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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION: Senate

TEL

FROM: Peter Keller, Vice-President, Academic and Provost, and Chair, SCUP

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter Keller".

RE: External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Humanities (SCUP 19-02)

DATE: February 11, 2019

TIME

At its February 6, 2019 meeting, SCUP reviewed the Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Humanities which resulted from its 2014 external review. The report is attached for the information of Senate.



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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION: Peter Keller, Chair, SCUP

TEL

FROM: Wade Parkhouse, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President, Academic

RE: External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Humanities

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "W. Parkhouse", is written over the "RE:" line.

DATE: January 28, 2019

TIME

The External Review of the Department of Humanities was undertaken in April 2014. As per the Senate guidelines, the Unit is required to submit a mid-cycle report describing its progress in implementing the External Review Action Plan. The mid-cycle report is attached for the information of SCUP.

c: Paul Crowe, Chair, Department of Humanities
Jane Pulkingham, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

External Review Update for the Department of Humanities

Action	Progress Made
1. Programming	
1.1.1 Undergraduate	
- The department has identified its emerging focus and contribution to the university mission as “critical dialogue in world humanities,” which would draw on the existing Western and Asian focus of the department as separate streams to develop a research and teaching focus on dialogue and common themes within these traditions of the humanities. Several existing members of the department will develop new research and teaching ideas for this stream. (2017) We propose to streamline and integrate the undergraduate curriculum by - suspending admission of new students into the Asia-Canada Program (summer 2017), while enabling students with declared minors to complete their program and continuing to offer ASC courses that draw strong student enrollments - discontinuing the honours degree (as soon as possible) - deleting courses that no longer attract strong enrollment (May 2017) - examining course titles and revising them to better reflect both course content and 21st century perspectives (May 2017) - re-examining the certificate programs (May 2017) - arranging for faculty members (rather than sessional instructors) to teach HUM 101 (Spring 2018) - developing a new 300-level course that will integrate	- The department integrated “critical dialogue in world humanities” into its most recent five-year plan. Faculty with expertise in East Asia and Europe are working together to open up courses previously focusing exclusively on European cultures in order to provide more opportunities for undergraduates to examine humanities themes across cultures. To date we have streamlined and integrated the undergraduate curriculum by - suspending admission of new students into the Asia-Canada Program (summer 2017), while enabling students with declared minors to complete their program and continuing to offer ASC courses that draw strong student enrollments - discontinuing the honours degree - examining course titles and revising them to better reflect our global humanities orientation - terminating certificate programs - arranging for faculty members (rather than sessional instructors) to teach HUM 101 (Samir Gandesha and Paul Crowe) - developing a new 300-level course that will integrate programming offered through the Institute for the Humanities and the J.S. Woodsworth Chair, thereby enabling students to engage in matters of public concern and importance. Eleanor Stebner and Samir Gandesha have been working on this. The task is to be completed by Dr. Gandesha as Dr. Stebner will

