Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization Division of the Humanities College of Arts and Sciences Last review: 2003-2004 Char: Prof. Scott Noegel Self-study author: same as Chair Date submitted: October 1, 2010

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Executive Summary

The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization (NELC) at the University of Washington is the premier institution in the Northwest entrusted with research and teaching in the languages, literatures, cultures, and intellectual history of the Near East and Central Asia, and to this end, it emphasizes not only their contemporary manifestations, but also their ancient and medieval roots, and their significance within the history of world civilizations. A more detailed articulation of NELC's mission statement appears in Section I.1 of this document.

Summary of Findings

NELC is a strong department with a track record of success. The department's scholarly output and international profile are very strong when measured against peer programs at top public universities. Last year, NELC was ranked third in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*'s Faculty Scholarly Productivity rankings, with only Harvard University and University of Arizona rated higher. Indeed, the NELC faculty has a great deal of talent and distinction, at a time in which the national importance of and demand for Near Eastern Studies has risen sharply. NELC students, both undergraduate and graduate, also have a strong record of success. M.A. students frequently enter high quality Ph.D. Programs or are placed in professional jobs. Many NELC undergraduates have received prestigious awards and have entered strong graduate programs or have been successful in a variety of professions. Moreover, current demand in NELC courses is at an all time high. In many cases the demand has outstripped our ability to meet it, and we are forced to turn away students.

At the same time, the department continues to face challenges that were identified already in the last decennial self-study and external review. These challenges are threefold:

First, there is an inherent problem in the way that we must deploy our permanent faculty. Currently, several faculty members must teach lower-level and advanced language courses in addition to topical courses. NELC is fortunate in that it receives some funding for support from the Middle East Center and the Ellison Center through Title VI funds to hire lectures in Arabic, Persian, and Uygur, but said funding must be applied for cyclically and offers no permanent solution. The last review stated that the university should commit resources to hiring permanent lecturers who would teach first and second year language instruction and thus free permanent faculty to teach upper level language and content courses. This would solve the problem and also strengthen the Middle East Center's ability to secure future rounds of funding. However, the university has devoted no resources to this end. Moreover, this situation has been exacerbated by the recently departure of one of our permanent faculty members, which has resulted in the loss of a tenure-track position in classical Islamic literature and history.

The second challenge identified by the last decennial review was that NELC faculty feels that other units see NELC primarily as a "service unit" that offers language training for them and that these other units do not recognize NELC for its content courses and intellectual contributions. The faculty of NELC envisions the department as a hub with spokes that connect it to many other units on campus. These units depend upon NELC for language instruction, content courses, and faculty resources. While the NELC faculty enjoys the relationships it has with the faculty in these many units and the interdisciplinarity and potential for synergy they bring, many of the NELC faculty are not pleased with their standing in relation to these other units and would like to see NELC's relationship to them articulated more clearly at the Division and College levels.

Thirdly, the last decennial review made it clear that NELC should have its own Ph.D. program. Currently, some members of NELC's faculty work with Ph.D. students in the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Near and Middle Eastern Studies, which is housed in the Graduate School. However, the NELC faculty

does not see this as ideal and would rather have a disciplinary Ph.D. housed within NELC in agreement with the previous external decennial reviewers' recommendation.

The UW, like all universities around the country, is experiencing a major budgetary crisis, and likely will do so again on an even larger scale in the next biennium. Therefore, the solution to some of these challenges must be sought elsewhere, such as in curricular reform. Other challenges, such as the need for permanent lecturers, still will require a university commitment of financial resources, regardless of financial forecasts.

Part A: Required Background Information

The following is NELC's response to the set of question asked of all units undergoing review.

Section I: Overview of Organization

Mission & Organizational Structure

1. Describe the overall mission of the unit. What does the unit believe in and what are its goals?

The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization (NELC) is devoted to teaching and research concerning the principal cultures and languages of the Near and Middle East, including Central Asia, emphasizing not only their contemporary manifestations but also their ancient and medieval roots, and their significance within the history of world civilizations.

