college, and 36% declared the major/minor in their Senior year. Of students surveyed, only 18% had declared the LAST major/minor by the end of their sophomore year. These percentages are not surprising for an inter-disciplinary major which must, by necessity, be paired with another major in Fulbright College. Often students don't know what Latin American Studies is until they have had some exposure through their major classes/professors. We can use this data to help us think creatively about how to better publicize our major and recruit majors earlier (aiming for the Sophomore year).

ii) Language skills: The Exit Survey shows that the majority of our LAST majors/minors are obtaining much more than the minimum language acquisition required for program participation. I.e., we require students to complete SPAN 2013 or equivalent before graduation, yet 82% of respondents had engaged in 4000-level language classes or are heritage speakers (speak Spanish as their first language).

Other languages: Survey results continue to indicate student interest in the reinstatement of a Portuguese language option: 45% of respondents said it was "likely" or "highly likely" that they would opt for Portuguese if offered, 18% said they would double up, opting for both Spanish and Portuguese, while only 9% said it was "highly unlikely" that they would opt for Portuguese if offered. We are delighted that the World Languages Department was awarded a tenure-track position for a Portuguese specialist and has made a hire in that field. Portuguese will be taught again at the University of Arkansas beginning in Fall 2016. In the future, we may also entertain the idea of offering an indigenous language (Quechua, K'iche', Kaqchikel, Aymara, or another of the hundreds of indigenous languages spoken in Central and South America and the Caribbean). Country wide, Centers of Latin American Studies offer Spanish, Portuguese, and at least one indigenous language; we can use our Exit Survey to assess the viability of this possibility.

iii) Language and literatures, political and economic issues, social and cultural issues, historical trajectories, and the arts in Latin/o America: The Survey asked students to evaluate their satisfaction with the depth of knowledge in, and exposure to, the above-mentioned areas. Each area was ranked by students on a scale ranging from excellent (assigned a value of 4); to good (value of 3); to satisfactory (value of 2); to unsatisfactory (value of 1); to not applicable (n/a = no value). We will use this data during our Fall LAST faculty meetings to discuss weaknesses in our curriculum and to improve our offerings. For instance, "the arts" continues to be an area requiring attention. We currently have only one dedicated and "Arts" professor in our program (an Art Historian). In the future, LAST faculty may decide to propose another joint hire in Art, Art History, Music, Theatre, etc. and/or include a more visible "arts" component in our

interdisciplinary capstone and/or intro classes, and/or feature the arts more prominently in our lecture series. Defining what is meant by “the arts” is also crucial here, as it may indeed encompass literary arts, visual arts, music, theatre, and film.

Language and literatures: 82% of students ranked their knowledge base in and exposure to language and literatures as “good” or “excellent.” The average evaluative score for this component is 3.18 (on a 1 to 4 point scale), meaning that students rated their knowledge in language and literatures between “good and excellent.”

Political/economic issues: 82% of students ranked their knowledge base in and exposure to political/economic issues as “good” or “excellent.” The average evaluative score for this component is 3.18 (on a 1 to 4 point scale), meaning that students rated their knowledge in political and economic issues between “good” and “excellent.”

Social and cultural issues: 91% of students ranked their knowledge base in and exposure to social and cultural issues as “good” or “excellent.” The average evaluative score for this component is 3.45 (on a 1 to 4 point scale), meaning that students rated their knowledge in cultural and social issues as between “good” and “excellent.”

Historical trajectories: 82% of students ranked their knowledge base in and exposure to historical trajectories of Latin/o America as “good” or “excellent.” The average evaluative score for this component is 3.27 (on a 1 to 4 point scale), meaning that students rated their knowledge of Latin/o American historical trajectories between “good” and “excellent.”

The arts: 45% of students ranked their knowledge base in and exposure to the arts in Latin/o America as “good” or “excellent.” The average evaluative score for this component is 2.45 (on a 1 to 4 point scale), meaning that students rated their knowledge of the arts of Latino and Latin America as being between “satisfactory and good.”

iv) Study Abroad: We view Study Abroad opportunities as important to cultivating well-rounded students (and program). According to the Survey results, 29% of respondents engaged in a study abroad program while studying at the U of A. When asked to indicate why they did not study abroad (if this was the case), 33% of students responded that they “did not have room in their schedule,” 29% responded that their lack of participation was “due to a lack of financial aid or scholarships” for study abroad. No-one responded that they did not study abroad due to “lack of interest.” We are aware of the lack of financial support for non-honors study abroad at UA, and we find this disparity alarming. We hope to use these survey results to support our case and continue to lobby for better financial support for non-honors students at the University of Arkansas.

