

Internal Academic Review 2004-2005
Department of Spanish and Italian
Internal Academic Review Committee Report to Senate

Department of Spanish and Italian

The Department of Spanish and Italian offers a Master's program in Spanish at the graduate level, Spanish and Italian undergraduate programs and a Latin American Studies program. External Consultants and the Review Team commended faculty members for their dedication as teachers and their productivity as scholars despite working in the context of severely limited resources. Students are strong and as graduates go on to higher-level studies at prominent institutions or find employment in professional occupations. All reviewers and participants in the review spoke highly of the efficient and knowledgeable administrative staff member.

The Senate Internal Academic Review Committee (IARC) has concluded that after a challenging decade of budget restrictions and several changes in the faculty complement, the Department of Spanish and Italian has turned the corner and is now looking to the future. The Department is undertaking a comprehensive curriculum review at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The IARC suggests that these efforts combined with suggestions revealed in the IAR process point to opportunities for the Department to revitalize itself and its programs.

Major Recommendation

1. **FACULTY:** External Consultants and Review Team members agree that the Unit has been operating "close to the margin" for an extended period of time. The IARC agrees that four tenure or tenure-track faculty is the absolute minimum required to maintain the current undergraduate and graduate programs. The IARC took note of the recent news of the possible addition of a joint language acquisitions faculty position in the Faculty of Arts and Science to assist all language acquisition programs with coordination and curriculum design. The appointee of such a position could not only help the Unit with its

current curriculum review but could also contribute to the efforts of the Department to engage more with other units in the university.

The IARC recommends that the Department of Spanish and Italian work with the Faculty of Arts and Science to complete recruitment of a strong candidate for the vacant faculty position and to continue to work together to stabilize and revitalize the Department and its programs.

2. GRADUATE PROGRAM: With such a limited and fluctuating faculty complement in recent years, it is not surprising to the IARC that the Graduate program is facing many challenges. The Department is to be commended for beginning to address many of the suggestions of reviewers. In particular, the IARC agrees with external consultants' recommendations for a careful review of course offerings to streamline and focus areas of graduate study and to explore a limited proportion of pertinent cross-disciplinary courses. In addition, the Department is to be congratulated for quickly responding to student concerns regarding mentoring and the timing and training of Teaching Assistants.

The IARC recommends that the Department of Spanish and Italian continue in its efforts to rebuild and strengthen the Master of Arts program in Spanish.

3. UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM: The IARC notes the efforts and progress being made by the Unit and Faculty to address reviewers' concerns. For example, the second language lab has been brought up to standard and a cap on class size, which is comparable to other language units, has been introduced. Nonetheless, the IARC concurs with reviewers' recommendation to build "intellectual coherence and rigor" in the language programs by defining clear learning objectives and outcomes in the core curriculum; and to establish a clear path through the four year program. It is anticipated that demand for first year language programs will continue to rise as a result of the University's new strategic direction. The IARC suggests there is an opportunity for the unit to build its undergraduate program if enough attention is given at this time to reviewing and redefining its undergraduate curriculum.

Outcomes of the Internal Academic Review of the Department of Spanish and Italian

*Joint response submitted by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science and
the Head of the Department of Spanish and Italian*

Recommendation 1: Faculty

Under major recommendation one, the Faculty Office released a position to the department in the last budget and staffing strategy and while the department has selected a candidate for the position, the candidate has not yet accepted. Whether filled in the next few weeks or with another search in the fall, the position will restore the complement of tenure/tenure-track members to four and provide a basis for future growth.

Recommendation 2: Graduate Program

Under major recommendation two regarding graduate curriculum, SPAN is engaged in a review of its graduate curriculum and a search for cross-disciplinary partners for new course offerings.

Recommendation 3: Undergraduate Program

Under major recommendation three, the Faculty Office hopes to release in the future a position in language acquisition to be shared by the language departments to coordinate and enhance language instructions. Such a position would help build the “intellectual coherence and rigor” of SPAN’s offerings in the face of steadily increasing enrolments. The department will also begin meeting in the fall to discuss reforming the program’s core curriculum.

