The National Hispanic University

Translation and Interpretation Certificate Program Self-Study 2008

Program Mission, Goals, and Objectives

1. Describe the program’s mission, role and scope.

The mission of the Translation and Interpretation (T&I) Certificate program is to prepare and train bilingual students to a high level of professional competence in the arts of translation and interpretation. The certificate program is a set of specific academic courses that is narrower in scope and objectives than a degree or major, and which is designed to be finished within one year. A certificate will be issued after the completion of 21 units of coursework.

2. Describe the program, including name of the degree, the major, the emphasis and the purpose.

The Translation and Interpretation Certificate program offers a Certificate in Translation and Interpretation in the Spanish-English combination, with emphasis on medical and legal translation and interpretation. Students are allowed, however, to choose to concentrate on other areas of translation or interpretation, such as business, government, or education.

3. What are the major goals and objectives? If they have they changed over the last 5 years, provide a summary of these changes. Are there likely to be changed in the near future?

Goals. The T&I Certificate program has two goals:

The first is to provide the education and necessary tools to students so they can succeed as a translator and interpreter in a highly competitive world, and find employment in the medical, legal, education, government, or business fields. The second goal is to offer students the opportunity to apply units earned in T&I courses towards the pursuit of other degree programs at NHU. This goal was added shortly in May 2001, after the program was started again, in articulation with the B.A. degree program in business administration.

Program Objectives. The goals of the T&I Certificate program are accomplished by having students achieve the following objectives:

Acquire specialized vocabulary
Learn techniques for simultaneous and sequential interpretation, and sight and text translation, and
Apply intra-language interpretation and reading-comprehension techniques for education and learning in any discipline.
These goals are not likely to change in the near future.

4. How do these goals and objectives fit in the NHU mission?

The mission of the National Hispanic University is to enable Hispanics, other minorities, women, and others to acquire an undergraduate degree or certificate using a multicultural educational experience to obtain a professional career in business, education, or technology.

The T&I Certificate program fits the NHU mission in two ways:
It allows a student to obtain a professional T&I certificate and pursue a career as translator and/or interpreter in government, business, education, or technology, and
It provides the basis for a student to move on and pursue a B.A. degree within or outside NHU.

Moreover, by adopting critical hermeneutics (the science of interpretation of texts) as academic meta-framework to guide all facets of the program (including design, curriculum & instruction, and self-assessment), the program strengthens its curricular contents in a way that enables simultaneous fulfillment of broader NHU objectives related to WASC accreditation guidelines of integrated-learning and life-long learning. For example, hermeneutics teaches that, contrary to popular belief, language is not a tool for communication but, rather, the very medium in which, by which, and through which we negotiate meanings via the process of interpretation. We engage in interpretation when we try to learn any subject matter, resolve any everyday problem, or figure out the meaning of someone’s action in all facets of life. Thus, teaching hermeneutics allows us the learn the fundamental method to integrate all kinds of learning and throughout our whole life. The specifics on how this is done are described in the various sections below.

PROGRAM HISTORY

1. Program’s history since the last program review or within the last five years, emphasizing major changes that have occurred.

A. Brief Program History and Major Changes

The Translation and Interpretation (T&I) Certificate program under study here, headed by its director Dr. George Guim was re-established in the year 2001, after its previous director Ms. Rosa Kong-Beach left the position in 1999 and the program was discontinued in the year 2000. Under Ms. Kong-Beach, the mission of the program was to prepare interpreters and translators primarily for work in the medical and court interpretation fields (although the program does offer latitude for students to ‘specialize’ in other areas, such as education, government, business).
The T&I program was part of a bi-lingual certificate track whose goal was to enable future teachers to satisfy California bi-lingual education requirements in order to teach in the school system; the program goal was more related to language training than T&I per se.

The T&I Certificate program was re-started in January of 2001 when Dr. George Guim, who had been hired as full-time chair of the Business Administration department, saw the value and necessity of reviving such program. Initially (and until 2004), his T&I program was subsumed under the business administration department, with his acting in the capacity of formal chair of the business department and, at the same time doing double duty as coordinator of the T&I program.

After NHU obtained WASC accreditation status in 2003, and as the program evolved and solidified, it became necessary to have a person dedicated exclusively to its management. In Fall of 2004, then university provost Dr. Robert Segura designated Dr. George Guim as full-time director of the T&I program.

Under Dr. Guim’s direction, the program made great strides towards improving its design and curriculum, initially to fulfill its narrower goal in the areas of medical and court translation and interpretation but, later, to achieve the expanded goal of helping students to further their academic pursuits beyond the confines of the medical and legal T&I, and beyond the level of a certificate. He articulated the program with the B.A. degree program in business administration.

An ironic example of the program’s success is the story of one student, Everardo, who felt so empowered by what he learned in the very first course (T&I 201 Syntax and Grammar) that he left the program upon completing the course and went for a double major in business and international relations at San Jose State University. He said he had never been taught to learn how to write and express himself in a way that showed the importance of the concrete connection between syntax and intended meaning in English composition. He graduated and is currently working for the minority recruitment office at UC Berkeley.