### **C) Student GPAs:**

As stated in our Academic Assessment Plan, we record, track, and compare the GPAs of our graduating LAST co-majors and minors over the course of time. Our LAST students’ GPAs are as follows:

LAST Co-Majors (Spring 2016 graduation) – Average GPA: 3.34

LAST Minors (Spring 2016 graduation) – Average GPA: 3.45

All LAST Co-Majors and Minors (2016 graduates) – Overall Average GPA: 3.39

**D) Honors Theses, Conference Presentations, and Publications:** The data below provides a record of honors theses, publications, and awards related to Latin American and Latino Studies and/or directed by Latin American and Latino Studies program-affiliated faculty. These results will be compared to data from previous years to evaluate areas of program strengths, impact, and needs.

**2016 Honors Theses:**

Best, Rachel. Honors Thesis: "Children's Environmental Health in the US-Mexican Borderlands: An Overview and Assessment." (Anthropology, Justin Nolan, director). Cum Laude, Spring 2016.

Kincaid, Sandra. Honors Thesis: "Literacy in Latino Lives." (English, David Jolliffe, director). Cum Laude, Spring 2016.

McChesney, Victoria. Honors Thesis: "News Framing of Immigration in a Presidential Election Year vs. Non-Election Year in the United States." (Journalism, Hoyt Purvis, director). Magna Cum Laude, Spring 2016.

Zedlitz, Hilary. Honors Thesis: "A Lot of People Watching and a Lot of People Dead: Violence Levels and Religiously-Motivated Terrorist Groups." (Political Science, Jeff Ryan, director). Summa Cum Laude, Spring 2016.

**2015 Honors Theses:**

Axte, Erick. Honors Thesis: "Immigrant Assimilation: Does the Segmented Assimilation Theory Represent National Identity?" (Sociology, Juan Bustamante, director). Summa Cum Laude, Spring 2015.

Cameron, Mark K. Honors Thesis: "Economic Neoliberalism and the Chilean Student Movement: A challenge to privatized education and neoliberal sociopolitical structure in Chile." (Latin American and Latino Studies / International Studies, Sergio Villalobos, director). Magna Cum Laude, Spring 2015.

Gray, Lillian Ayana. Honors Thesis: "Female Integration in Secular Terrorist Groups." (Political Science, Jeff Ryan, director). Cum Laude, Spring 2015

Phillips, Sarah. Honors Thesis: "Literature of Societal Trauma: A Study of Literature Following the Holocaust and the Dirty War." (English, Yajaira Padilla, director). Cum Laude, Spring 2015.

Vaca Pereira Rocho, Hugo. Honors Thesis: "Inflation Targeting and Dollarization in Bolivia." (Economics, Andrea Civelli, director). Magna Cum Laude, Spring 2015.

**2015 Grants, Honors and Awards:**

Erick Axte (Juan José Bustamante, mentor) was awarded a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship for Germany.

**2014 Honors Theses:**

Fancher, Victoria (International Relations / Latin American Studies). Thesis title – "Acculturation: The Case of Latinos in the U.S. South," Juan José Bustamante, faculty mentor. *Cum Laude*, 2014.

Hayes, Lauren (International Relations). Thesis title – "The Rupture of Remembrance: Cultural Memory in Chile as Seen Through Art" Sergio Villalobos, faculty mentor. *Magna Cum Laude*, 2014.

Kraus, Rachel (International Relations). Thesis title – "Why Did McDonald's Close Their Stores in Bolivia? A Political Economic Perspective," Sergio Villalobos, faculty mentor. *Summa Cum Laude*, 2014.

March, James (Economics). Thesis title – "Has the 2002 Multi-Fund Reform to Chile's AFP System Increased System Participation Rates?" Andy Horowitz, faculty mentor. *Cum Laude*, 2014.

