**Annual Departmental Assessment Report**

**Department or Program: Linguistics**

**Academic Year of Report: 2018-2019**

**Department Contact Person for Assessment: Melissa Baese-Berk**

**Section 1: Learning Objectives Assessed for this Report**

For each major in the department, list the learning objectives that were assessed during this period.

1. Rather than focusing on specific learning objectives this year, we used insights from our previous assessment (2017-2018) to focus on revamping our major to create a new major that is more accessible to our students, which has new learning outcomes.

**Section 2: Assessment Activities**

We collected data from our of faculty about skills their students are developing (primarily via assessment of student learning on assignments and tests) and used insights from these to revamp our major.

**Section 3: Actions Taken Based on Assessment Analysis**

Our plan to revamp the major (see attached for more information) was in light of assessing two of our most challenging “core” classes last year, LING450 (Phonology) and LING451 (Functional Syntax). These two courses are notoriously challenging for students. 451 in particular has had a high DFW rate (18.6% average over the past 5 years). Because it was clear from this assessment that students were not achieving their learning goals, we asked why this was the case. It was clear that they were entering the classes not prepared for the high level of course content. This is a sticking point because both classes are required for the major. Given the relatively small size of our department, these classes are only offered once per year. Because of this, it is often the case that a student must wait an entire year to re-take the course – causing a significant roadblock to graduation. It became clear to us that our students were not as prepared as they could be nor were we assisting them in successfully completing the major in a timely way.

Therefore, we reassessed our major as a whole with two questions in mind: What did students need to support their readiness for these classes? And what can we do to help students succeed in our major, especially if they declare the major late in their career (e.g., after a transfer from another institution)?

We have taken action in two ways, one to address each of the aforementioned questions. First, we have developed two new courses LING311 and LING312 designed to serve as a bridge between our introductory classes (LING301 and LING302) and our more advanced 4/500 level classes. These courses will allow students to develop some necessary skills before diving into the more complex content. Second, we have revamped the required courses in our major to give students more flexibility and to ensure that any one course will not be a stumbling block to successful completion of the major. We have attached sample syllabi for the two courses, as well as our major overhaul, which is currently under review at UOCC.

**Section 4: Other Efforts to Improve the Student Educational Experience**

In addition to the major change outlined above, we have begun to work closely with Tykeson Hall advisors and the Career Center to help improve the wrap-around advising services for our students. We now believe our students are served by an advising team (rather than a single departmental advisor) to ensure they are able to successfully navigate the Linguistics major.

We are also planning to propose two career-legible minors before the end of the academic year to supplement our existing course offerings and student opportunities.

**Section 5: Plans for Next Year**

We hope that our major revision will be approved (under review since September), such that we can implement it with our new learning objectives. As such, we will shift our assessment plan to more directly examine these new objectives. We also hope that we will propose the second phase of our major revision, which will involve shifting some of our existing classes to more closely meet the expertise of our faculty (of our eleven tenure-line faculty, three have been hired in the past two years). There are no budgetary implications of our proposed actions.