Our language and thematic curricula investigate major literary and cultural traditions. Arabic, Persian, Tajik, Turkish, and Central Asian Turkic (such as Uzbek, Kazakh, and Kirghiz) are the languages of the most significant manifestations of Islamic civilization. Hebrew and Aramaic are languages of the Bible, and central to Judaism and Jewish culture. A rich and vast heritage from other ancient Near Eastern cultures is explored through study of languages and literatures such as Egyptian (Hieroglyphic, Coptic), Akkadian, Ugaritic, Phoenician, and Syriac. In this endeavor NELC is committed to excellence in interdisciplinary research, historical and linguistic training, innovative pedagogical approaches to learning, and expanding awareness of and appreciation for non-Western cultures, past and present.

Appendix A shows the way in which NELC distributes its academic and non-academic staffing. In brief, the unit's organizational structure divides into two components, both of which fall under the supervision of the department chair. The first is the unit's administration and the second includes the unit's program areas. In order to avoid any complications that could arise from micromanagement, the department Administrator serves as the immediate supervisor of the other administrative staff members. The administration include the Administrator, Program Assistant, Undergraduate Advisor, and any Work Study students. The academic program areas divide according to discipline and geographic region represented by the expertise of particular faculty who oversee those areas. Each of the program directors is responsible for general guidance of the area and curriculum. None of the program directorships offers financial compensation.

2. Degrees including special pathways, options, tracks, or majors/minors, and fee-based programs within these degrees.

a. NELC offers four BA major option tracks. These include 1) Near Eastern Studies: Language and Civilization; 2) Near Eastern Studies: Culture and Civilization; 3) Comparative Islamic Studies; and 4) Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies.

b. NELC also offers a Minor in Near Eastern Studies.

Each of the degree options and their requirements appears in Appendix E. It is important to note that NELC faculty is in the process of rethinking these degree options in the light of proposed changes to its curriculum. See Appendix F for reasons why we are undertaking curriculum revisions and for a general outline of proposed changes.

c. Certificate programs offered, if any. NELC offers no certificate programs.

d. NELC offers a graduate program of studies leading to the Master of Arts degree. The program provides students with advance training in at least one Near Eastern language and in a specific field of specialization. Students may concentrate in Arabic, Hebrew (ancient or modern), Persian, Turkish, or

Central Eurasian Languages and may choose as their field of specialization in a culture or literature related to their language of concentration.

e. Provide detailed information on enrollment and graduate patterns for each degree program (these data should appear in aggregate form, i.e. no student names).

The chart in Appendix D provides data for the last three years (autumn to summer) on the number of students taking classes in NELC, the number of Teaching Assistants, and the number of majors enrolled, as well as BA and MA degrees granted. The chart shows a significant increase in the number of non-major enrolling in NELC classes (4340 to 5888), with a slight dip in 2009 (3975). The decrease in the number of students taught by Teaching Assistants in the last year from 3015 to 1305 reflects university-wide budget cuts that resulted in the loss of Teaching Assistant positions. It remains to be seen what the cause of the slight decrease in majors and undergraduate degrees granted represents (from 107 to 96). Likely economic forces are at work, since 2010 marked a 14% increase in tuition. The slight decrease in MA students taking NELC courses (from 11 to 5) and MA degrees granted (from 4 to 3) represents the fact that in 2009 and 2010 NELC saw an increase in students enrolled from the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program and that NELC had a significantly larger graduating class than in previous years. We expect these numbers to decrease in the next few years, because in 2008-2009 NELC faculty accepted no graduate students for 2009. The latter was due to the budget crisis.

Regardless of the program area, the data show that the number of students taught per faculty member in NELC is roughly even, except for that of the position in Islamic literature and history, now vacated, which taught roughly twice the number of students as other faculty in NELC. This was due to the popularity of classes such as "Introduction to Islam" and "Introduction to the Qura'n" (see Appendix I). The number of students reached by these classes is another argument in favor of filling the vacated position.

3. Describe the manner in which shared governance works in the unit, along with how the unit solicits the advice of external constituents.

The chair of the department is Scott Noegel. Two of the other current full professors in the department (Cirtautas, Sokoloff), one joint appointment (Williams), and one emeritus professor (Bacharach) also have served terms as chair of NELC. Graduate advising has been handled by one associate professor (Kuru) for the last four years. Prior to this, another faculty member served (Noegel). A 75% permanent staff member (Dang) handles undergraduate advising.