Patterson, Breana (Anthropology). Thesis title – “Crafting a Better World: Latin American Indigenous Movements for Autonomy as Resistance to Neoliberal Globalization,” Raja Swamy, faculty mentor, Kirstin Erickson, core committee member. *Cum Laude*, 2014.

Weston, Tyrel (Anthropology). Thesis title – “Religious Reconfiguration After 17th Century Jesuit Occupation: The Holy Week of the Rarámuri and Yaqui Cultures,” Kirstin Erickson, faculty mentor. *Cum Laude*, 2014.

Yeager, Rachel (Latin American Studies). Thesis title – “Government Control of and Influence on the Press in Latin America: The Case of Argentina During the Presidency of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2007-2014),” Luis Fernando Restrepo, faculty mentor. *Summa Cum Laude*, 2014.

**2014 Publications:**

Yeager, Rachel L. 2014. “Government Control of and Influence on the Press in Latin America: the case of Argentina during the Presidency of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, 2007-2014.” (Faculty mentor: Luis Fernando Restrepo) *Inquiry: the Undergraduate Research Journal* 17(2): 17-31.

**2013 Honors Theses:**

Cox, Celeste (Spanish). Thesis title – “E.E. Cummings and Pablo Neruda: Who is the Real ‘Doctor of Love’?” Steven Bell, faculty mentor. *Cum Laude*, 2013.

Kennedy, Devin (Spanish). Thesis title – “Theory and Reality in Public Policy: The Case of HIV/AIDS in Contemporary Chile,” Sergio Villalobos, faculty mentor. *Magna Cum Laude*, 2013.

Strike, Katherine (International Relations). Thesis title – “Does Violence Work?: The Effects of Violence on the Success of Indigenous Protest Movements Against Mining Enterprises in Latin America,” Jeffrey Ryan, faculty mentor. *Magna Cum Laude*, 2013.

Thompson, Lydia (Anthropology / Latin American Studies). Thesis title – “English Only: Navigating the Borders of Spanish Language and Identity in an Arkansas Middle School,” Kirstin Erickson, faculty mentor. *Summa Cum Laude*, 2013.

**2013 Publications:**

Newby, Lindsay. 2013. “Representations of Argentine National Identity via El Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes” (Faculty Mentor: Kirstin Erickson). *Inquiry: Undergraduate Research Journal*, vol. 14 (Spring 2013), pp. 64-74. University of Arkansas.

**2012 Honors Theses:**

Haltom, Matthew (Spanish). Thesis title – “The Disparity in Health Care Between Hispanics and Caucasians in Northwest Arkansas,” Reina Ruiz, faculty mentor. *Cum Laude*, 2012.

Kirkland, Kelsey (Anthropology). Thesis title – “Turning from the World: A Study of Conventual Life as Experienced by Hispanic and Anglo-American Carmelites,” Kirstin Erickson, faculty mentor. *Magna Cum Laude*, 2012.

Newby, Lindsay (Anthropology/International Relations, Latin American Studies minor). Thesis title – “Representations of Argentine Identity: Tradition, Modernity, and Tourism,” Kirstin Erickson, faculty mentor. *Summa Cum Laude*, 2012.

VanGenderen, Andrew (Latin American Studies). Thesis title – “How to Train Your Dragon: Brazil's Protectionist Responses to Chinese Competition,” Nick Copeland, faculty mentor. *Cum Laude*, 2012.

**2011 Honors Theses:**

Goetz, Donald (Anthropology / Latin American Studies). Thesis title – “Vignettes of Exile: The Work of Mario Benedetti and the Uruguayan Military Dictatorship,” Nick Copeland, faculty mentor. *Cum Laude*, 2011.

Spicer, Taylor (Anthropology). Thesis title – “Our Rights. Our Rights are Coming:” the Cultural Politics of Defending Place in Neoliberal, Leftist Brazil,” JoAnn D’Alisera, faculty mentor. *Summa Cum Laude*, 2011.

Worley, Jessica (Spanish). Thesis title – “The Blend of Traditional and Modern Medicine: Case Studies from Latin America as Lessons for the United States,” Reina Ruiz, faculty mentor. *Summa Cum Laude*, 2011.

