

Queen's University
Executive Summary of the Review of the Academic Programs in the Department of English Language and Literature

In accordance with Queen's University Quality Assurance Processes (QUQAP), the Department of English Language and Literature submitted a self-study in January 2013 to the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic), the Dean of Arts and Science and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies to initiate the cyclical program review of its undergraduate and graduate programs. The approved self-study presented program descriptions, learning outcomes, a library report and analyses of data provided by the Office of Institutional Planning and the School of Graduate Studies. Appendices to the self-study contained CVs for each full-time member in the Department of English Language and Literature.

Three arm's-length external reviewers (Dr. Brian Corman, Dean, School of Graduate Studies and Vice-Provost, Graduate Education, University of Toronto; Dr. Mary O'Connor, Professor, Department of English and Cultural Studies, McMaster University; and, Dr. David Parker, Associate Professor, Department of History) examined the materials and conducted a site visit on February 14 & 15, 2013. The site-visit included interviews with the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic), Vice-Provost and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, Dean of Arts and Science and meetings with undergraduate students, graduate students, librarians, cognate heads, staff and faculty.

In their report (March 2013), the Review Team provided feedback that describes how the Department of English Language and Literature programs meet the QUQAP evaluation criteria and are consistent with the University's mission and academic priorities. The Review Team noted that the Department of English Language and Literature was a very strong department with good teaching scores and an excellent research record both in terms of external funding and peer-reviewed publications. The Review Team also highlighted that its students were engaged and praised the commitment of their professors and the programs that they offer.

The Review Team did report on a number of challenges, including the need for: a departmental Constitution or By-laws; more formal mentorship of junior faculty; monitoring the workload some professors assume with regard to numbers of graduate supervision more help at the university level around mental health, career counseling and academic counseling; relief of congestion in the general office; reorganization of MA student office space; revitalizing a collegial atmosphere within the department; and balancing future appointments with retirements.

Based on all of the above documentation, a *Final Assessment Report* and an *Implementation Plan* were prepared by the Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) and approved by the Provost (March 6, 2014).

The academic programs in the Department of English Language and Literature have been approved to continue and are scheduled for their next review in 2020-2021.

Prepared by the Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning)
April 21, 2014

Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan for the Cyclical Program Review of the Academic Programs in the Department of English Language and Literature

In accordance with Queen's University Quality Assurance Processes (QUQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response and assessments of the graduate and undergraduate programs delivered by the Department of English Language and Literature. This report identifies the significant strengths of the programs, together with opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, and it sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

The report includes an Implementation Plan that identifies who will be responsible for approving the recommendations set out in the Final Assessment Report; who will be responsible for providing any resources entailed by those recommendations; any changes in organization, policy or governance that will be necessary to meet the recommendations; who will be responsible for acting on those recommendations; and timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations.

Summary of the Cyclical Program Review of the Academic Programs in the Department of English Language and Literature

The Department of English Language and Literature submitted a self-study to the Faculty of Arts and Science, the School of Graduate Studies and the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) on January 24, 2013. The self-study presented the program descriptions and learning outcomes, an analytical assessment of the academic programs, and program data, including the data collected by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning and the School of Graduate Studies. Appended to the Self-Study were a number of documents, including CVs, for each member of the Department of English Language and Literature and the Library Report.

Three arm's-length external reviewers (Dr. Brian Corman, Dean, School of Graduate Studies and Vice-Provost, Graduate Education, University of Toronto; Dr. Mary O'Connor, Professor, Department of English and Cultural Studies, McMaster University; and, Dr. David Parker, Associate Professor, Department of History) were selected by the Deputy Provost in consultation with the Deans of Arts and Science and the School of Graduate Studies, from nominations submitted by the Department of English Language and Literature. The Review Team evaluated the self-study documentation and then conducted a site visit to Queen's on February 14-15, 2013. The site-visit included interviews with the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic), the Vice-Provost and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, the Dean of Arts and Science and meetings with undergraduate students, graduate students, librarians, cognate heads, staff and faculty.