Table 1 below shows the evolution of the program leading to its current design which divides the program’s seven courses into 3 foundation and four professional courses.
Table 1. Overview of T&I Program: Course Number (Units) and Name

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Foundation Courses</th>
<th>Professional Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic Skills</td>
<td>Technique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2001</td>
<td>T&amp;I 311 (6)</td>
<td>T&amp;I 314 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Translation Theory &amp; Applications</td>
<td>Anatomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T&amp;I 316 (3)</td>
<td>T&amp;I 413 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diseases</td>
<td>Legal Translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Legal Interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spr 2003</td>
<td>301 (3)</td>
<td>T&amp;I 314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Socio-cultural Foundations of Language</td>
<td>T&amp;I 316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>302 (3)</td>
<td>T&amp;I 413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T&amp;I Theory &amp; Techniques</td>
<td>T&amp;I 414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2004</td>
<td>201 (3)</td>
<td>T&amp;I 314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intensive Grammar</td>
<td>T&amp;I 316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>301</td>
<td>T&amp;I 413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>302</td>
<td>T&amp;I 414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td>205 (3)</td>
<td>T&amp;I 314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Syntax &amp; Discourse Analysis I</td>
<td>T&amp;I 316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>305 (3)</td>
<td>T&amp;I 413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Translational Theory &amp; Technique I</td>
<td>T&amp;I 414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>306 (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interpretation Theory &amp; Technique I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4
B. Enrollment and Graduation Trends

The program has grown from 6 students in the Fall of 2000 to a steady enrollment averaging 15 students per cohort, with two cohorts per year. In the Fall of 2008, there are approximately 15 students in the first cohort, and 25 in the second, totaling 40 in the entire program. Enrollment and graduation numbers are shown below.

Table 2. Enrollment and Graduation Trends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over the years, the student profile has shifted from older to younger, from older working adults who wanted to effect a change in jobs, to college students or high school graduates who want to start a career and fulfill their goals in the T&I field.

From its initial open-enrollment policy, where students would come into the program at any point in time and graduated after taking 6 courses in any combination and sequence, Dr. Guim re-designed the program so that (1) the first three courses (grammar, translation technique, and interpretation technique) became thematically and interdependently related, so that the first course was a pre-requisite to the next, and so on, and (2) applicants could only enter the program at fixed entry points. He created a cohorted program where, with rare exception, students could only start from the first course in the program. He instituted two cohorts per year, with entry points in January and August, respectively.

EXTERNAL REVIEW TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS AND T&I PROGRAM RESPONSE

The last External Review of the T&I Certificate program was done in November of 2001, and only as part of a larger review focused mostly on the Business Administration degree program. This was so because the T&I program was a only subsidiary curriculum that Dr. Guim undertook while he was chair of the business administration department at the time. A copy of the External Review Team 2001 Report showing its recommendations, with responses by the business department is attached. (See External Review Team 2001 Recommendations below.) Since the T&I program had already been separated from the business administration department, this attachment does not show T&I responses.

Because there has not been another self-study or external review of the T&I program since 2001, the T&I program has not had the need to report its responses until now that this self-study is being prepared.
Even though the Team 2001 recommendations were addressed mainly to the business department, the T&I program has taken notice of the general recommendations directed to the business program and responded where applicable and relevant. In this Self-Study we focus on four recommendations relevant and applicable to the T&I program. These recommendations are summarized in a table titled Summary of Team 2001 Recommendations and T&I Program Responses, and which divides them into two categories: (A) Educational and Operational Environment and (B) Curricular Structure and Development, respectively.

This Self-Study addresses six recommendations made by the External Review Team 2001, under ‘Educational and Operational Environment’ and ‘Curricular Structure and Development.” These were considered the most relevant and applicable to the T&I program, given that the Team visit focused on the review of the business administration degree program (under which the T&I Certificate program was subsumed at that time). In summary form, they are shown on Table 5 below.

Table 5. Summary of Team 2001 Comments and Recommendations, and T&I Program Response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Area</th>
<th>Team 2001 Recommendation</th>
<th>T&amp;I Program Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational and Operational</td>
<td>1 Stable and committed learning practices.</td>
<td>Adopting critical hermeneutics as academic meta-framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>2 Curriculum matrix and integrated learning.</td>
<td>Critical hermeneutics as pivotal concept (method) for integrated learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Non-quantitative measures of learning outcomes such as learning reflections and narratives</td>
<td>Use of self-reflection and narrative to assess student learning-outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 Faculty enrichment programs.</td>
<td>Lectures series on e and integrated learning, to start in September, 2008.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curricular Structure and</td>
<td>1 Implement changes to rationalize and strengthen curriculum</td>
<td>New curricular directions and innovative teaching approaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>2 Develop standardized syllabus format.</td>
<td>Course outlines and syllabi in place.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion:

(A) Educational and Operational Environment: Recommendations and Response:

**Recommendation 1.** Although NHU has broken out its values statement into ‘Mission’ and ‘Philosophy,’ conversations with internal stakeholders indicate that the true mission is “Si, Se Puede,” or the modeling of educational possibilities for a Hispanic community so often lacking such models. The degree and certificate programs are concrete markers of success in a more fundamental mission endeavor ---to draw Hispanic students into stable and committed learning practices and community leadership. Perhaps a redefinition of mission priorities is in order.

Response: The program director adopted critical hermeneutics as the academic meta-framework via program and curricular changes to achieve ‘stable and committed learning practices.’

The External Review Team 2001 comments on the need to have ‘models’ to create stable learning environments. This recommendation resonates with Stanford University Prof. Lee Shulman’s (1977) notion of “participant structures” in order to secure “authentic and enduring learning” (italics added), and recommendation that “an entire institution must be oriented toward these principles” (e.g., hermeneutics meta-framework), and that “the principles must be consistently and regularly employed throughout each course and experience in a program.”

The T&I program orients itself academically with the hermeneutic framework as fixed reference for program design, curriculum and instruction to articulate closely with each phase of the program management cycle: conceptualization, implementation, development, self-assessment, and re-conceptualization.

The hermeneutic framework acts as a steadying overall guide for the academic contents of each of its courses and serves the purpose of securing delivery of an educational product of the highest caliber.