Follow-up on these recommendations and issues will take place in the annual budget and staffing strategy meetings between the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science and the Vice-Principal (Academic)

**Report of the Internal Review Team for the
Department of Spanish and Italian
Queen's University**

Review Team Membership:

Mr. Peter Aitken, Marketing & Communication

Ms. Jennie Baxter, Psychology doctoral student

Dr. Richard Chaykowski, Policy Studies

Dr. Mark Chen, Physics

Dr. Eva Krugly-Smolska, Education

Ms. Alicia Miller, History/Politics undergraduate student

Dr. Sylvia Söderlind, English (Chair)

Process

In addition to reviewing the documentation, the Internal Review Team, either together or individually, met with members of the Spanish and Italian Department on several occasions. The undergraduate student representative met with the undergraduates in the fall; the graduate student representative met with the graduate students on two occasions (the last one of which was also attended by the Chair). Because the external consultants visited the department at different times (due to a snowstorm that prevented Dr. Kirk from coming when originally planned) the team met with Dr. Grieve and Dr. Kirk, the external consultants, on separate occasions. A meeting with faculty originally planned for December was deferred until late March, on which occasion three members of the team met with faculty, staff and graduate students. At the request of the graduate students the Chair and the graduate representative subsequently met again with the graduate students. The Internal Review Team did not peruse the external consultants' reports until after all of these meetings had taken place. Our report takes into account all information gathered from these various sources. We would like to extend our thanks to the staff of the Faculty of Arts and Science, in particular Sue Bedell and Nancy Cutway, whose assistance greatly helped in our work.

Preamble

The Internal Review Team would like to reiterate, from the outset, the observation made by both external consultants that their recommendations-- several of which are echoed in our report-- are remarkably similar to those made in the last IAR report. No reasons have been given for the lack of implementation of the 1998 recommendations on the part of the Faculty of Arts and Science, and we sincerely hope this *déjà vu* experience will not be repeated for the next IAR. We would also like briefly to address the issues of low morale that has characterized the Department of Spanish and Italian according to both consultants' reports. That there have been internal tensions in the department during the period covered by our report is not disputed by anyone, but we see most of these as resulting from, rather than as causing, specific management problems. In particular, as will be noted in our findings, the loss of faculty and its inevitable consequences for workload have had severely negative effects on the health of the department as a whole. As will become obvious in the following, we see workload, hence faculty and staff complement, as the absolutely most crucial issue for the wellbeing of the department, which has taken large strides in overcoming a troubled past, and we hope that the Faculty will support its strong desire to put history to rest. Our task is to look to the future; the tendency to focus on the past, which permeates in particular Dr. Kirk's report, risks putting obstacles in the way of progress.

Research and Scholarship

The Spanish and Italian faculty are to be commended on their ability to maintain a high standard of scholarship under a situation of work overload. We concur with the external consultants' observations that, without exception, the tenured, tenure-track, and term appointment faculty are all productive scholars. Dr. Chamberlain, Dr. Mennell, and Dr. Santeramo have all held SSHRC research grants, either individually or in

collaborative projects. Dr. Chamberlain, who is now the longest serving FTE in the department, has published a monograph and an edited collection of essays as well as a solid list of refereed articles and book chapters. His long service to the profession through his activities in a number of learned societies, including the International Comparative Literature Association, should be noted; the international conference he organized on *Literary Histories and the Development of Identities* in 2001 put Queen's on the map of comparative studies by bringing a number of distinguished international scholars to campus. Dr. Mennell has a solid publishing record, including substantial articles and translations, and she is an active conference participant, nationally and internationally. Her research has garnered two ARC grants, and she has been the most active of the faculty in the time- and labour-intensive activity of graduate supervision. The most recent tenure-track appointment, Dr. Peter Thompson, has his first book in press and an admirable record of publication beginning before receiving his Ph.D. in 1999. Dr. Santeramo, Associate adjunct professor in Italian, has been enormously productive; he has a monograph and an edited anthology in press, in addition to two co-edited collections and a number of translations and articles published. The fact that the University of Toronto Press has commissioned an edition of Pirandello stories from him testifies to his status in the scholarly community.

The department has also been extraordinarily successful in securing the two recently hired limited term appointments in Spanish (Dr. Salinas) and Italian (Dr. Caracchini). Although recent Ph.D.s, both have CVs that make them highly competitive on the job market.

