



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

The Graduate School

G-1 Communications

Box 353770

Seattle, Washington 98195-3770

Telephone: (206)543-5900

Fax: (206)685-3234

December 12, 2002

To: David Thorud
Acting Provost

From: Marsha Landolt
Dean and Vice Provost

Re: Textual Studies Program Review

Summary and Recommended Action

At its meeting of November 11, 2002, the Graduate School Council met with members of the team reviewing the Textual Studies Program, the co-Directors of the Program, and the Divisional Dean for Arts and Humanities. The Council recommended continuation of the Program, with its next review to be conducted in 10 years (2012). In so doing, it recognized the fiscal fragility of this excellent program; its proven value to students pursuing Ph.D.s in literary studies; and its to-date unrealized potential to bridge not only other departments within the Arts and Humanities, but other schools and colleges as well through an undergraduate minor program.

I concur with the Council's comments and recommendations.

Background

Begun in 1998, the Textual Studies Program is an interdisciplinary graduate program that draws on the expertise of 60 UW faculty, librarians and staff members as well as visitors from other institutions. It offers a Ph.D. option for doctoral students such that upon completion of their degrees, graduates' transcripts show, e.g., a Ph.D. in English and Textual Studies. The Program gives students comprehensive knowledge of oral, handwritten, printed and electronic texts; core courses also acquaint students with major theories and practices of textual editing. While a total of five students to date have been accepted into the Ph.D. option, the Program's core courses are open to all graduate and upper-division undergraduate students. The review team reported numerous testimonials from students in English and Comparative Literature, among others, to the core courses' impact on dissertations, theses and majors. In addition to Arts and Humanities, the Textual Studies Program has attracted interest from the Information School, the Law School, the College of Architecture and Urban

Planning, and the College of Education. These entities worked together to write a highly competitive UIF proposal in 2000, which, though not funded, nonetheless demonstrated the Program's potential for creating an exciting venue for interdisciplinary collaboration across campus.

The Textual Studies Program was originally housed in and supported by the Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities. When its tenure in the Simpson Center ends, Textual Studies will join the Comparative Literature Department, which, notwithstanding its enthusiasm for the Program, is not yet able to fund it. This means that Textual Studies will have no money whatsoever starting in the 2004 fiscal year. The Council, reflecting the review team's adamant recommendation, was convinced that the Program should not be allowed to disappear. In order to survive, however, the Program needs a budget sufficient to support part-time staff in taking over scheduling and similar functions that Program Directors Mona Modiano and Miheal Vaughn have handled—uncompensated and unassisted—since 1998. It is unlikely that current staff in Comparative Literature will be able to handle the increased workload of Textual Studies without some additional assistance. Secondly, the budget should allow for the continued use of visiting scholars. To date, the Program has invited an average of 3 visitors per year, some from as far away as Australia, for extended visits during which they have given several public lectures, taught in core classes, and met individually and in small groups with students. The Council saw these visits as a cost-effective and dynamic way of providing UW professors and students with access to outstanding faculty in the field. These visits have been supported through the modest Program budget provided by the Simpson Center (\$7000 per year) and supplemented with Program Directors' personal funds.

The review team and the Council were very positively impressed by the current program and the interdisciplinary and inter-school synergies it has already generated and can potentially foster in the future. The Council therefore strongly encourages the University to provide the modest support needed to meet its minimum needs.

cc: Lee Huntsman, Interim President
David Hodge, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Michael Halleran, Divisional Dean for Arts and Humanities
Debra Friedman, Associate Provost for Academic Planning
John Slattery, Associate Dean for Academic Programs
Mona Modiano, Co-Director, Textual Studies
Miheal Vaughn, Co-Director, Textual Studies
Gary Handwerk, Chair, Department of Comparative Literature
Members of the Review Committee
Graduate School Council
Heidi Tilghman, Assistant to the Dean