**Recommendation 2.** The proposed curriculum matrix aimed at providing all instructors with a coherent map of projected program learning in its entirety, and with a collegial environment for sharing expertise and curricular ideas, should be implemented as fully as resources and faculty energies permit. This is a key option for providing the integrated learning environment NHU professes to seek.

Response: To distribute critical hermeneutic concepts as ‘glue’ that holds the contents within and between T&I courses, links T&I and non-T&I interpretation as one common operation and, finally, ties contents and methods together. This constitutes integrated learning and lifelong learning. There is also a *trans-disciplinary* element achieved (see Academic Quality section below).
Dr. Guim implemented a plan in which key concepts from different disciplines were integrated into the contents of the foundation courses taught by him, and which tie together interpretation, language, culture, and ethics. The foundation courses are: T&I 205 Syntax and Discourse, T&I 305 Translation Theory and Technique, and T&I 306 Interpretation Theory and Technique. These courses not only integrate subject matter but also research methods under the common operation of interpretation.

As a research operation, hermeneutics moves interpretation away from the traditional linear approach of the scientific method towards methods more appropriate to the social sciences. In specific, paradigmatic shifts in subject matter content included incorporation of participatory research and critical hermeneutic approaches that emphasize emergent knowledge, value relationships, and link linguistic interpretation directly to ethical acts.

As a side note, curriculum matrix and integrated learning recommendations were also implemented in the business administration program by developing the qualitative cluster of courses comprising business communication, organizational behavior, leadership, and ethics. Because Dr. Guim teaches these business courses and the T&I foundation ones as well, there is cross-polinization in curricular and pedagogical experiences in terms of “knowing, doing, and being” (Guim 2001, unpublished doctoral dissertation).

**Recommendation 3.** Proposed work in the area of non-quantitative measures of learning outcomes (such as learning reflections and narratives) is also to be encouraged. In a community-focused environment like NHU, it is imperative that the students be canvassed to determine that they have succeeded in a wider sphere than test-taking or other quantitative measurements.

Response: The program director, as instructor in the foundations courses, program started using reflection and narrative types of approaches to assess student learning outcomes. While not yet systematized, narrative types of approaches are being tested in homework assignments and as exam questions. Their improved utilization is a function of the type of instruction and delivery of contents that are amenable to such evaluations. In turn, this function depends on instructional materials (including textbooks) and the availability of technology resources. Starting with the T&I 205 course in August 2008, some of these narratives are being captured on video clips.

**Recommendation 4** (actually #8 on Team 2001 report). Faculty enrichment efforts, under way in the areas of cross-disciplinary conversation and various faculty development workshops are the key to maintaining a vigorous focused faculty cohort.

Response: The T&I program has instituted a series of lectures to start in September, 2008, on the applicability of hermeneutics to T&I teaching, business, education, the arts, and sciences.
(B) Curricular Structure and Development: Recommendations and Response

Recommendation 1. Implement changes to rationalize and strengthen curriculum

Response: See Academic Quality section below (under New Directions in Curriculum, and Innovative Teaching Approaches).

Recommendation 2. Develop standardized syllabus format.

Response: University-wide implementation of course outlines in standardized format to serve as template and guideline for individual instructors to use and create their course syllabi. See Appendix B.
CURRICULAR STRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

Major Changes

This section describes major changes curriculum and their reasons, as broadly described in Table 3. Reasons for changes include:

1. Director’s initial assessment of the program from operational (format) and curricular perspectives,
2. Subsequent initiatives to implement needed changes, and
3. Recommendations by the External Review Team 2001 (from now on abbreviated Team 2001) in support of existing or new initiatives as described in the Team 2001 Report explicitly addressed the business administration program but implicitly to the T&I program as well, since both were under the direction of the same person, Dr. Guim.

Table 3. Overview of Major Changes and Broad Rationale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Program Design/ Course Changes</th>
<th>Course Content Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Director’s initial assessment of program.</td>
<td>Adoption of previous program design. Adoption of hermeneutic meta-framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 - on</td>
<td>By subsequent director initiative</td>
<td>Changes in program design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By External Review Team 2001 Comments and Recommendations</td>
<td>Incorporation of hermeneutics in program design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>Further incorporation of hermeneutics into course contents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Final changes in program design</td>
<td>Hermeneutics made explicit in course outlines and syllabi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because of his background in critical hermeneutics (the science of interpretation of texts and, by extension of speech and action), upon starting the program, Dr. Guim sought to strengthen its academic contents by imbuing them with concepts that have far-reaching consequences in terms of T&I itself and outside of T&I. For example:

1. Making the crucial distinction between the *intra*-language and *inter*-language phases involved in the processes of translation or interpretation. (From now on, the word *interpretation* will be used to refer to either one or both processes, depending on the context). The intra-language interpretation part is called the *comprehension* phase, and the inter-language interpretation phase is called the *production* or *rendering* phase;
2. Redefining the four skills (writing, reading, listening, and speaking) as intra-language interpretation that extends beyond the application of techniques and, paradoxically, penetrates deeper into the skill/technical aspects; and
3. Considering the interpretation act as an ethical act beyond mere technique.

Typically, T&I programs focus more on the inter-language phase (where one language is converted into the other). The belief is that it is here that most interpretation problems occur. The T&I program at NHU, indeed, addresses the inter-language issue in the second and third of its three foundation courses: T&I 305 (Translation Theory and Technique I) and T&I 306 (Interpretation Theory and Technique I), respectively. However, the program director made a strategic decision to give priority to develop the teaching of the intra-language phase, for two reasons: (1) it is a pre-requisite to the inter-language phase, and (2) it is the key methodological operation to integrated-learning.

In specific, the program director sought to apply hermeneutic principles to develop the intra-language phase of translation (in writing) or interpretation (oral) for a very important reason: they are related to the four foundational academic ‘skills’ of reading-comprehension, writing-composition, listening-comprehension, and speech production, regardless of whether an intra-language phase is involved.