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The Head of the Department of English Language and Literature, after consultation with faculty and staff in the Department, submitted a response to the Review Team Report (June 14, 2013). The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (July 2, 2013) and the Associate Dean of Arts and Science (July 22, 2013) also submitted their responses to the Office of the Provost. Specific recommendations were discussed, and clarifications and corrections were presented.

Subsequent to receipt of the Review Team Report and the internal responses from the Department of English Language and Literature, the Associate Dean of Arts and Science and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, the Senate Cyclical Program Review Committee (SCPRC) dedicated its meeting of November 26, 2013 to this particular discussion.

The SCPRC would like to recognize the following strengths:

- Strong complement of faculty with a very good record of teaching and scholarship;
- Dedicated team of administrative support staff;
- Efficient and effective use of existing resources during a period of fiscal constraints;
- The department-initiated curriculum review, including the introduction of new undergraduate curriculum (English 100, 200 and 292) that aligns with Pillar 1 of the Academic Plan and emphasizes academic skills including inquiry-based learning;
- Introduction of innovative programs that prepare graduate students for non-academic careers, develop professional transferable skills and provide opportunities for experiential learning (e.g. internship program);
- Offering of a diverse undergraduate curriculum that extends far beyond the traditional Anglo-American roots of the discipline;
- The Department of English should be congratulated on receiving a Queen's National Scholar in *Indigenous Literatures and Languages* in collaboration with Drama and Languages, Literatures and Cultures.

The SCPRC would like to identify the following opportunities for enhancement. The Department of English Language and Literature is encouraged to continue to:

- Improve communications and consultation with its undergraduate students to clarify that the option of studying abroad in year three does not result in additional time to complete their degree;
- Expand its interdisciplinary collaboration with cognate units with the aim of finding more efficient ways for English majors to take courses outside their home department;
- Continue to build a revitalized culture of collegiality within the Unit that will foster a respectful and productive work/study environment for its students, staff and faculty.

Summary of the Reviewers' Recommendations with the Department's and Deans' Responses

Graduate Program

1. The Review Team recommends the Department look at its pre-dissertation requirements with an eye to enabling students to begin dedicated dissertation work more quickly.

The Department's response indicated that it had engaged in a series of discussions about the graduate curriculum and had made some significant changes that have removed barriers to students who are completing their dissertation. These changes include: changes to the comprehensive examination process that allows students to pursue a Special Topic Presentation that may become the first chapter of their dissertation; implementation of an Annual Report that tracks graduate students' progress; and, implementation of a new thesis proposal format, deadline and form enabling students to begin their dissertation writing process more quickly than in the past.

The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies responded that reforms to the Special Topic Presentation, the requirement of an annual report and earlier identification of the supervisor and dissertation committee will support students as they work towards completing their degrees in a timely manner.

Undergraduate Program

1. The Review Team recommended a full curriculum review of the redesigned English 100 course to assess if it is working as a gateway course and if it is servicing all students. The Review Team further recommended that various options be considered: having more than one course to choose from in year one; allowing gifted students and/or those with AP or IB credits to enroll in a second English course (e.g. English 220) while still in year 1.

The Department responded that like all aspects of the curriculum, English 100 will be reviewed in 2014-15 and at that time particular attention will be paid to assessing its function as a gateway course – that is, to assessing its ability to prepare students for the study of English Literature as delivered in the rest of the curriculum and to attract students to the program. The Department addressed the impossible task of designing a large lecture course that has the appropriate level of difficulty for all students and reaffirmed its commitment to continually refining the course. The Department's response went on to respectfully disagree with the reviewers' speculation that a "more traditional course" would offer a greater level of challenge than do alternative approaches to literacy study. The response noted the Department's experience has been that students who regard themselves as "gifted" or who come with AP or IB credits are not always guaranteed success in ENGL100 let alone more advance courses.