Of the many adjuncts who have served the department's language program throughout the period covered by the IAR in the language program, we would like to note the contributions of Monica Chamberlain and Joanne Rotermundt de la Parra. We also note the tragic loss of Gloria D'Ambrosio, whose contribution to the Italian program was remarkable.

Workload

Workload is a major pressure point in the department. In October of 1999 the department ratified a workload document in which 2.5 courses were considered the standard (in accordance with cognate departments) with a 1.0 release for the department head and .5 for each of the coordinators. Junior faculty were also given a reduced workload in accordance with the Collective Agreement. Because of the chronic understaffing over the recent past, this workload standard has not been met. The loss of two tenure/tenure-track faculty members (a 40% reduction) within the last three years has had a significant impact. Faculty members are taking on overloads, especially the head and coordinators who have had no release time. Furthermore, adjunct faculty members have had to take on service responsibilities. Questions arise as to whether there are violations of the Collective Agreement in this situation. It is commendable that the faculty members have continued to produce quality research in such a context. The appointment of the two three-year non-renewable adjuncts (one in Spanish, one in Italian) only alleviates the situation partially and is a short-term fix.

In addition to concerns about faculty workload, the shortage in staffing has led to very large class sizes in the language courses. This situation results in a drop in quality of student learning and could be a reason for a drop in enrolment numbers in subsequent years.

The Review Team thus concurs with the recommendations of both external consultants that the hiring of additional faculty members is imperative and should be a priority. Ideally we would support the recommendation of Dr. Grieve that an additional four appointments be made (three in Spanish, one of whom would be a language pedagogy specialist, and one in Italian). One of the appointments in Spanish should be a senior person who would be able to take on the headship. At a minimum we recommend the immediate replacement of the two positions lost in Spanish (one a retirement, one a resignation) and a conversion of the term appointment in Italian to a continuing one. In addition we recommend either the hiring of a short-term adjunct in language pedagogy, or the designation of one of the current adjuncts (with the appropriate expertise) as coordinator of the language program. This person's role would be to oversee the restructuring and curriculum development of the first year courses and the coherence and continuation of language courses throughout the program.

Given the number of students and faculty, we also recommend the addition of another full-time staff person for office and faculty support. Administrative assistant Laurie Young garnered praise from all quarters, but her workload is also heavier than it should be.

The Undergraduate Program

Recommendations 2-5 in Prof. Grieve's report and recommendations 3-6 in Prof. Kirk's report address the undergraduate curriculum. Common elements that appear in these recommendations include "definition of the language program," developing "courses that would engage students who may not (or who may) continue in the major" and review and redesign of the core curriculum for majors. The Review Team offers the following additional comments to reinforce these recommendations.

Queen's University has the stated vision of "Preparing Leaders and Citizens for a Global Society." At Queen's, the language with the greatest undergraduate student demand (based on the number of students enrolled in at least one course in that language) is Spanish. In this statistic Spanish has more demand than French and German, with Italian coming in fourth. This fact illustrates the great interest that students have in Spanish as a foreign language and in Hispanic culture. The confluence of student interest and Queen's international vision is propitious because of the growing importance of Latin America as a global partner of English- (and French-) speaking North America. The two main implications of the above facts are: 1) the Department of Spanish and Italian has been playing an important role in helping the University achieve its stated vision 2) the demand for Spanish and Italian foreign language instruction by students is large and this provides an opportunity for the department to grow and expand the undergraduate program and number of majors.

Viewed from the perspective of seizing an opportunity to grow the undergraduate program, the department is encouraged to consider the following suggestions:

The highest priority item for the department is a strategic plan that includes improvement of the language program by endowing it "with intellectual coherence and rigor," and defining clear objectives in the core curriculum for the majors, including the

possibility of several different types of majors, as provided for by more diverse and flexible course offerings. This suggestion from the Review Team and the external reviewers should not be interpreted as recommending that the department becomes one of just “service teaching” and foreign language training. Rather, it should be interpreted as a method for improving the quality of the undergraduate program for majors and non-majors alike. Feedback from undergraduate majors stressed the need to improve the upper-year language offerings. The department’s strategic plan to redesign the core curriculum for majors should address this concern. We believe, as do the external reviewers, that strengthening the upper-year language instruction would have the effect of improving the quality of the program for majors. These quality improvements would translate, given time, into an increase in the number of program majors, especially in an environment in which the demand for introductory Spanish and Italian is so high.