The significance of this move is that generic intra-language interpretation consists of the same mental operation involved in translation and interpretation. An interpreter must understand the text in its original language (source language or SL) first before he or she can even think of rendering it in a second (target or TL) language. By re-focusing first on the intra-language, the T&I program is greatly strengthened from the start.

For example, regarding how to approach the interpretation of a text, a generally accepted principle taught in the T&I field is philologist Schleiermacher’s notion that “you must know the author better than he knows himself.” This is a paradoxical and contradictory situation but many practitioners follow the principle; they are incorrect (for reasons that go beyond the scope of this study.)

A critical examination of principles like these will lead to a substantial improvement in the understanding of the nature of language and interpretation, and will result in new perspectives with theoretical and practical implications for the contents of the T&I program at NHU.

Broad changes stemming from adopting and implementing a hermeneutic-based program are discussed below from a program-design/operations perspective and acurricular and pedagogical one as well in the Academic Quality section, under New Directions in Curriculum and Innovative Pedagogical Approaches.

**B. Program and Curricular Changes under a Hermeneutic Meta-Framework**

Program Design Changes. The number of courses, their sequence in the program, their course contents, and interaction among them have been changed over the years. The number of courses went from 5 to seven. The program courses have been divided into two groups: foundation and application courses. Foundation courses have evolved into syntax and discourse, translation theory and technique, and interpretation theory and technique. Application courses include two medical and two legal courses. The program design has now reached a steady state after the last program modification in 2007. See Table 4 below.

Table 4. History of Foundation Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>FOUNDATION COURSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start of Program in 2001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2001</td>
<td>T&amp;I 311 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spr 2003</td>
<td>301 (3) Socio-cultural Foundations of Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2004</td>
<td>201 (3) Intensive Grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steady-state in 2007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td>205 (3) Syntax &amp; Discourse Analysis I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cohort Program. The T&I program used to be an open-enrollment program, where students would enter the program at any point in time. Dr. Guim limited it to two entry points a year: in January and August, respectively. This fact meant that the program could now be designed as a series of sequential courses, one being the pre-requisite for the next. This development had the effect of securing stability in enrollment for every single course in the program. Previously, there were wide fluctuations in enrollment, and it was difficult to teach a course with new people being accepted at any point in time during the program and who did not have the proper academic background for the course.

Changes in Admission Requirements. Formerly, the minimum academic requirement was high school graduation. Since 2004, the program director instituted an entrance test. All applicants are to take the university placement test for English and Spanish. Passing the English placement test means a student’s command of English was such that he could register for the standard college-level English composition course. The Spanish test indicates a student has the equivalent of at least two years of college-level Spanish. In addition, a translation test was required, with short excerpts in English and Spanish to be translated into the target language.

Informal articulation with business administration program. Another important program change, instituted around 2003, was to articulate the T&I Certificate program with the bachelor’s degree program in business administration. Under this arrangement, and with the consent of the chair of the business administration department, T&I students could transfer up to 6 T&I courses into the business administration degree program electives. This opens up the T&I program to a two-way exchange: T&I students could take business courses, and business students could obtain a certificate or just take courses in T&I. This exchange in congruent with the two goals of the T&I program (see p.1).

All of these changes have been made with the academic meta-framework in mind. In addition, these changes reflect the T&I program’s response to the relevant and applicable recommendations made by the External Review Team 2001. (See section on External Review Team 2001 Recommendations below).

Strategic Changes to Curriculum/Contents. The curriculum has evolved from having a mostly technical focus to one in which a hermeneutic understanding was emphasized. The hermeneutic framework gave each course and the entire program cohesion and unity. The contents of each of the foundation courses have been aligned closely with the academic meta-framework. The hermeneutic perspective has been and continues to be incorporated into the course structure and topics. The current contents of each of the foundation courses (Syntax and Discourse, Translation Technique, and Interpretation Technique) have reached a steady-state both individually and jointly. Within this steady-state, minor modifications will be required as the pedagogical, learning-outcome, and other factors come into play.

The T&I curriculum has reached a steady-state with three foundation and four professional courses. Because the contents of the professional courses (in the medical and legal areas) depend heavily on the foundation courses, the strategy has been to give priority to the development of the foundation courses. This decision is supported by the fact that the four professional courses are in the very capable hands of individuals who are experienced in both teaching and interpreting professionally (a rare combination to find): they are Prof. Marcela Dickerson, and Prof Lidia de la Torre. We continue to work on the contents of the foundation courses in our effort to maintain a high quality program.
With the hermeneutic framework in place, the director proceeded to implement a series of changes over the years, ending in the distribution of hermeneutic concepts across the foundation courses, and concentrated on T&I 205 (Syntax and Discourse Analysis I). Table 4 above shows the evolution of the foundation courses.

Curricular changes in Response to External Review Team 2001 Comments and Recommendations.

T&I changes also comply with the broader recommendations made by Team 2001 regarding the need to connect T&I to the “matrix” proposed by Dr. Guim for the business program. It would start working towards integrated learning at the inter-departmental level. With no subject-matter general education course to articulate with, the next best course of action was to link the contents of the T&I certificate program via the concept of the process of interpretation as the common denominator in all courses (to know how to know) and thus achieve integrated learning and lifelong learning objectives. (See External Review Team 2001 Comments in the next section.)

ACADEMIC QUALITY

This section discusses two key aspects of academic quality: New curricular directions, and Innovative Teaching Approaches.

A. New Curricular Directions

As far as the new perspective in curriculum is concerned, placing the T&I program within the meta-framework of hermeneutics constitutes a major curricular event that makes all the elements in the program (course contents, teaching, learning-outcomes, and assessment) work in unison.

