

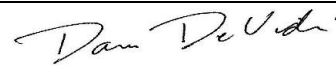


PROGRAM(S): GERMAN (BA, MA, PHD, MINOR),
RUSSIAN AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES (MINOR),
CULTURAL IDENTITIES (MINOR)
FEBRUARY 2025

Program information: *completed by AQUE Office*

Previous review period:	2019-2020	Next review period:	2026-2027
Date of Internal Approval of Final Assessment Report (FAR):	10/17/2023		
Link to FAR:	Final Assessment Report		

Signatures:

	Required	Signature	Date
Chair/Director	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		2/3/2025
Dean	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/17/2025
AFIW Dean	<input type="checkbox"/>		Click or tap to enter a date.
AVPA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		2/21/2025
AVPGSPA	<input type="checkbox"/>		Click or tap to enter a date.

Enrollment (past three years): *completed by AQUE Office*

	General	Honours	German Minor	REES Minor	German Diploma	CI Minor	Dutch Diploma	MA	PhD
2024-25 (CURRENT YR)	0	3	3	0	0	2	0	1	5
2023-24 (LAST YR)	0	3	5	0	0	2	0	1	7
2022-23 (LAST 2YRS)	0	1	7	1	0	3	0	1	5

Based on Active Students Extract in Quest on February 10, 2025.

Initiatives/Developments since the Final Assessment Report

The past two years have a number of developments:

- A process is underway in the Faculty of Arts to reorganize departments into schools. GSS would join Communication Arts, English Language and Literature, Fine Arts, French Studies, and Spanish and Latin American Studies to form a School of Critical and Creative Humanities. Pending necessary approvals, the School would come into effect in July 2026.
- The University's worsening financial situation and its impact on the Faculty of Arts has also had an impact on Germanic and Slavic Studies.
 - Since 2017 the German program has seen its faculty complement decline from nine faculty members to five; three of those retirements occurred in the past three years. A faculty member in German has elected to accept the university's EFRI offer, which will reduce the faculty complement in German to four effective 2026. A sixth faculty member in Slavic Studies is an Arts First instructor teaching one or two Russian courses per year.
 - The Diefenbaker Memorial Chair in German Literary Studies, an endowed chair that the department was awarded in a national competition in 2006, remains vacant following the retirement of the chairholder in 2025. The endowment provides \$160,000 annually towards the salary of the chairholder. There is no word on what will become of the chair.
 - The Faculty of Arts has paused (suspended) enrolments into the BA in German. Further faculty-wide measures to reduce expenses such as a course enrollment floor of 18 students per section has been instituted across Arts, affecting the ability of small language programs to mount courses beyond the first-year level.
 - The PhD in German attracts considerable attention from overseas students, but the Faculty of Arts is unable to admit these international students due to the costs involved. The decline of German studies as an undergraduate program in Canada

has accelerated over the past 5-10 years, resulting in a declining pool of Canadian-educated undergraduates interested in graduate studies.

Progress update on Implementation Plan

RECOMMENDATION 1: New Major in Cultural Identities: We recommend that the department continue to advance the creation of the new major in Cultural Identities with cooperation from other departments and perhaps even other faculties, i.e., knowledge integration.

Completed: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Partially

Progress:

CI is jointly managed with Spanish and Latin American Studies. Working with them, a discussion paper outlining the framework has been developed and circulated for consultation and feedback with the following departments and units: Classical Studies, Communication Arts, French Studies, Renison University College. The discussions took place in Fall Term 2024 and were generally positive.

Next steps (if applicable):

The chairs of GSS and SLAS had expected to spend more time moving CI forward in Winter Term 2025. But with the release of the new reorganization plan in February, the chairs have been preoccupied with supporting the reorganization efforts, in particular meeting with chairs of the other departments expected to join the proposed School of Critical and Creative Humanities, but also holding meetings with staff, faculty members, and students. At this point in the reorganization process, it has been important to deal with more structural or organizational matters in an effort to demonstrate that reorganization has the potential of being a positive experience for all concerned. The chairs of the proposed school will soon begin discussing how the school could develop new interdisciplinary and collaborative programming that would involve the whole school, and we expect to make a case for CI at that time.