programming offered through the Institute for the Humanities and the J.S. Woodsworth Chair, thereby enabling students to engage in matters of public concern and importance. Programming offered by Graduate Liberal Studies and World Literature may also be incorporated. (May 2017) o creating a joint major between Humanities and World Literature (already in process)	retire as of Aug. 31, 2019. o In 2018 both Paul Crowe and Shuyu Kong offered courses in support of the Global Asia program. Humanities continues its willingness to make its Asia-content HUM courses available to the GA program as cross-listed courses.
1.1.2 Graduate	
• In order to better integrate programming at the graduate level - o the department will seriously consider how viable it is to run the MA HUM degree, especially since the MA in Liberal Studies degree exists, and explore how MA students may take courses in the Graduate Liberal Studies program, thereby providing them with a regular learning cohort and also reducing the overload course teaching now experienced by Humanities faculty (May 2017) - o pending the outcome of the above re-visiting of the MA HUM program, faculty who teach in the World Literature Program will be available to supervise MA Humanities students - o the department will market our unique, interdisciplinary program as widely as possible to deepen our pool of applicants and ensure that only the best-prepared and capable students who are motivated to complete their degree in a timely manner are admitted	• In order to better integrate programming at the graduate level - o the department has seriously considered its MA HUM degree and elected to continue with the degree while monitoring faculty workload challenges. We have successfully integrated our past two MA cohorts into the GLS course titled LS 800 which has been helpful in this regard. - o The Dean's Office is considering relocating LTI and WL within FASS. It is unclear whether their faculty will be available to supervise HUM students. We are however continuing to cooperate with Hellenic Studies who have offered expertise and support to our HUM MA students. We see possibilities for greatly strengthening this relationship. - o the department continues to take in very few new graduate students due to a need to ensure high quality students who are also sufficiently motivated to complete their degree in a timely manner. We are also mindful of shrinking faculty resources due to retirements and a lack of faculty renewal for ten years.
1.1.3 Graduate Liberal Studies Program (GLS)	1.1.3 Graduate Liberal Studies Program (GLS)
• The Director, with members of the steering committee, will re-examine the three program completion options; examine and	The current three options for completion are being maintained.

revise, if necessary, educational goals; and support the three PhD -SAR Liberal Studies cohorts that currently exist.	
1.1.4 Institute for the Humanities and J.S. Woodsworth Chair	1.1.4 Institute for the Humanities and J.S. Woodsworth Chair
The Director and members of the steering committee of the Institute and the J. S. Woodsworth Chair will participate with the Undergraduate Studies Chair and committee in developing a course for students that will utilize their diverse public education programs (May 2017).	Integration of programming with the Institute and the J. S. Woodsworth Chair is being undertaken by Samir Gandesha (on leave 2018-05-01 to 2018-12-31) and Eleanor Stebner. Public programming for the Institute and J.S. Woodsworth Chair was integrated in HUM 101 in the 2018 Winter term.
1.1.5 Language Training Institute (LTI)	1.1.5 Language Training Institute (LTI)
The LTI, which was administratively housed with the department during the time of the external review, was moved out of the department on December 31, 2015 and is currently administered by the FASS dean's office.	The Dean's Office is considering relocating LTI and WL within FASS.
1.1.6 World Literature Program (WL)	1.1.6 World Literature Program (WL)
The WL program was moved into the department on September 1, 2015 and was not part of the external review. It is administratively housed in the department, but its three faculty members (including one who serves as director) teach exclusively in the WL program. The faculty will integrate their expertise in the department through committee service and be available to act as supervisors for MA students.	There are no plans to pursue integration given that the Dean's Office is considering relocating LTI and WL within FASS.
2. Research	Research
All faculty members are actively engaged in their respective fields of endeavor through research and dissemination of knowledge at conferences and in publications. Several are recent recipients of SSHRC Insight Grants (Ian Angus, sole recipient; Eleanor Stebner, sub-grant) and other research grants (Shuyu Kong, VPR 4A Grant; Paul Crowe, Hong Kong Baptist University and Chinese University of Hong Kong grants). Faculty members are deeply engaged with international scholarly	All faculty members continue to be actively engaged in their respective fields of endeavor through research and dissemination of knowledge at national and international conferences and in publications. In line with the recent five year plan the department has been seeking opportunities to raise its profile and better serve the SFU intellectual community by presenting research through conferences and public forums and lectures in cooperation with other units. Over the past eighteen months initiatives have been