**2010 Honors Theses:**

White, Jennifer (Anthropology). Thesis title – “I am a Kayapó’: Kayapó Identity Construction Through Video,” Kirstin Erickson, faculty mentor. *Cum Laude*, 2010.

Winchester, Kelsey (International Relations, Latin American Studies). Thesis title – “Painting a Thin Line: International Relations Between Mexico and the United States as Seen Through the Visual Arts of Tijuana/San Diego,” Kathryn Sloan, faculty mentor. *Magna Cum Laude*, 2010.

**2009 Honors Theses:**

Chapman, Rachel (Psychology). Thesis title – “Perceptions of Mental Health Service Among Hispanic Adults,” Ana Bridges, faculty mentor. 2009.

Day, John. (Political Science). Thesis title – “First and Second Generation Reforms in Latin America,” Jeffrey Ryan, faculty mentor. *Cum Laude*, 2009.

Findley, Rachel. (Anthropology). Thesis title – “Remembering la Virgen de Guadalupe: Feminist Interpretation Among Northwest Arkansas Latina Women,” Kirstin Erickson, faculty mentor. *Magna Cum Laude*, 2009.

Hayde, Donnelley (Anthropology). Thesis title – “Out of Mouths, Out of Minds: Exploring the Progress and Problematizing of Bileez Kriol,” Kirstin Erickson, faculty mentor. *Summa Cum Laude*, 2009.

**E) LAST Alumni Tracking:****2016 graduates**

Pamela Aguilar: (2016 grad) currently works at the Northwest Arkansas Center for Sexual Assault as a Bilingual Advocate.

Kristina Birke: (2016 grad) plans to work for a nonprofit organization dealing with issues of food sovereignty and hunger.

Diego Quiñones: (2016 grad) has applied for an internship with the Hispanic Congressional Caucus Institute in Washington, D.C. and plans to attend law school.

**2015 graduates**

Mark Cameron: (2015 grad) spent 6 months living and working as a research associate at COHA (the Council of Hemispheric Affairs) in Washington, D.C. Mark has recently been selected as a volunteer to Colombia, where he will spend a year teaching for Greenheart International in the city of San Juan de Pasto.

Alberto Chavez: (2015 grad) is enrolled in the Masters of Arts in Spanish at the University of Arkansas and also serves as a GA in that department. He plans to become a Spanish teacher after graduation.

Rubicely Hernández Zamacona (2015 grad) has accepted a position at the Walton Family Foundation. She serves as a community liaison and works on outreach to the Latino community of Northwest Arkansas.

Alexandra Serrano: (2015 grad) is an intern at the International Rescue Committee (Dallas), where she will serve as a Spanish translator for immigrants and will facilitate refugee acclimation to US culture.

#### **2014 graduates**

Tyrel Weston (2014 grad) will finish his Master's degree program in History at the University of Arkansas in summer 2016; he is specializing in 19<sup>th</sup> century Latin America. Weston has been accepted into the 2016-17 MAT program at the University of Arkansas. He will continue to serve as the Latin American and Latino Studies Graduate Assistant in 2016-17.

#### **2013 graduates**

Oscar Cardona (2013) earned his Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree at the University of Arkansas in 2014.

Susan Moreno (graduated 2013) went on to earn a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree at the University of Arkansas in 2014. During her graduate tenure at UA, she worked extensively for La Oficina Latina. Ms. Moreno now has a teaching job in a middle school, in Dallas, Texas.

Lindsay Newby (graduated 2013). After graduating from the University of Arkansas, Lindsay spent seven months teaching English to children in Pre-K, K, and 5-11th grades in Salamanca, Chile, in service to the United Nations Development Program's "English Opens Doors." Upon her return to the United States, she joined Teach for America's Dallas-Fort Worth Corps where she was placed as a self-contained 2nd grade dual-language teacher. She is currently in her second year of the Teach for America program and was selected as an Education Fellow for Teaching Trust, a non-profit in the Dallas-Fort Worth area dedicated to developing future educational leaders. In the future she is planning to continue with her teaching career while pursuing her Master's degree in bilingual education and ed-policy.

Katherine Strike (2013 grad) is currently attending the University of Pennsylvania Law School. Her legal studies are focused on development, civil society, NGOs in Latin America.