At present there are no standing committees or annually appointed committees. The faculty reviews and votes on applications for graduate admission as a committee-of-the-whole. Several years ago there was an annually appointed committee of two or three members to make recommendations on admissions, but the final discussion and vote was still by the entire faculty. The decision was made to discontinue the extra work by a special committee. The faculty also reviews and votes as a committee-of-the-whole on applications for teaching assistantships and fellowships. The chair appoints other necessary committees (e.g., for any curriculum reform or review, invited annual lecturers, etc.) as needed. The work of serving on collegial teaching review committees is divided up and rotated by the department chair as evenly as possible among all ranks.

The faculty holds regular monthly meetings, and additional meetings on an ad hoc basis when necessary. The faculty vote or reach consensus as a group on major departmental decisions (i.e., there is no executive committee). On personnel issues such as promotion, tenure, and merit decisions they vote by rank in accordance with the usual procedures stipulated in the Faculty Code. By faculty vote, the current system that is followed in NELC for merit decisions on full professors is that the chair of the department seeks advice from emeriti professors and/or one adjunct full professor.

Budget & Resources

1. Outline the unit's budget.

General Operating Budget (GOF): For the current biennium the University has allocated NELC a total of \$1,640,428. Of this, \$1,548,656 is permanent and \$91,772 is temporary. The lion's share of NELC's permanent operating budget (\$1,524,688) goes toward salaries. In the current biennium the permanent and temporary allocations break down into the salaries of faculty (\$1,186,314), professional staff (\$172, 584), classified staff (\$44,240), graduate student appointments (\$116,166), and hourly student appointments (\$5,384). The remaining \$23,968 is applied towards contractual services (\$19,288), supplies and materials (\$3,880), and faculty travel (\$800), though as I discuss below there is currently a moratorium on using departmental budgets for faculty travel. Moreover, we expect the next biennium to bring far fewer resources.

Gifts and Endowments: NELC also has a number of gift budgets and endowments, each of which is earmarked for specific purposes. Currently, the amount of money generated and usable by these accounts totals \$80,924, though the endowments themselves are considerably larger. Nevertheless, given the unusually low yield of all university endowments over the last two years, we have been forced to curtail spending monies from these accounts. In some cases this has meant not holding an expected event or not offering a student award. For details see the budget summary in Appendix B.

2. How does the unit evaluate whether it is making the best use of its current funding and human resources?

The chair evaluates best spending procedures in consultation with the administrator, and in the case of some endowments, the divisional Director of the Office of Advancement. With regard to the endowments, these are tied to specific awards or events, and thus the chair convenes internal committees to ascertain which students should receive said awards or which speakers the department might invite.

With the exception of Title VI funds, which help defray the costs of specific lecturer positions, there is little in the way of funds on which to evaluate spending effectiveness. Most, if not all, decisions are based on need. The recent current budget crisis led to the elimination of the chair's discretionary budget, which had helped in previous years to defray the costs of faculty travel. Recently a portion of the original discretionary budget (50%) was returned to the department, but there continues to be a university moratorium on using any state funds for faculty travel. The fact that we are allowed to use the newly received discretionary funds to invite faculty from other universities and pay their honoraria has been perceived as counter-intuitive and unsupportive by the faculty.

3. Describe any fund-raising/development plan, or grant/contract-getting strategies used to seek additional funding.

For several years NELC possessed a strategic plan for fundraising. It also possessed an advisory board of community members who were assembled to assist in fundraising endeavors. However, given a general lack of activity and commitment among board members, a frequent turnover in department chairs due to health reasons, and the national budget crisis, which decimated the staff of the university's Advancement Office, leadership in the Advancement Office encouraged us to disband the NELC advisory board until a time when it and the department and the Advancement Office might make the most of peoples'

generosity. Thus, at the end of last year NELC formally disbanded its advisory board while making clear to its members that we might call upon them in the future when times become brighter economically. The Advancement Office now focuses only on major gifts. Consequently, the department chair has begun to explore opportunities for corporate and foundation giving.