Table E below shows a sample of hermeneutic concepts that have been incorporated into the curriculum between 2001 and 2008.

| Language is not a tool but, rather, the very medium in which we negotiate meanings, in Truth and Method Gadamer 1976 |
| Language is the house of Being, in On the Way to Language (Heidegger 1971) |
| Distinction and dialectic between structural linguistics (grammar and syntax) and the linguistics of discourse (Ricoeur 1976) |
| Distortions in message caused by switch in media: speech vs writing (Jakobson 1976: 26) |
| Dialectic between sense and references (Ricoeur 1976: 19) |
| Ostensive nature of dialogical situation of speech vs autonomization of text in reading (Ricoeur 1976: 30) |
| The model of the text (Ricoeur 1997: 144) |
The T&I curriculum has reached a steady-state with three foundation and four professional courses. Because the professional courses (in the medical and legal areas) depend on the foundation courses, the strategy has been to give priority to the continuous development of the foundations courses, given that the curriculum for the professional courses did not require major changes. These new directions in curriculum are not reflected so much in the name of the (foundation) courses, which are quite standard in these kinds of programs, but in their contents and how they are intimately related within and between the foundation courses.

A key starting point in curricular change was to take the four basic skills and their link to intra-language phase of the translation and interpretation acts.

Table 6. The four basic skills and their link to intra-language phase of the translation and interpretation acts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intra-language (Comprehension)</th>
<th>Inter-language (Production)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consecutive</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simultaneous</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Staying within the scope of this Self-Study, two more specific examples of new curricular direction are offered next.

Example 1: Teaching syntactic and discourse organizational structure as they relate to the four basic ‘skills’ of reading, writing, listening, and speaking and, then turning them into acts of interpretation themselves. In this manner, skills are made to transcend themselves into full-blown interpretive operations.

Example 2: Teaching the ethical dimension of the interpretation act proper (and beyond the subject-matter itself) via objectification process tied directly to physical structures of the sentence and discourse as a while. Through this approach, interpretation becomes a negotiation of linguistic and ethical elements and meaning ‘emerges’ as the result of the interaction between the text and the interpreter.

Examples of new curricular direction:

EXAMPLE 1:

Every single course is consistently related to overall principles of hermeneutics, the academic meta-framework par excellence for T&I. Every course is made to relate to one or more of the four basic skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Related in this manner under a hermeneutic perspective, these skills cease to be mere skills with focus on the technical only, but take an ethical dimension. Thus, the “ineffables” (in this case the ethical element) that WASC desires in assessment are made concrete through a concrete physical and ideational structure. Thus, they can be taught concretely and, therefore, measured and assessed concretely.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Paragraph</th>
<th>Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phrases &amp; clauses</td>
<td>Sentences; introductory words, and conjunctive adverbs</td>
<td>Overall organization, introductory sentences, and conjunctive adverbs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Interpretation = Matching physical (syntactic and discourse organizational) structures with ideational structures of a text in order to arrive at total meaning in reading.
Each of the four skills is taught from the common perspective of their being an interpretation act within the same language. The common focus is syntax and discourse organization as key components of meaning, plus co-text and context. For this reason the program places a great emphasis on explicit and detailed knowledge of sentence structure (phrases, clauses, verbal phrases, etc.) and discourse organization (ranging from the schematic ‘wh’s and how,’ five basic essay structures (historical, classification, description, cause-effect, and argumentation) all the way to the journalistic questions.

The added advantage of this curricular innovation is that it fulfills T&I learning objectives by simultaneously fulfilling the more fundamental generic objective of ‘knowing how to know’ through language which is not surprisingly a condition *sine-qua-non* for interpretation and learning in all areas of knowledge. In addition, this makes interpretation, if understood in the hermeneutic way, the articulating operation for integrated- and lifelong-learning.

The interpretive character of the four skills discussed in T&I 205 carries over to T&I 305 and 306. T&I 305 deals with reading-writing (translation) and T&I 306 deals with hearing-speaking (simultaneous interpretation) and reading-writing also (consecutive interpretation). In both courses the four basic interpretive acts, in turn, imbue the translation and interpretation processes with an ethical dimension. (See example 2.)

**EXAMPLE 2:**

Students are taught that there is a significant difference between a technique-based and an ethical-based understanding of interpretation, by deepening the understanding of the technical dimensions itself.

In a technical-only view of interpretation, text and meaning have an objective relationship separate from the interpreter who is an outsider, detached from the text, and who can grasp the meaning via a technique.

In an ethical view of interpretation, text, meaning, and interpreter’s act are in a dialectic relationship where the interpreter is fully committed and involved in the negotiation of meaning with the text itself. By using distanciation and appropriation approaches, the interpreter makes sense and reference converge (by matching physical and ideational structures plus context) and allows the final meaning to emerge.

Two diagrams representing the technique-only and ethical views of interpretation are shown in Fig. 2 and 3 below.
Figure 2. Technique-only view of interpretation: Text and meaning have an objective relationship separate from the interpreter who is an outsider, detached from the text, and who can grasp the meaning via a technique.

Figure 3. Ethical view of interpretation: Text, meaning, and interpreter are in an interrelated process of mutual transformation.

Dr. Guim strategy has been to turn the relationship between subject-matter and student from a ‘transactional’ to a ‘transformational’ one: from ‘learn the contents and get a grade,’ to ‘use the contents themselves to effect a personal transformation leading to ethical understanding.’

WASC speaks of assessing the *ineffable* in each course (Barbara Wright’s WASC presentation at NHU on August 22, 2008). The ineffable cannot be assessed without it first being explicitly and deliberately incorporated into the conventional contents of a course. By deliberately and explicitly incorporating the ethical and transformational aspects of each course via the concreteness of the syntactic structure into the
curriculum, Dr. Guim has made the ineffable tangible at the subject-matter level. This event has important implications for assessment of the ineffable.