The Associate Dean of Arts and Science responded that the Faculty Office will continue to work with the Department to facilitate discussions about curriculum and through any resources the Faculty can provide (e.g. Associate Dean for the Department; Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning; and financial support for curricular development where possible).

Interdisciplinarity and Inter-Departmental Relations

1. The Review Team recommended that the Department consider the possibilities for graduate students to engage in collaboration and teamwork and to engage in interdisciplinary work. It also suggested the creation of a combined graduate events calendar for Humanities programs and more interaction between heads of cognate departments/programs in the Humanities.

The Department responded that its graduate students are already allowed to take one course in another field outside the Department. In the Department's opinion, what would most facilitate possibilities for interdisciplinary work in the university is a common graduate timetable or at least a website where departments could post any graduate-level course vacancies, with time, place and pre-requisites so that students could more easily avail themselves of opportunities within the university. The Department agreed with the recommendations about a combined graduate events calendar and more interaction between heads of cognate departments/programs. It further recommended that a formal working group of cognate Heads be established to address common challenges and opportunities with a view to collaborating on implementing any changes rather than merely discussing them.

The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies responded that the SGS would be launching its new website this fall, which will include a campus-wide graduate events calendar, intended to promote broader engagement of faculty and students.

The Associate Dean of Arts and Science responded that the Faculty Office works with the Heads of the Humanities Departments to facilitate the discussion of common challenges and opportunities, and recognizes the need for such discussion to be ongoing, and to take place in a working group format of the cognate Humanities Departments themselves. The response went on to say that the Faculty Office recognizes the challenges facing the Humanities at Queen's, and in broader contexts, and is proactive about seeking strategies to address these challenges.

Implementation Plan:

Recommendation	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility for Leading Follow-up	Timeline for Addressing Recommendation
1. The Department should work with the School of Graduate Studies to address concerns raised in the Review Team Report that graduate students are leaving the program during dissertation research/writing and reapplying just in time to defend.	Initiate meeting with relevant Associate Dean (SGS), Department Head and Graduate Coordinator	Dean of School of Graduate Studies in consultation with the Department Head	Dean of School of Graduate Studies' <i>Annual Report</i> to the Provost 2015
2. When it is fiscally possible, new faculty hires should ensure a full	Preparation of staffing plan	Associate Dean (Arts and Science)	Dean of Arts and Science's <i>Annual</i>

faculty complement in identified fields of study.	that balances faculty appointments with upcoming retirements	and Department Head	<i>Report to the Provost 2015</i>
3. To address the concern around the pre-dissertation course requirements at the graduate level, the Department of English should review its graduate offerings with the goal of removing unnecessary time-to-completion delays.	Initiate meeting with relevant Associate Dean (SGS), Department Head and Graduate Coordinator	Associate Dean (SGS) and Department Head	Dean of the School of Graduate Studies' <i>Annual Report to the Provost 2015</i>
4. The planned 2015 undergraduate curriculum review should be undertaken in consultation with the Centre for Teaching and Learning, and the curriculum review committee should be chaired by a trusted, neutral person from either inside or outside the department.	A curriculum mapping of all undergraduate courses to DLEs, LOs and other indicators of achievement	Associate Dean (Arts and Science), Department Head, all Faculty Members in the Department and an Educational Developer from the Centre for Teaching and Learning	Dean of Arts and Science's <i>Annual Report to the Provost 2015</i>

The Deans of Arts and Science and School of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the Head of the Department of English Language and Literature shall be responsible for monitoring the Implementation Plan. The details of progress made will be presented in the Deans' Annual Reports and filed in the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic). Monitoring reports will be posted on the University web site.

Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan

April 23 2014 .

Approval Date

Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning)

Signature

Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science

Signature

Dean, School of Graduate Studies

Signature

Final status of academic programs in the Department of English

Approved to Continue

Date of next program review

2020/2021 Academic year