Prof. Grieve’s recommendation 5 describes the formulation of a departmental plan that develops a clear path for majors. The path would include beginning language instruction and “bridge or foundation” courses between the language classes and the upper-year offerings. Upper-year offerings that include advanced language instruction as well as literature are suggested in Prof. Grieve’s report. A clearer path for the major or several diverse paths serving majors from different constituencies—notably SLAS but also other literature and linguistics students-- would also translate into increased numbers in the undergraduate program. Why does the Review Team believe this? Given the popularity of the introductory classes, the high demand for those classes and the outstanding instructors in Spanish and Italian in the first-year classes, it is a sure bet that careful crafting of the undergraduate program, with well-designed bridge courses to upper-year offerings, be they literature, cultural, arts or language oriented, will lead to a larger number of program majors. With resource support from the Faculty, this can happen, to the benefit of the University and its international vision.

The Review Team wishes to emphasize the cap on class size that is also recommended in the two external consultants’ reports. Effective language instruction requires strictly-enforced class size caps. Quality in language instruction will lead to increased upper-year enrolment. The Faculty must communicate its support of this notion and assure the department that it does not need to meet any arbitrary total enrolment target. As resources are made available (i.e. new faculty appointments and adjuncts), additional sections with the same capped class sizes can be added. Thus, the recommendation is for an initial reduction in the total number of students in the introductory language courses by capping class sizes, and eventually a gradual increase in these numbers as instructors and sections are added.

For purposes of comparison, French and German courses have enrolment caps of respectively 25 and 30 students. The typical French or German class with oral language practice has fewer than 25 students per section. In Spanish and Italian the enrolment caps are set at 40 and typical section sizes exceed 30 students. Spanish and Italian courses should adopt a target size of 20-25 students with a cap at 25. This will result in scaling back total student numbers, but we believe this to be desirable. As additional faculty and adjunct teaching resources are made available to the department, sections can be added and total student numbers will grow again.

In the Italian program the major challenge is not curriculum so much as the resources needed to maintain the medial. In view of the importance of oral language

practice for both languages taught in the department, it would also be highly desirable to improve the language lab facilities. Bringing lab B up to the standards of lab A would require money, but it would benefit all language departments.

Study abroad can be an important component in the undergraduate (as well as the graduate) program; immersion is doubtless the most effective way to acquire advanced oral skills. As discussed in Prof. Kirk's report, the Faculty and International Programs Office should work with the department to develop flexible study abroad options for students in the Spanish and Italian programs. The Review Team feels that some effort to expand the study abroad possibilities would be beneficial to the undergraduate program. The university is signing agreements of cooperation with Spanish-speaking universities and this might be a vehicle for further collaboration. Creative possibilities should be explored. An example would be students teaching ESL at host institutions as a way to offset costs of study abroad.

The Graduate program

The MA program has been of good quality. Given the expertise of the faculty members, the department is well positioned to offer a graduate program, and the graduates have been well placed in a variety of advanced graduate programs and occupations. But the future of the graduate (MA) program in Spanish is a major concern of both external reviewers, because it faces several major challenges. The Review Team agrees with the external reviewers that the basic problems associated with the graduate program are the insufficiency of faculty resources and the structure of the program. We recognize that the undergraduate and graduate programs, taken together, complement each other from an academic and intellectual viewpoint. The success of the graduate program is important to the overall academic focus and output of the department. The Team therefore strongly recommends that the MA program be maintained and strengthened, in the ways outlined below.

First, as with all graduate programs, the program is not sustainable without sufficient faculty resources. The MA program is not sustainable without the expansion of faculty resources beyond its current small core. The Review Team is of the view that increasing the faculty complement as recommended would permit the department to continue to successfully offer an MA degree program.

Second, the MA program is currently available in three different patterns of requirements, the main differences among them being whether or not a thesis is required; and, if a thesis route is chosen, then there are two choices that differ in the number of courses required and the extent of the thesis requirement. The value of having the distinctions represented by these three patterns of requirements, especially with regard to the different types of MA theses, is not apparent. Given the small size of the graduate program, a single model for an MA would focus the graduate curriculum and provide efficiencies. The Committee recommends that the department offer only one MA structure: an MA with courses and a thesis requirement. The Committee further recommends that the department form a committee to consider the most appropriate form of the thesis and decide the number of course credits that the thesis will count towards the degree.