communities -- by organizing, hosting and participating in international conferences, and by collaborating on publications.	undertaken in with the Institute for the Humanities, J.S. Woodsworth Chair, David Lam Centre. We have also pledged conference support to History, GSWS, and English. We have also successfully taken up wider community opportunities to share research across cultures in the arts and humanities. Faculty members continue active research agendas and have received local and international research support (Shuyu Kong, Taiwan Fellowship; Paul Crowe, Jiliang University, Hangzhou PRC visiting scholar grant, SFU UPF Serials grant for Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies journal and blog). Faculty members are deeply engaged with international scholarly communities -- by organizing, hosting and participating in international conferences, and by collaborating on publications. Humanities is hosting India's Indian Council for Cultural Relations scholar.
Humanities faculty will continue to serve as post-doc supervisors.	Humanities faculty will continue to serve as post-doc supervisors.
3. Administration	Administration
The Manager, Academic and Administrative Services In the department is overworked, being responsible for overseeing the budgets, scheduling and other administrative matters for HUM, GLS, WL, ASC, the Woodsworth Chair, and the Institute for the Humanities. Even though LTI is no longer administratively housed in the department, the addition of WL has increased the demands on all support staff.	The Manager, Academic and Administrative Services in the department continues to be overworked, being responsible for overseeing the budgets, scheduling, and other administrative matters for HUM, GLS, WL, the Woodsworth Chair, and the Institute for the Humanities. Given that the Dean's Office is considering relocating LTI and WL within FASS the possible departure of World Literature would help reduce the workload somewhat.
Some relief has been provided by the creation of a temporary appointment of an APSA grade 6 Academic Advisor, originally at 3 days per week and then increased to 4 days per week, effective January 2, 2016 to January 27, 2017. This position needs to be made permanent.	This APSA grade 6 Academic Advisor is permanent and at 3 days per week (since February 2017). This seems adequate with regard to the workload since the creation of the CUPE grade 7 position (see below).
Also, in order to relieve the workload of the Manager and Chair's Secretary (who now has additional requests from the WL director), a CUPE grade 7 Program Assistant is	A CUPE grade 7 Program Assistant at 3 days per week has been added (since April 2017). The position has allowed for more clarity in division of tasks between staff members and has relieved the

required for 3 days per week.	Academic Advisor of such time-consuming tasks as course scheduling and preparing expense reports.
4. Working Environment	
Workspace is currently tight. An associate dean, however, is working on moving the Grace MacInnis Room (AQ5119) – a meeting/seminar room currently shared by Humanities and Gender Studies – to Room 5118. New office spaces will be created in Room 5119 and perhaps even allow for a more comfortable “community” room for faculty, staff, and students.	Workspace is improving with 4 new offices resulting from the conversion of AQ5119 (the former Grace MacInnis meeting room). AQ5118 has been repurposed to become both the department meeting room and a lounge area for students, faculty, and staff. Our graduate students are making good use of this room to share research and for their events. We have also been holding informal undergraduate group discussions. Once the 4 new offices are furnished and ready for use, we plan to convert a larger office into the mail/copy/lunch room. Because we use AQ5118 for meetings, we need to have fridge, coffee, etc. available in a separate room to avoid disrupting meetings. The added offices should finally put us in a position where only SIs and TAs occasionally share office space, but CFLs have their own dedicated office without being asked to share. The new meeting room has significantly improved the departmental interactions among faculty, and between faculty, staff, and students. We are hoping to add a permanent AV setup to the room so that we don't have to continue to request AV for presentations and events.

Educational Goals – Assessment Plans

Reflection upon the current strengths and realities of the department, as well as the nature of the Humanities as a discipline, have required us to adjust the goals and revise the data sources used to assess how the department is working towards achieving those goals.

The goals initially listed are met on a course-by-course basis, and at the appropriate lower-division or upper-division level. We are largely a service department (we currently have fewer than a dozen majors and a handful of minors), and, in this role, we have been very successful at helping many students of various departments fulfill B-HUM and W requirements. Our purpose, of course, exceeds this pragmatic reason for our existence, and students find in our courses a deeper meaning they may or may not have known they were seeking, as well as a space to inquire into and engage with life's great questions; they develop curiosity for the working of the world and the human beings and other creatures that populate it. This has led us to want to revise the data sources listed and, while keeping the course-level goals, set an additional department-level goal.

