Editor’s Message:
The Evolving Undergraduate Language Major

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Over the last five years, there have been countless conversations across the United States that aim to “take the temperature” of the undergraduate Spanish and Portuguese majors. Leaders of traditional programs that focus on languages and literatures in Spanish and Portuguese are looking for effective ways to reform and innovate the traditional curricula. The study of film has become a staple in most language departments, along side a selection of courses on translation, business, and health, and Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP) has gained traction during that last fifteen years in higher education. At all levels of instruction, most Spanish and Portuguese language educators are aware that there is a current privileging of applied knowledge in the educational sector.

With these developments in mind, I invited José M. del Pino (see his bio below) to write a column about a gathering of educators that featured an important—if not representative—discussion that explored changes in Spanish language curriculum from a variety of perspectives. During several snowy days at Dartmouth College in December 2013, Dr. del Pino presided at the symposium titled “Spanish in the Liberal Arts, Professional, and Scientific World (its presence in the US)” where a group of language professionals discussed the future of language and literature curricula. In his column in this issue of Hispania, “Hacia un modelo de coexistencia en la enseñanza subgraduada del español,” del Pino captures key concepts in this collective debate that is taking place across the language profession.

It is becoming more and more apparent that flexibility and adaptability are now indispensible characteristics of the most successful language educators because the teaching of Spanish and Portuguese is evolving. With summer upon us, the change in routine offers an opportunity to reflect on our curriculum. As our programs change, I urge you to join me by being a part of the professional conversation to enhance our Spanish and Portuguese programs and to double down on quality, relevancy, and explore broadly appropriate content and modes of delivery.

Welcome to the June Hispania!

José M. del Pino

José M. del Pino (PhD, Princeton) is Professor of Spanish at Dartmouth College. He has published the books on the Spanish avant-garde Montajes y fragmentos (1995) and Del tren al aeroplano (2004), and co-edited El hispanismo en los Estados Unidos. (1999). His new edited volume, ‘America the Beautiful’: La presencia de Estados Unidos en la cultura española contemporánea will be published in 2014 by Iberoamericana Vervuert.