Additional comments:

An issue hampering the program's development is the degree to which involvement in CI would take faculty members away from their areas of scholarly expertise or divert them from providing courses in their home programs. In the case of GSS, colleagues have shown their desire to collaborate by contributing to a number of programs on campus – APPLS, VCULT, Medieval Studies, Linguistics.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Two Tenure Line Retirement Replacements: We propose two tenure line retirement replacements that will focus on large-lecture enrollments and interdisciplinary approaches that bridge the Department with Fine Arts, Anthropology, Engineering, Public Health, and other disciplines.

Completed: ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Partially

Progress:

- With the current hiring freeze and low enrolments, retirement replacements (including the Diefenbaker endowed chair) are not expected.
- Regarding high enrolment course instruction, GSS is already doing the following with the faculty members it still has:
 - GSS regularly teaches the popular in-person course FINE 102 / VCULT 100: World Cinema and Visual Culture (150 students per offering).
 - GSS regularly offers online courses that students take to satisfy breadth requirements. These well-subscribed online courses are capped at 60 per section, the maximum that we feel is manageable without TA support. The faculty members teaching these courses are often taking on teaching assignments that are far removed from their scholarly interests and training.

Next steps (if applicable): N/A

Additional comments: N/A

RECOMMENDATION 3: Evaluation of PhD Qualifying Exams: We recommend that the PhD qualifying exams be evaluated to determine if they are meeting the needs of the students and of the program.

Completed: ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Partially

Progress:

- None.

Next steps (if applicable):

- Uncertain at this time (see below).

Additional comments:

- Our PhD program is of great interest to international students, but UW's funding limitations would require these students to fund their studies. Domestic student applications have dried up, a problem affecting all German PhD programs in Canada.

- The low level of interest in the PhD program makes it difficult to justify the effort required to revise the exams, especially since it is not the exams themselves that are preventing students from applying to the PhD program.
 - If new students were to apply and be accepted into the PhD program, the department would immediately revise the exam structure for the new student(s).
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RECOMMENDATION 4: Collaboration through a School of International Languages: We recommend that the University of Waterloo and Dean of Arts work with all the languages departments towards an overarching strategy and common goals, perhaps through a School of International Languages (SILLC) with a communications / outreach staff with expertise in languages.

Completed: ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Partially

Progress:

Little action has been taken on this recommendation. Efforts to create a cross-departmental minor in linguistics are underway, but those discussions have involved individual faculty members without formally or directly involving language departments, and would not lead to a school of languages.

Currently the Faculty of Arts is planning to create a school of Critical and Creative Humanities containing the departments of Communication Arts, English Language and Literature, Fine Arts, French Studies, Germanic and Slavic Studies, and Spanish and Latin American Studies. This will bring together most of the Faculty's language programs.

Next steps (if applicable):

UW now only has one BA in a language (French). There may be interest in the school of creating an academic plan in languages (e.g. a BA or Minor in Languages) that would leverage existing offerings to offer a suite or package of courses for interested students. This would not likely lead to any significant increase in enrollments, but it would offer UW students the opportunity to consolidate their language interests without requiring the university to invest new resources to make that happen, and it could serve to raise the profile language and culture programs. The idea of a BA in languages will be raised in the new School for Critical and Creative Humanities when discussions turn to new School academic programs.

Additional comments: N/A

CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEW PROGRESS REPORT

	Recommendations	Proposed Actions	Responsibility for Leading and Resourcing (if applicable) the Actions	Timeline for addressing Recommendations
1.	New Major in Cultural Identities	Continue consultations.	James Skidmore	Winter / Spring 2025
2.	Two Tenure Line Retirement Replacements	No action	N/A	N/A
3.	Evaluation of PhD Qualifying Exams	No action	James Skidmore	TBD
4	Collaboration through a School of International Languages	Discussions with other units.	James Skidmore	2025/2026

The Department Chair/Director, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty shall be responsible for monitoring the Implementation Plan.