B. Innovative Teaching Approaches.

Innovative teaching is intimately linked to new curricular directions described above. Dr. Guim has received the Faculty-of-the-Year Award three times in his seven years as full-time faculty at NHU for excellence in teaching business administration, linguistics, and translation and interpretation. He constantly seeks innovative approaches to teaching.

Teaching the four operations as interpretive acts, for example, effects a paradigm shift on the T&I 'technique' courses, which become something other than mere 'technique' under hermeneutic principles. Students are taught the crucial distinction between translation and interpretation based, in turn, on the difference between speech-listening (in dialogue) and writing-reading (in a text). The T&I program at NHU recognizes this vital distinction and systematically incorporates this realization throughout the curriculum of the two technique courses.

The program teaches that the crucial difference between translation and interpretation is not in the medium (spoken vs. written) but something much more critical: when a message goes from speech to text, its referential function is suspended and must be 're-appropriated' by the interpreter. This has profound consequences in the teaching of T&I 'techniques.' In order to arrive at the meaning of a text, students are asked to pay very close attention to both syntactic and ideational structures (in T&I 205). They constitute essential physical and ideational components in the negotiation process of interpretation that begins with the interpreter, and which transforms interpretation into an ethical act that transcends the pure application of technique (but which is absolutely grounded on syntactic and discourse structure). That is why students are not allowed to get away with not knowing syntax and discourse structure.

The teaching approaches developed in the foundation courses seek to change a student’s relationship to the subject matter from a conventionally transactional one into a transformational one. From ‘know it and you will get a good grade or pass the course’ to ‘know it by using the material for your everyday life activities.’ This is authentic learning in the Heidegger (1953:247) explained it, as “ready-at-hand” (understand something by being in an engaged relationship of use) as opposed to “present-at-hand” (understanding something from a detached relationship of definition).

Conventionally, sentence structure, discourse, and ethics are taught separately. In the T&I program, they are taught as elements that reciprocally constitute and are constituted by one another. In doing so, we show that its usefulness comes precisely from working with these three elements at a level of analysis that allows the connection to emerge. And the connection is a connection in use (applicability)

This approach is transformational, for students learn, for example, syntax not as boring abstract intellectual rules but as useful things. This realization is in itself a transformation in the student’s understandings and values and, thus, the student is on the way to becoming ethical (not so much in the moral correctness or duty sense) but rather in the Aristotelian sense (Nichomachean Ethics) of virtue
understood as one ‘achieving excellence’ in “knowing, doing, and being” (Unpublished dissertation, Guim 2001)

Three specific teaching approaches developed by the instructor are described below. These are used in the foundation course T&I 205 (Syntax and Discourse Analysis I).

1. An “expansion-contraction” that links single part-of-speech words to phrases, clauses, all the way up to compound-complex sentences. This shows them how to construct a (long or short) sentence from a single word (for writing). And, conversely, how to reduce a (short or long) sentence into a single word (for reading). Students love it because through that approach they can “see themselves” writing a compound-complex sentence in seconds.” It is an incredibly empowering and motivational tool.

2. From the above concept, comes another one termed “4-1-5.” Starting with four words, students are taught to write one page in a matter of five minutes. The objective is not technical perfection but to show that writing can be done quickly precisely through knowledge of syntax and discourse structure. As an extension of the 4-1-5 approach, students picture themselves writing a one-page essay in no time. And after adding discourse structure elements, they are shown how a ten- or twenty-page paper for other classes. At least, they don’t “freak out” about it anymore.

3. Leveraging on the 4-1-5 concept, in turn, another teaching approach shows students that single words and longer sentence components (up to full sentence or groups of them), and the organization of a whole paper, are in a structural relationship that bears ethical status also. The goal is to create awareness that a student’s choice of syntactic or discourse structure have ethical implications. After they are exposed to this idea, and after a few days, they report how they pay more attention to the way people and themselves say things. They understand the importance of syntax in communication as an ethical endeavor. This is a permanent transformation in their, now, “interpretive” being.

Thus, an innovative curriculum leads to innovative teaching and to integrated-learning and integrated teaching as well.

More importantly, integration happens not only at the subject-matter or discipline level, but it constitutes a true bridge between academic and life-long learning. In that sense, it also addresses WASC ineffables such as integrated-learning and life-long-learning.

All students in the T&I 205 course are asked to take the Junior Proficiency Writing Exam, even though they have had only five weeks of instruction. The instructor is making a great effort in delivering so much material, and the students are making a major effort in absorbing it, in such a short time.

Of course, re-enforcement, repetition, practice, are needed And the results are not 100%. Creative curricular and pedagogical approaches can only go so far; especially when each course is only 5 weeks long. That is the greatest weakness in the program: it’s simply too short to impart all the necessary knowledge and allow them enough time to absorb and practice. On the other hand, whatever degree of success these curricular and pedagogical innovations represent, they are intimately linked back to the
hermeneutic academic meta-framework. That established the elements of “assessability” and accountability in an objective manner.

Learning-outcomes. Appendix E shows the dramatic transformation reported by students in terms of linking syntax, discourse organization, ethics, critical thinking, integrated learning, and life-long learning under one single operation of hermeneutic understanding. This is only after five weeks of instruction.

Assessment efforts. The first step in the assessment effort is adoption of the hermeneutic meta-framework to guide the entire academic side of the program. In a deliberate, explicit, and systematic manner the curriculum and the teaching has been developed incorporating the hermeneutic perspective into contents and pedagogy. Now that the curriculum and pedagogy have reached a steady-state, the program will hone-in on student-outcomes as tied to the meta-framework. This will make the whole cycle authentic: the subject-matter, the teaching, and the learning are related to one another.

