Final Assessment Report of the
Augmented Review of German and Slavic Studies
(BA, MA and PhD)
April 2013

Review Process

The self-study was written by the Associate Chairs, in conjunction with the Chair and the administrative assistant. Faculty members participated in the curriculum mapping process, commented in Department meetings, and reviewed a copy of the draft. Undergraduate and graduate student representatives participated in Department meetings when the review was discussed; undergraduate students attended a focus group in February 2012, and graduate students were consulted via the Associate Chair, Graduate. An online survey was sent to alumni.

Characteristics of the Program

Program Objectives

The Self-Study does not identify individual goals for each program, but lists its departmental mission as:

- Maintaining a variety of degree-granting programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels;
- Maintaining individual, personalized and supportive instruction at all levels;
- Ensuring that all graduates are competent in the target language of their discipline and knowledgeable about it through the study of literature and culture;
- Maintaining a variety of programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels that respond to the interests and needs of students and society;
- Maintaining a commitment to international exchange and study abroad programs in Germany, Russia, and Croatia;
- Exploring and adopting ways to increase the transfer of applied knowledge and skills within our disciplines to the practical needs of society;
- Expanding activity in interdisciplinary studies; and
- Promoting the application of current educational technology, including computer-assisted and networked learning.

An overarching objective is the Department’s commitment to internationalization.

Specific Learning Outcomes

Detailed learning outcomes for the graduate and undergraduate programs have been developed, along with a curriculum map.

Distinctiveness
The Department offers one of the larger programs in German in Canada. The Department was founded in 1960, shortly after the foundation of the University in 1957, and the Masters programs in German and Russian commenced in 1964, along with the PhD in German. Over the past 50 or so years, the Department has graduated 400 Masters in German, 100 in Russian, 7 joint in German and Russian, and 48 PhDs in German. Waterloo offers one of only five doctoral programs in Canada in German, and one of only nine Masters programs. The Russian program (before its recent closure) was one of only four such Masters in Canada. Over the last 7 years, 30-40% of those completing graduate degrees in German in Canada came from University of Waterloo.

The Department’s offerings are also distinctive in that it opened a new Joint Master of Intercultural German Studies with Universität Mannheim in 2011. This program accepts both German and Canadian students who spend equal amounts of time at each university and receive a joint degree. There are only a handful of such joint programs between European universities and Canada which have been approved, and this is the only one in German. It is expected that this qualification will continue to grow in attractiveness and attract students from across Canada. Since this program was externally reviewed in order to get approval to commence, it is not reviewed in detail here.

At the time of the review, the Department had two highly acclaimed full Professors. The Department won a national competition for the Diefenbaker Memorial Chair in German Literary Studies ($2m endowment) and appointed John H. Smith from the University of California. The Department also succeeded in attracting Alice Kuzniar from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, a renowned theorist of German cultural and film studies. There is also a Centre for German Studies, for which the department succeeded in fundraising an endowment of $3m and which enriches the Department’s programming and activities.

**Academic Programs Offered**

The undergraduate programs were first offered in 1965; the MSc beginning in 1969, and the PhD beginning in 1972. The programs currently offered include:

- BA Honours German (Arts and Business co-op and regular)
- BA Honours Russian and East European Studies (Arts and Business co-op and regular)
- Three and four year general degrees; joint honours; minors; and certificates in German, Russian, Dutch and Croatian language
- MA in German
- Joint MA in Intercultural German Studies with Universität Mannheim
- PhD in German (two fields: applied linguistics, and literary and film studies)

The Masters in Russian was discontinued recently, when the last faculty members retired and were not replaced; in their stead, the Department was given a definite-term 2-year lecturer position.

**Students: Undergraduate**
The language courses attract substantial enrolment (including online courses). Over the review period, the median number of new majors per year was 9. On average one student per year pursues the co-op stream. The department strongly encourages exchange experiences abroad, usually with Mannheim or Bamberg (and also invites non-majors to participate). 2-3 students per year participate in the exchanges. Students who enter the German program in second year generally complete the program (attrition is low), and they generally complete in four or five years. The alumni survey suggested that some graduates stay in humanities-related careers (libraries, education, translation, writing) while others go into the business sector.

In addition to majors, the Department provides language instruction to a large number of students, including a surprisingly large enrolment in online courses. Instruction is provided not only in German, but also Russian, Croat, Dutch and Polish.

**Students: Graduate**

Students in the regular Masters take one year, and in the Joint Masters two years. They are supported in the amount of $15,000/year. Doctoral students receive $22,000/year for four years. Part of this support (in two terms a year) comes from teaching, teaching assistantship, or research assistantship positions.

The regular Masters requires either 8 courses, 7 courses and a research paper, or 5 courses and a thesis. The Joint Masters requires 10 seminars/courses plus a thesis, and requires 3 terms in Waterloo and 3 in Mannheim.

The PhD is offered in two fields, applied linguistics, and literature and film studies. PhD students are required to take 6 courses.

Graduate students are encouraged to complete the Fundamentals of University Teaching (Masters students) and Certificate in University Teaching (PhD) offered by the Centre for Teaching Excellence. The Department has also worked with the Centre for Teaching Excellence to implement a Certificate in University Language Teaching. Students are also encouraged to attend and present in seminars and talks offered by the Department and the Waterloo Centre for German Studies.

The regular Masters takes 8-10 students per year. The Department encourages them to complete the course-based model, as it is hard to do courses, teaching assistantships and a thesis in 3 terms. The Doctoral program takes 1-2 students a year and those completing take 4-5 years. The future plan is to take 2-4 students in the regular Masters, 1-2 in the PhD, and 6-10 in the Mannheim Joint program.