Lydia Thompson (graduated 2013) spent nine months as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Toluca, Mexico. Lydia is now working as a Teach for America volunteer in Fort Worth, TX, where she teaches bilingual reading to fifth-graders in a predominantly Hispanic-serving middle school.

#### **2012 and earlier:**

Rafael Arciga Garcia (graduated 2010). Rafael is currently the Senior Assistant Director for Admissions at University of Arkansas. He was formerly Arkansas' State Director of LULAC. He has served on the Board of Directors of the Hispanic Women's Organization of Arkansas and was a Partners of the Americas Legislative Fellow to Paraguay.

Ana Aguayo (graduated 2011) after graduating, served as Director of Development and Communications at the Northwest Arkansas Workers' Justice Center, a non-profit agency that serves the local Latino and Latin American immigrant community. Ms. Aguayo works in Arkansas' Office of the Governor.

Nathan Bogart (graduated 2007) completed a Law degree at the University of Arkansas and is currently working in the field of immigration law in Kansas City.

Steven Coger (graduated 2008) spent a year in Argentina as a Teaching Assistant after graduation. Stephen was one of five students who were awarded the prestigious William H. Gates Public Service Law Scholarship to attend the University of Washington School of Law. He currently practices law in NW Arkansas.

Amanda Koone Echevoyen (graduated 2005) worked, immediately following graduation, with the Hispanic community in Northwest Arkansas as Community Outreach Coordinator for the Jones Center for Families in Springdale, AR.

Angela Fletcher (graduated 2007) Ms. Fletcher currently works at Cotton Council International, a not-for-profit trade association, which promotes the export of U.S. cotton. Her job title is Manager of International Programs and Supply Chain Marketing.

Michael Glenn (graduated 2010) works for Walmart International in the Imports division.

Cassandra Griffin (graduated 2011) During her undergraduate years, Ms. Griffin served as an intern in Peru. After graduation, she earned an MS in Community Health Promotion from the University of Arkansas in 2013. She currently works for the Arkansas Department of Health as a Health Information Specialist, a position she has held since July 2013. Ms. Griffin writes, "Even though my job is in health, I utilize my Latin American Studies degree nearly every day when working with different programs throughout a nineteen country region."

José Lopez (graduated 2008). José has put his LAST minor to great use – he works as Managing Editor of La Prensa Libre (Northwest Arkansas' Spanish-language newspaper – published online and in print). José also co-chairs the Hispanic Heritage Month committee, under which the University joins forces with the broader NWA Latino community to sponsor and publicize a month of Hispanic Heritage events.

Aaron Moulton (graduated 2007) successfully defended his dissertation in spring 2016 and has earned the Ph.D. in History at the University of Arkansas. (Aaron's dissertation focuses on U.S. diplomatic history in Latin America.) Aaron has taught many Latin American History courses for us over the last few years. In 2012-13, he became also the recipient of several distinguished awards: a Harry S. Truman Presidential Library Research Grant (\$400); a Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) Samuel Flagg Bemis Dissertation Research Grant (\$2000); a Phi Alpha Theta John Pine Memorial Scholarship (\$1000); and also a J. William Fulbright College Dissertation Research Award (\$5000).

Emile Phaneuf (graduated 2009). Emile was awarded a LAST GA position and also held an Arkansas World Trade Center internship while completing an M.A. in Political Science. He has taken a job as the Export Sales Manager for the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Europe for Brunner and Lay, a world leader in the manufacturing of mining and construction tools, headquartered in Springdale, Arkansas.

Nick Rowell (graduated 2004) served as an undergraduate, as one of our first LAST student interns. Nick went on to complete a Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of New Mexico, in 2012. In 2013-14, Nick joined the Fulbright College faculty as a visiting assistant professor. During 2013 14, Nick enriched our curriculum with his courses, "Church and State in Latin America" and "Government and Politics of Latin America." He is now a tenure-track faculty member at Cabrillo College in California.

Renata Shelton (graduated 2008). After graduating from the University of Arkansas, Renata engaged her LAST degree in numerous ways. She served in Springdale, Arkansas as a translator/interpreter for Americorps; she was a Spanish Liaison and ESL Outreach Coordinator for Legal Aid of Arkansas; and she spent 2009 in Iguazú Falls, Argentina, working as a Field Research Manager at the Centro de Investigaciones Ecológicas Subtropicales research station. She earned the M.A. in Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies at the University of Arkansas in summer 2015, and she is currently enrolled in a Master's degree program in the Walton College of Business.