Hermeneutic allows (demands) a level analysis that deals with issues on the thematic level, rendering them concrete and, therefore, assessable. That is the great virtue of the hermeneutic meta-framework.

The program is now in a position to start focusing progressively on assessment at the classroom level. For example, using technology to record a student’s multiple drafts on the same essays, and to have him/her explain the reasons for making each change. This will be a great heuristic toll for students to learn from each other in a very efficient manner.

The director of the program, who also teaches the foundations courses, has started a project to capture the entire T&I 205 course on digital video. The plan is to capture the rest of the foundation courses offered in this Fall semester.

This pilot project that will provide a rich amount of information to continue improving curriculum and instruction, and student learning outcomes and, at the same time, enable authentic assessment of a course, based on authentic teaching and learning. By authentic (Heidegger 1953:247) we mean that all the elements in the cycle of design-teaching/learning outcome-assessment-and redesign, are interwoven and in relationship to each other under the common academic guide of critical hermeneutics as meta-framework, and not in relationship to any extraneous or artificial factors.

For example, measuring learning-outcome by using a template which was not developed from the instructor’s experience with that particular classroom and with those particular students is not meaningful. Nor would counting the number of graduates who obtain employment be an authentic assessment, for employment is not directly attributable to learning-outcomes. As Barbara Wright puts it, those are “inputs” into the assessment cycle (WASC presentation at NHU, August 22, 2008), not learning-outcomes.

In addition to video data, one can get a glimpse at the curricular changes and their significance in terms of academic quality by looking at the contents of course syllabi (see Appendix).

The usual data on grades and student evaluation are also available for analysis. While these data serve a purpose, they do not represent authentic data in the sense that the instruments are not yet fully linked directly to the specific contents and approaches developed for each course. Instead, these instruments
(e.g., student evaluation of instructor form) are generic to the point of not being able to capture the specifics of each course. Even with the course objectives in place, there are the ineffables which, by definition, cannot be explicitly described and captured. That is why the T&I program is planning on reviewing these conventional instruments methods so that they are able to reflect the ineffables, now that these are being made concrete via curricular and pedagogical innovation one course at a time.

C. Other Issues Related to Academic Quality.

Future Program Design
The titles of all three foundation courses have a Roman numeral I on it; this is in anticipation of future program expansion (to include a sequel course to be labeled Syntax and Discourse II, Translation Theory and Technique II, and Interpretation Theory and Technique II) in 2009. In lieu of these foundation courses, however, more medical and legal application courses could be added. Note that either alternative will result in extending the duration of the program beyond one year. Academically, the current T&I Certificate program is poised for expansion into an AA degree, BA degree, or master’s degree. Any one of these options should be explored.

Technology and Equipment
The academic quality of the program is also closely tied to instructional materials and equipment. The current lab equipment is more than 5 years old and outdated. The needs have changed and intensified with the increasing availability of technology at the consumer level. However, it is expensive for individual students to acquire this technology. In order to properly deliver a good translation course, ideally all students should have a laptop in class. For the interpretation course, Voice-recognition software is a necessity not only for in-class use by students and instructors, but also have students start using it as key component in their future professional translator’s set of tools.

Application Courses and Internships
The application courses need to be expanded. A course on mock-trials and court procedures, and doctor-patient situations is essential for a well-rounded training of T&I professionals. Internships are available through community agencies and the Santa Clara Superior Court projects but, because students work full-time, they cannot always take full advantage of these opportunities.

Video-Capture of Lectures
Both medical and legal application courses need to be captured in their entirety for the benefit of instructor and students alike. Given the short duration and the very high intensity of each course, video capturing is a very efficient and efficacious way of enhancing student-learning. For instance, they could use them to review class material if they miss a class. Video-capturing requires more technical resources and support, which are hard to come by. Currently, the instructor in T&I 205 is paying off his own pocket for someone to do the video capturing of the entire course.
Student Advising Process
Since the program is a cohorted one with fixed sequencing, advising is not an issue. The most important aspect of advising is done at the entry point. Prospective students have distorted views about: (a) what the field of T&I is, (b) what the certificate program will do for them in terms of employment, (c) the difference between a certificate program and “certification” as California court interpreter, (d) being bilingual and becoming professional interpreters, (e) the difference between applying and enrolling (in the program) versus registering (for a course).

Adjunct and Full-time Faculty
Important changes in the quality of the T&I faculty have taken place with the hiring of adjunct faculty who bring a combination of the following desirable qualifications: (1) professional certification (California State legal court interpreter certification), (2) practical experience in court, medical, and or UN interpretation, (3) strong background in T&I theory and techniques, and linguistics, (4) diverse academic background (in law, education, etc.). The current adjunct faculty is comprised of Prof. Marcela Dickerson, and Prof. Lidia de la Torre.

The only full-time faculty is the director himself, who brings his (a) expertise in hermeneutics and interpretation, (b) experience in curricular development and instruction in T&I and other academic disciplines, and (c) strong understanding of integrated learning to link T&I and other key disciplines.

Dr. Guim has taught undergraduate and master’s level courses in many disciplines. He has also taught doctorate level courses on applied hermeneutics for education, at the University of San Francisco. He has done translation and interpretation work in the United States, Argentina, and Chile. His doctoral dissertation was on the subject of hermeneutics, autopoiesis (self-generating system), and organizational development. He has presented and lectured on hermeneutics and autopoiesis applications at the American Translators Association conventions in the U.S., and also lectured on the link between interpretation, anthropological research, and Argentine tango. In addition has field experience in anthropological and international development.