Revision 1. We have found that the initial ways set forth to assess these goals require some adjustment. The proposed HUM101W non-credit multiple-choice survey, for example, runs the risk of reducing the knowledge to be acquired to a list of canonical works and is not in line with the department's increasing focus on global humanities (as in the recent Five Year Plan) that denies the possibility of such a reductive survey. We can achieve the most important reason for having this survey (introducing students to a variety of key works in the Humanities) through balanced course offerings instead. This alternative approach prevents us from reinforcing a Eurocentric idea of the Humanities through a reductive list of key authors and texts tested in a multiple-choice survey. In our Five Year Plan, we are adamant about our efforts toward a more inclusive and more truly global approach to Humanities content. We have already made curriculum changes (course titles and content) to allow for a more geographically balanced course offering.

Revision 2. The second major data source suggested to assess most goals was the 400-level final paper. Because of the low number of majors and, therefore, the general lack of offering of 400-level courses, this data source also requires adjustment. Because very few of the many students who pass through our Humanities courses often to fulfill a B-HUM and/or W requirement, the 400-level paper is not the appropriate measure for our educational goals. Due to the small number of majors in our department, faculty have the luxury of following their development closely and tailoring the expected outcomes to the student's needs: this may, for example, be preparing them for graduate programs in a humanistic discipline.

Added Department-Level Goal. The main educational goal of the department as a whole, however, is not and should not be to prepare students for graduate school in a humanities program, but to prepare them to be responsible, inquisitive, and aware citizens. Each course should contribute to this to some degree. We have started working towards this by increasing experiential learning in the curriculum, as well as by increasing such opportunities outside of the formal curriculum. Additionally, we are seeking to build a stronger departmental community at the different levels of instruction (undergraduate and graduate), and between undergrads, grad students, and faculty to create a variety of forums for further informal learning. We are measuring our success through recent initiatives such as the revival of the graduate student caucus, initial meetings of the undergraduate student union, and a series graduate student-led lunchtime meetings for all department members and guests (funded by a Faculty Inquiry Grant focused on improving the Student Learning Experience). We are using our recently renovated and dedicated Grace MacInnis meeting room to house these forums. The increased liveliness of our hallway and meeting room are a sign that we are making progress on these fronts. The many opportunities to meet with peers and members at different stages in the department offers students greater opportunities to discuss the knowledge gained in their Humanities and other courses. Additionally, an increased commitment to maximizing the potential of our connection with the Institute for the Humanities at the Harbour Centre campus offers students even more opportunities to explore the present-day relevance of certain theories studied in their courses.

We have started making changes we would like to see reflected in a large number of Humanities courses in our entry course, HUM101W. HUM101W deals explicitly with exploring the purpose of a Humanities education in relation to pressing global issues. It sets the tone of an inquiry-based approach for other Humanities courses. In this course, students learn how to perform a peer review of each other's essay; this fosters an environment of discussion of ideas and turns the individual essay into a topic for discussion that goes beyond the conversation between the individual student and the instructor. We see this as the start of building a community of curious learners. In terms of experiential learning, one assignment asks students to attend an event in the community (a public lecture, a community dialogue, a film screening, an art exhibit, etc.) and write about their experience. Encouraging this kind of community participation and making it a part of the curriculum allows the instructor to tap into the cultural resources available in the Lower Mainland, as well as giving students the freedom to explore something of their own interest, and discover how some questions central to the study of the Humanities pertain to this event. This, in turn, encourages students to seek out discussions and debates that are happening in their community and to become active participants. We see this as an important way to encourage participation in civil society and to acquire an awareness and appreciation for intellectual and cultural engagement beyond their university years.

Incorporating similar initiatives in the majority of our courses would bring us closer to achieving our aim of activating and cultivating in our students a desire for life-long learning and instil the value of inquiry and (self-)reflection on current and historical events. These goals require a far-reaching type of formative assessment that does not end at graduation and will preoccupy us as we move toward the end of this external review cycle.