There has also been some concern expressed over course offerings at the graduate level. The Review Team recommends that the department consider carefully the possibilities of:

- (i) Limiting graduate enrollments so as not to exceed current intake.
- (ii) Streamlining and focusing regular graduate course offerings, possibly with a view to concentrating on several key areas of graduate study;
- (iii) Offering more independent study courses in the MA program (which, in view of (ii), would provide opportunities for study in more specialized areas).
- (iv) Encouraging and facilitating the ability of students to take courses in other departments.

Taken together, these strategies would facilitate the efficient use of scarce faculty resources until the proposed restructuring of the undergraduate and graduate programs of study have been undertaken and fully implemented. Once faculty resources have been augmented, the department could then consider a measured expansion of graduate studies enrollment.

Mentoring and Teacher training

The external consultants identify the mentoring process for incoming graduate students as problematic both with regard to academic advising and preparation for teaching. The Review Team agrees with these concerns and recommends that the mentoring process and teaching skills development be reviewed in conjunction with the review of the MA program content and structure.

The graduate students disagreed with Dr. Kirk's representation of their concerns with the training they receive for their teaching assignments. They were unanimous in their praise for the content of the training but feel that the timing of the several workshops arranged for them could be improved. Because the MA students have no prior experience of teaching, it is crucial that they receive as much assistance as possible before stepping in front of their classes. If it is difficult for the department to arrange intensive training during Orientation week, the IDC might be able to assist. We do not think that all training can be relegated to the IDC, as language teaching requires specific techniques, but it may be a good idea to resume discussions with French and German to see what if any collaboration can be worked out.

One problem that arises in considering TA training and mentoring is that the most appropriate pool for training and mentoring is among the seasoned language teachers. Of course, all faculty in Spanish and Italian fit that bill, by force of circumstance and experience if not educational background. It is true that adjuncts' job descriptions do not allow for this, and we certainly do not encourage their exploitation, but a teaching workshop taught by someone whose life's work is language teaching might be more useful than one taught by a professor of literature. It would also be helpful for a new TA to have a designated teaching mentor to whom she or he could turn with problems or who could attend classes and give feedback without the pressure inevitably attached to a professor—student relationship. Such arrangements tend to work better when fairly informal and when the TAs have a say in choosing their mentor. If they had a chance to

meet with all faculty during a period of training, this would be easier. Having the adjuncts involved in training and mentoring may also create more cohesion among the different constituencies within the department. Ideally, of course, some remuneration should be offered for any adjunct conducting a workshop; mentoring is a more casual and collegial relationship that could be undertaken on a volunteer basis. It could also work towards creating better cohesion among the language courses.

The rationale for assigning Teaching Assistantships versus Teaching Fellowships needs to be made clear. It would seem logical to have students progress from a TA in the first year to a TF in the second year. Another problem pertains to TA and TF duties and study abroad. Currently students lose their full Teaching Assistantships if they go abroad for a term. This is counterproductive, as studying abroad should be encouraged as much as possible, in particular as the one fear students expressed related to their oral language skills; the need to practise Spanish at an advanced level is not entirely met within the structure of the program.

Student participation and communication

Finally, the students should be more involved with any discussions related to the undergraduate and graduate programs. One representative of the DSC and one representative of the graduate students should be elected to the departmental council as well as to other departmental committees, notably Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, Appointments and Personnel. It is also imperative that graduate students as well as all faculty members have a say in all matters pertaining to the quality of the MA program. There are many advantages to being a small program; with regard to strategic library acquisitions, for instance, a graduate student representative could easily work in tandem with the departmental library rep. to ensure an equitable distribution of resources with regard to student as well as faculty needs. It seems graduate students have been given considerable influence over library purchases but without sufficient guidance and overall planning. Both external consultants point out that library resources in Spanish are quite good--and we assume the Italian holdings are sufficient for the needs of an undergraduate program--and the budget allows for a reasonable degree of maintenance, but students feel that there is a lack of planning in purchasing.

Overall, the graduate students are very satisfied with their experience in the program; they see the small size of the program as an asset and commend the dedication of its faculty. They are also generally satisfied with the quality of thesis supervision. The department could do a better job, however, in its communication with students *before* they enter the program and during the first year. Course descriptions should be available to students earlier than they currently are and the welcoming of each student should include a clearly designated academic advisor.

