

YORK UNIVERSITY

Final Assessment Report – Executive Summary

Hispanic Studies (BA, iBA)

**Certificate in Translation Spanish-English/
English-Spanish**

**Certificate in Spanish for Business and Professional
Communication**

Glendon College/Collège universitaire Glendon

Cyclical Program Review – 2011 to 2019

This Final Assessment Report (FAR) provides a synthesis of the cyclical review of the programs listed below.

Program(s) Reviewed:

BA, iBA

Certificate in Translation Spanish-English/English-Spanish

Certificate in Spanish for Business and Professional Communication

Reviewers appointed by the Vice-Provost Academic:

Dr. Odile Cisneros, Associate Professor, Faculty of Arts, Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies, University of Alberta, Alberta

Dr. Omar Rodriguez, Associate Professor, Faculty of Arts & Science, Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics, University of Lethbridge, Alberta

Dr. Gillian McGillivray, Associate Professor, Department of History, Glendon College, York University

Cyclical Program Review Key Milestones:

Cyclical Program Review launch: September 19, 2019

Self-study submitted to Vice-Provost Academic: January 31, 2022

Date of the Site Visit: April 4-5, 2022

Review Report received: June 27, 2022

Program Response received: August 30, 2022

Dean's Response received: December 1, 2022

Implementation Plan and FAR received by Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance, January 2023



Submitted by Lyndon Martin, Vice-Provost Academic, York University

This review was conducted under the York University Quality Assurance Protocol, August 2013.

SITE VISIT: April 4-5, 2022

The site visit consisted of a series of virtual interviews with the following individuals and groups:

- Vice-Provost Academic Lyndon Martin
- Principal Marco Fiola and Associate Principal Academic Audrey Pyee
- Department Chair Jerzy Kowal
- Full-time faculty members
- Contract faculty members
- Student groups from the Hispanic Studies program and the Certificate in Spanish-English translation
- Administrative staff and the Coordinator of the Spanish Resource Centre
- Library representatives Associate Dean Research and Open Scholarship Jack Leong, and Director of Content Development and Analysis Patti Ryan.

The reviewers note that while they were not able to visit any facilities, the collective effort of the site visit participants painted a clear picture of the college and offered a strong sense of the quality and beauty of the Glendon Campus and of the spaces the Hispanic Studies department has at its disposal.

OUTCOME:

The Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance received the Program and Decanal responses to the recommendations and has approved an implementation plan.

A report on the progress of the initiatives undertaken in response to recommendations in general and as specified in the implementation plan will be provided in the Follow-up Report which will be due 18 months after the review of this report by the York University Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance (in July 2024).

The next Cyclical Program Review will begin in the Fall of 2027 with a site visit expected in the Fall of 2028 or Winter of 2029.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND STRENGTHS

The Hispanic Studies program offers a range of major and certificate programs, including an Honours and a Specialized Honours BA and iBA, double major and major/minor programs, a 90-credit BA, a Certificate in Spanish/English-English/Spanish Translation, and a Certificate in Spanish for Business and Professional Communication.

The programs attract liberal arts students interested in learning a third language in a bilingual setting, students who intend to major in the academic field of peninsular and Latin American cultures, literatures and societies, and students interested in learning Spanish in conjunction with their studies in other fields, such as French, translation, international studies, history, and others. Spanish is the most popular third language among Glendon students and is central to Glendon's trilingual International Bachelor of Arts (iBA) and to the Trilingual Excellence Certificate.

The program describes its academic mission as intimately connected to community engagement and social awareness, writing that there is “a tangible connection between the foundations of our discipline (language, arts, literature, criticism) and the search for solutions to current social, economic, ecological, political and cultural issues.”

The reviewers commented on the remarkable range of literature and cultural courses and the program’s “well designed structure takes students from mere linguistic instruction to more advanced literature and cultural offerings.” They further note that “the department has taken special care to offer innovative and creative courses that focus on the graphic novel, flash fictions, ecocriticism and geopoetics, to name a few.” They see the department’s commitment to teaching the Spanish language in context as evident by the courses that focus on experiential learning and that strengthen ties to the community. The reviewers also remark on the department’s creative and effective uses of technology in its courses.

The reviewers commented that the integration of the three basic program areas (literature/culture, language/linguistics, and translation) provides a sound structure for students to achieve the program learning outcomes. They also indicated their support for the direction in which the department is moving to address challenges in the curriculum to remove barriers to student participation and streamline the path to completion. They agree that the proposed changes to the curriculum will better enable students to explore courses across the three main areas of the program.

The reviewers note that the Spanish Resource Centre in particular is a great asset to the program. As a unit dedicated to the promotion of the Spanish language and sponsored in part by the Government of Spain, it is also one of only three such places across Canada.

The reviewers also commented on the impressive expertise and experience of both full-time and part-time faculty, including their publication record and research activities, but they note the challenges that imminent retirements will pose to the Department.

Enrolment in the program is declining and the reviewers suggest a review of the high minimum GPA for admission. They also suggest an exploration of the entrance exam for the Certificate in Spanish/English-English/Spanish Translation as it may be deterring students, particularly mature and other non-traditional students.

The reviewers make their recommendations with the aim of supporting the sustainability and continuous improvement of what they describe to be an innovative and distinct program that excels in its three key areas of study.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The chart below lays out the implementation plan approved by the Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance at its meeting in January 2023.

| | Recommendation | Action | Responsible for Follow-up | Timeline |
|----|--|--|--|--|
| 1. | That a comprehensive and aggressive recruitment strategy be put in place. | The department should work with Glendon's Communications and Recruitment teams to amplify external efforts. | Department Chair Executive Director, Strategic Communications and Community Engagement, Glendon | Winter 2023 term and ongoing |
| 2. | That the department simplify its program requirements to make them more flexible and consider using more descriptive course titles. | The department should create an 18-month plan with specific timelines for the program changes that are proposed, in alignment with the Glendon revisioning exercise. <i>See also recommendation 4 below.</i> | Department Chair, Associate Principal, Academic Faculty Council | Plan should be laid out by the end of May 2023, including an indication of what has been approved. |
| 3. | That the department hire additional faculty members. | The department should develop a complement plan for the revised program, with enrolment objectives for required and elective courses. | Department Chair, Principal's Office | Complement plan to be completed by May 2023. |
| 4. | That the department undertake short-term focused measures to enhance flexibility for students and mitigate teaching and administrative strain. | The department should continue with plans to change 6-credit courses to 3 credits, enhance course titles, and consider the mode of delivery of courses, especially after year 1. | Department Chair | Changes to be made for Fall 2023 and ongoing. |