Most of the PhD students have published either a journal article or a substantial chapter in addition to lively participation in national and international conferences. Of the six PhD
students who have graduated over the past seven years, five have academic jobs (including one in a tenure-track job), and the sixth in a non-profit playwright centre.

Faculty

The Department currently has nine faculty in the tenure stream, and one lecturer. There are additional faculty on short term/sessional contracts. Doctoral students can also have the opportunity to teach courses. The faculty are actively involved in editorial positions with journals, refereeing for journals, and community service. They are supported by 1.5 FTE administrative staff.

The faculty publish actively, and over the seven year period brought in just over $500,000 in research funding, the majority of this coming from the Tri-Councils.

Reviewers’ Report

1. Consistency with institution’s mission; are program requirements and learning outcomes clear?

   Undergraduate and Graduate: The Department enhances the university’s mission by its strong international programs (Joint program with Mannheim; lecturer funded by Croat government). Program and learning requirements clear and consistent with DLEs for both undergraduate and graduate programs.

2. Admission requirements: aligned with learning outcomes?

   Undergraduate and Graduate: Yes, at both levels


   Undergraduate and Graduate: Curriculum is cutting-edge, and better than any Department in North America “has begun to forge an intellectually and pedagogically-coherent program around...”“Translingual and Transcultural Competence””. Several “impressive, highly successful initiatives” include the Joint Masters, fundraising for the Center and the Diefenbaker Chair with outreach to the community, the combination of in-class and online instruction at undergraduate level, and successfully bringing together literary studies with linguistics both for undergraduates and graduate students.

4. Teaching and Assessment: methods of assessment appropriate? Do means of assessment demonstrate achievement of learning objectives and DLE’s?

   Graduate and Undergraduate: Assessment is aligned with the innovative curriculum; “many language programmes would do well to take this Department as a model”.
5. **Resources: effective use of human, physical and financial resources?**

   Graduate and undergraduate: “A vibrant academic unit full of new and innovative initiatives”; recommend a hire in Slavic, and giving the Department a CRC.

   Recommend small additional resources: scholarships to encourage students to go on exchange; film budget; better classrooms with media resources; better computers for sessional faculty, and progress on the “language commons” space under discussion.

6. **Quality Indicators: faculty, student and graduate?**

   Graduate and undergraduate: “outstanding faculty, several of truly international stature.” “efficient structuring” of the MA and PhD programmes allows timely completion; excellent retention rates; employment of co-op students is very good, and of graduate students excellent.

7. **Quality of enhancement: initiatives to improve program quality, learning environment?**

   See under 3 above

8. **Graduate program criteria: time to completion, quality/availability of supervision, program quality indicators for faculty, students, program, sufficiency of graduate-only courses**

   “Both the undergraduate and graduate students enthusiastically confirm that the professors’ unconditional availability and regular mentoring... has been the most rewarding academic and personal experience at the University” and the graduate supervision is “extraordinary”; “the external evaluators are impressed with the scholarly output of the students”.

9. **Other issues (graduate)**

   None

**Reviewers’ Recommendations**

The reviewers did not have other recommendations in addition to those above.

**Departmental Response**

1. The Department enthusiastically embraces the organizing principle of “multilingualism” with a translingual/transcultural perspective. This is a good fit for a Department which offers instruction in various languages, as well as courses in English, and is consistent with the existing fields offered.
2. The Department will require assistance from the Faculty in marketing its revamped programs. The theme may broaden the appeal of the programs to additional students, for example heritage language students interested in translingual and transcultural studies. In order to increase the appeal of programs, more faculty need to teach first year courses. This has to be balanced with giving graduate students opportunities to teach and also receive financial support.

3. The Department agrees with the Reviewers’ suggestions regarding setting up a “language commons” to encourage interaction, and with their suggestions regarding the need to improvement of media technology in the smaller classrooms used for teaching in the language departments.

Two-year Plan (and beyond).

The Department will report on progress of all items at the two-year report back (September 1 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Recommendation</th>
<th>Secondary Recommendation</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Resources Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multilingualism</td>
<td>Remapping and aligning departmental programs</td>
<td>By 2015-16</td>
<td>Chair/Department</td>
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<td></td>
<td>International multilingualism conference</td>
<td>2015 or 2016</td>
<td>Chair/Department</td>
<td>Some funding by department/ Dean, in addition to SSHRC application</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Explore links with other departments</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Chair/Dean</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Extend current Russian 2-year position ending 2014</td>
<td>By 2014/15</td>
<td>Dean/Provost</td>
<td>Funding for position</td>
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<td>Canada Research Chair in Multilingualism Studies</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>Dean/Provost</td>
<td>Funding for position</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing and recruitment</td>
<td>Recruitment activities, e.g. website renewal with recruitment videos</td>
<td>By 2014/15</td>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Some personnel help for design/implementation; some funding</td>
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<td>Links with international units, e.g. Cotutelle agreement w/</td>
<td>By 2015/16</td>
<td>Chair</td>
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Mannheim, explore 2plus2 with e.g. China

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<th>Space and equipment</th>
<th>Language commons</th>
<th>unknown</th>
<th>Dean/Provost</th>
<th>Funding for language commons</th>
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**Timelines**

Review visit by Dr. Agatha Schwartz, University of Ottawa and Dr. Joseph Salmons, University of Wisconsin November 29-30 2012
Review report received by GSO December 10, 2012
Departmental response received by GSO March 27, 2013
To be discussed at Senate Undergraduate Council May 14 2013
To be discussed at Senate Graduate and Research Council May 13, 2013
To be received by Senate June 17, 2013