Outreach

Both external consultants point to a certain insularity in the department, and the Review Team agrees that it would benefit the department to engage more with the broader university community. Again, it is not difficult to understand that a department plagued by serious work overload has neither energy nor time to pursue new initiatives,

and we hope the IAR will help bring about the stability needed to facilitate such initiatives, which will benefit the department in the long run.

Dr. Kirk's suggestion of an Italian Studies program seems idealistic at this time; the Department needs to focus on keeping the Italian medial alive. Other possibilities should be investigated on the undergraduate level (e.g. Post-colonial Studies, Mediterranean Studies). The degree of departmental autonomy that is a Queen's tradition stands in the way of the easy establishing of inter-disciplinary programs, but as SLAS and other SPFs demonstrate, it is not undoable. We recommend revisiting SLAS together with the heads of departments involved to search for new ways to overcome problems with caps and prerequisites for students from cognate departments.

On the graduate level the department students should have access to courses in other departments; the department could also fruitfully participate in current efforts to establish a Cultural Studies program. In view of Queen's international vision, the School of Business and the International Study Centre would seem obvious venues for outreach through teaching.

Individual faculty members have been active in reaching out and creating an intellectual atmosphere in and around the department (e.g. Dr. Chamberlain's work with the International Comparative Literature Association and Mexican connections; Dr. Mennell's Cuban connections which should provide an important entry to Latin America, and Dr. Santeramo's Italian days) and such initiatives are greatly valued. More could be done, however, to establish connections with Latin American—and Mediterranean--interests in other departments and across faculties. Dr. Mennell's collaborative SSHRC grant could be a model for potential 'clusters' of the kind actively encouraged by SSHRC. We would also encourage the department to raise its profile at such things as the March break open house and Orientation.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, then, the Review Team found a department that is academically strong but woefully short of resources. We also found faculty dedicated to addressing internal problems and students determined to do their part. Students, faculty, and external consultants all point to the growing importance of languages for the global future; in North America the crucial role played by Spanish is obvious, and Queen's cannot afford to lag behind. We also believe that languages cannot be taught at anything like an advanced level without an engagement with culture, notably literature. Our recommendations indicate our very strong sense, at the end of the long IAR process, that the Department of Spanish and Italian has all that it takes to provide excellent programs, both undergraduate and graduate, and to serve Queen's well in its international outreach efforts. All that is needed to make it all happen is tangible support in the form of resources from the Faculty of Arts and Science.

Recommendations:

- 1. Hire additional faculty.** Ideally four appointments should be made, one of them a specialist in language pedagogy. At a minimum the two lost positions should be reinstated immediately as tenure-track positions.
- 2. Establish a strategic plan to ensure an undergraduate curriculum that guarantees “intellectual coherence and rigor”:**
 - i) establish a “clear path” through four years of language training, including a fourth-year advanced language course
 - ii) cap class sizes for language courses
 - iii) facilitate study abroad
- 3. Strengthen MA program:**
 - i) reduce the options to one path, consisting of courses and a thesis
 - ii) streamline and focus regular course offerings
 - iii) provide more information regarding course offerings and Teaching Fellowship or Assistant duties before students arrive on campus
 - iv) facilitate study abroad by allowing students to retain a half TA or TF if away for one term and by investigating possibilities of funding at host institutions (e.g. ESL teaching)
- 4. Improve mentoring and training of TAs and TFs.**
 - i) ensure that incoming students receive adequate training before stepping into the classroom and mentor TAs and TFs through their work
 - ii) establish and communicate a clear rationale for assigning Teaching Assistantships and Teaching Fellowships (if possible assign TAs in first year and TFs in second year).
- 5. Improve communication between students (undergraduate and graduate) and faculty**
 - i) ensure students are elected to appropriate decision-making committees; in the case of graduate students this includes decisions for library acquisitions.
 - ii) encourage social activities that involve all members of the department.
- 6. Improve participation of faculty and students outside the department and raise the profile of the department.**
 - i) revisit SLAS in conjunction with concerned departments
 - ii) facilitate graduate students taking courses in cognate departments
 - iii) investigate possibilities for faculty research clusters with colleagues outside the department as well as abroad
 - iv) increase visibility on campus