Joseph (Alex) Thomas (graduated 2011) was certified as a court interpreter and currently works for the Washington County Public Defender's Office.

Pablo Velez Feraud (graduated 2012) is currently pursuing a graduate degree in secondary education (Spanish emphasis) at the University of Arkansas.

Anna Worsham (graduation 2007) went on to earn an MBA (finance emphasis) from UA's Walton College of Business. Ms. Worsham successfully landed two internships during her undergraduate and graduate careers: in 2007 she was a summer sales intern for the Nestle Purina Walmart team, and from January 2008 – May 2009 she interned as a Groupe Danone analyst for Walmart International. She is currently employed as an account manager at Saatchi and Saatchi X, a marketing agency in Springdale, AR.

## Use of Results

The most significant findings in our results are the various evaluations of our program's curriculum, its breadth and depth of coverage in each of the noted areas, student matriculation in and evaluation of our Introduction to LAST course, student rates of participation in the capstone course, levels of area language completion, student interest in other Latin American languages, student access to/involvement in study abroad, and the evaluative comparison of capstone colloquia.

### ***Using Survey Results:***

The results of our anonymous Exit Survey and Questionnaire will be shared with LAST faculty in Summer 2016 and will be discussed at a meeting during the Fall 2016 semester. We will use these results to help shape and plan future initiatives and directions for our program and to improve our current curriculum. We will discuss student matriculation in the program and strategize how to better reach students at an earlier stage in their college career. We will discuss the level and rates of (Spanish) language attainment. For specific strategies and uses, please see my comments (B-ii above). We will utilize the survey results to discuss areas of strength and weakness in the various disciplines (language/literatures, politics/economics, social/cultural, historical, arts). A comparison of students' evaluations (performed annually via the Survey) will provide information that may inform our requests for faculty/new hires, and it will also help us balance the topics and foci of our own classes (especially the interdisciplinary colloquia and intro). For specific comment on future strategies and uses, please see my comments above (B-iii). We will use the Study Abroad data in order to inform our improvement and spur recruitment into our Puebla study abroad program and to consider other areas/programs. For other uses, please see my comments in B-iv, above.

### ***Assessing the Capstone Colloquium:***

Many students take the Capstone LAST 4003 colloquium more than once (on different topics) during their college careers. Even though the areas and topics covered by the colloquium differ by semester, across the board LAST 4003 demonstrates curricular strengths including: interdisciplinary training, diversity awareness, bibliography building / annotation, public presentation skills, research skills, the composition of a research paper, the conduct of ethnographic fieldwork, and critical/analytical thinking. All of our capstone classes require some form of writing (typically a research paper, but also at times a series of shorter analytical essays); the LAST faculty developed general rubric to be used by our program's faculty in the assessment of capstone final projects. We now have our first comparative data set (see A-3, above). Faculty will discuss the results of the comparative rubric in Fall 2016 and will evaluate the process and outcome. In the future, year-to-year comparisons may also be made.

**GPA's:** The GPAs of graduating students (co-majors and minors) will be compared year-by-year. The faculty will discuss the results.

**Honors Theses, Conference Presentations, and Publications:** This year, there were 4 honors theses. While fewer Latin American/Latino- related theses were written this year than in 2015 (which saw 5 honors projects), it is consistent with previous years (which averaged between 2 to 4 theses). By comparing results year-to-year (the numbers of theses and publications as well as disciplinary representation) our faculty can gain a sense of upward or downward trends, areas of strength, and program needs. We will discuss the results during a Fall 2016 meeting, and we will strategize how we can become more involved in the honors college and increase our mentorship of honors students. We will also use this data as a point of discussion about curriculum balance (honors vs. non-honors sections) and recruitment (how to recruit more honors students into the LAST co-major).

**Alumni Tracking:** Finally, when our faculty convenes in Fall 2016, we will discuss trends and opportunities for graduates of our program. An examination of the information provided by LAST alumni on post-graduation employment, internships, teaching opportunities, volunteer work, and graduate study will help us identify programmatic strengths and needs.