Accountability
The single most important element of accountability in the T&I program is the director’s adoption of hermeneutics as the academic meta-framework, the corner stone for the rest of the elements in the program, and for assessment and accountability. The adoption of a meta-framework fulfills the injunction of NHU’s Faculty Handbook which encourages faculty (program director) to exercise best professional judgment and discharge their ethical obligation in the performance of their duty

“guided by a deep conviction of the worth and dignity of the advancement of knowledge and recognizing the special responsibilities placed upon us. Our primary responsibility to our subject is to seek and to state the truth as we see it (italics added). To this end we devote our energies to developing our scholarly competence [and] … critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge. We practice intellectual honestly… and shall never seriously hamper or compromise our freedom of inquiry.” (NHU Mission, General Academic Philosophy/Professional Ethics, NHU Faculty Handbook; adapted from the “Statement of Professional Ethics” issued by the Association of American University Professors (1966)).
It provides an objective reference point for assessing the road travelled and also for gauging its future direction; it is a backward- and forward-looking guidepost for accountability.

Hermeneutics as a meta-framework constitutes the crucial academic guidepost element in a set of “participant structures” (Shulman 1997) needed for “authentic and enduring learning” to take place in a learning community. An entire institution (in this case, the entire T&I program) “must be oriented toward these principles, and the principles must be consistently and regularly employed throughout each course and experience in a program.” Lee S. Shulman is a former Stanford university education professor and former president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
Appendix A. 
A brief history and description of hermeneutics.

Hermeneutics is the science of the interpretation of texts and, by extension, of all linguistic communication, including human action (considered as text). Thus, it looks at interpretation not just as a linguistic/technical exercise but an ethical act which requires the interpreter to commit to a full engagement with the text in order to have its meaning “emerge” from this very interaction. The text could be on any subject-matter.

Critical hermeneutics moves interpretation beyond its original local task of studying specific texts, and centers it on the general problematic of understanding (comprehension) and, thus, “requires that the interpreter rise above the particular applications and discern the operations that are common to the two great branches of hermeneutics. In order to do that, however, it is necessary to rise above, not only the particularity of texts, but also the particularity of rules and recipes into which the art of understanding is dispersed” (Ricoeur 1997:57).

Aristotle had already spoken on interpretation. In his treatise On Interpretation he refers to hermeneia as the very action of language on things. Interpretation is not what one does in a second language with regard to a first; rather it is what the first language already does, by mediating through signs our relation to things. Aristotle presupposed a theory of speech, not a theory of the text: “The sounds articulated by the voice are symbols of states of the soul, and written words are symbols of words uttered I speech (On Interpretation §1). In any case, interpretation is interpretation by language before being interpretation of language.

Later on, hermeneutics branched out into the study of classical and Biblical texts, with focus on recreating the original contexts. In contrast, the object of critical hermeneutics is both the interpretation of texts (in any field, and by extension, of utterances, or actions) and, at the same time, of its own methodology; that is, it self-critiques and self-corrects itself (thus, the name critical hermeneutics).

Critical hermeneutics took off from the concepts of phenomenology of Husserl, who thought one could know the naked truth of an object by going to “the thing itself” as it presents itself. This is done through his technique called epoche (suspending initial judgment) where one peels off all the layers of pre-understanding (assumptions) about something until there are no more; what is left is the pure reality of the object: an idea of (abstract) intentionality. His student, Martin Heidegger, revolutionized the field of phenomenology, by evolving it into a body of theories that tie interpretation to a more concrete but emergent reality that starts with the interpretation of the self as being-in-the-world.

From then on, there is “no hermeneutics [interpretation] without phenomenology, and no phenomenology without hermeneutics” (Gelven 1989). Hermeneutics and phenomenology complement and validate each other in a dialectical (interdependent) manner. This means that linguistic interpretations must be grounded on reality, and any reality is only to the degree that it can be articulated in language.
Hermeneutics theory is at the same time grounded on practical concerns. It is not pure *theoria*, nor pure *praxis*; it is more like Aristotle’s concept of *phronesis* (practical intelligence or intelligent action). That is why it is so applicable and indispensable for a T&I program and, in fact, for anything involving knowing as interpretation.

The critical hermeneutics tradition includes thoughts and concepts of prominent philosophers such as Heidegger, Ricoeur, Habermas, and Gadamer, whose works draw from the critique of earlier philosophical figures such as Aristotle, Socrates, Hume, Descartes, Kant, Hegel, and Husserl (to name a few), and incorporate important contributions from linguists and philologists such as Saussure, Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Austin, Searle, and Jakobson.

In spite of its apparent highly conceptual nature, hermeneutics theory is very much grounded on applications and, therefore, it is totally relevant for inclusion in the T&I certificate program. More importantly, once the T&I professional is working out there on the field, his object of analysis is not going to be T&I itself but whatever the (medical or legal) case is about. Thus, it is crucial that students be empowered to quickly learn how to learn because they are going to have to learn new subjects matters with only days of advance notice. A hermeneutic approach to T&I training gives them the best of both worlds: it allows them to learn how to learn in general (generic interpretation) by engaging in interpretation within a specific field (medical and legal areas). The hermeneutic perspective allows one to see that T&I and non-T&I learning (interpretation) methods are the same. There lies its claim to universality.
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T&I 205 (Sep 2008) Students Self-reflections
The National Hispanic University
Translation and Interpretation Certificate Program Self-Study
2008

1. Translation and Interpretation Certificate Program


3. Certificate in Translation and Interpretation

4. Last Program Review: November 2001 (under Business Administration Program Review)

5. Author of Self-Study: Dr. George Guim

6. ___________________________ Program Director
   Dr. George Guim

7. ___________________________ Provost
   Dr. Juan Necochea
The National Hispanic University
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