Section II: Teaching & Learning

Student Learning Goals and Outcomes

1. What are the unit's student learning goals?

Our student learning goals are shared with NELC undergraduate and graduate students on a quarterly basis through e-mail, and they appear in multiple places on the departmental web site. The goals and outcomes are as follows:

NELC provides a liberal arts education in new global realities and their connections specifically to history of culture in the Near East and Central Asia. A detailed and critical knowledge of ancient and modern languages of these regions is of utmost importance for a better understanding of their rich cultural heritages, and development of language skills requires cultural-historical knowledge. This includes the following:

Development of language skills, including proficiency in ancient languages of the Near East, and proficiency in modern foreign languages of the Near East and Central Asia, involving all four language skills (speaking, writing, reading, and listening). Expansion of student understanding of cultural diversity through study of languages, literature, religious, and other cultural aspects of the ancient and modern Near East and Central Asia: close textual and hermeneutic studies of ancient languages and texts, classical and modern literature, and history of culture.

Additionally, NELC focuses on the development of student abilities in critical analyses of texts, thorough understanding of historical and cultural contexts, integrative and critical thinking, analytical writing, and research procedures and strategies.

2. Describe and discuss the manner in which the unit evaluates student learning (e.g., classroom- and/or performance-based assessment, capstone experiences, portfolios, etc.).

In addition to student teaching and collegial teaching evaluations, which the chair reviews quarterly, the unit asks for feedback from each graduating student before he or she leaves the department.

The students are given an exit survey during their last quarter of study. Questions include basic information about which degree track they took and whether or not they received honors and also address issues of diversity. Students also are asked whether or not they were able to register for classes they were required to take and classes they wanted to take. They are asked to rate our program (advising, language instruction, course offerings, etc) and classes on a scale of 1 to 5. There is room at the end of the survey if they have any additional comments. The undergraduate advisor collects the surveys before convocation.

Graduate students are given an exit survey that lets them rate the department (advising, exams, course offerings, etc) on a scale from 1 to 5. Graduates are asked about the program's strengths and weaknesses, impressions of the exam process, suggestions for improving course work, and whether or not they feel prepared for their next step. Students are asked to turn in the surveys with the final draft of their seminar paper on the 10th week of the quarter in which they will graduate. A copy of the exit survey appears in Appendix H.

Department staff collects the surveys and conveys the results to the chair. The chair and the faculty discuss any concerns of the students during the first faculty meeting the following autumn quarter.

3. What methods are used to assess student satisfaction? What efforts are made to gauge the satisfaction of students from under-represented groups?

In addition to what has been noted in the previous response, our undergraduate advisor tracks student satisfaction in regular meetings with students. The NELC student association also registers its input to the undergraduate advisor and department chair. The exit surveys also contain a number of questions that are addressed specifically to under-represented groups.

4. What are the findings of the assessment of student learning in each program of study?

The language programs appear to be very healthy: the majority of ranking appearing in the 4 or 5 out of 5 categories. The only negative assessment we have received is lack of available spaces in language courses in high demand, such as Arabic. The other content, non-language courses also appear to be in good stead, receiving a 4 out 5 ranking by students. Such data is borne out also by student teacher evaluations. Most classes and instructors receive a 4 out of 5 ranking, with several consistently receiving 5 rankings.

5. How has the unit used these findings to bring about improvements in the programs, effect curricular changes, and/or make decisions about resource allocation?

The student feedback that we receive from our undergraduate advisor has led us to consider major curricular changes, and these appear in Appendix F in outline form. Individual faculty members also have initiated curricular changes in order to transform the classroom experience. Thus, instructors in both Biblical Hebrew (Noegel) and Modern Hebrew (Sokoloff) have begun to create a technological infrastructure for the teaching of the first year sequence. The infrastructure is being created in MOODLE, a sophisticated open-source course management system and virtual learning environment. We imagine such projects representing a first step towards the hybridization for teaching languages in NELC. The same instructors also have worked with private software firms to create CD-ROMS for the teaching of Hieroglyphic Egyptian and Modern Hebrew. These have been employed in the classroom and have resulted in speeding up the rate of language acquisition.

Resources, especially teaching assistantships, typically are allocated to courses with the greatest student demand such as first-year Arabic language courses and large introductory topic courses. Thus, it is demand that typically informs the way teaching assistantships are allocated.

6. If applicable, note the courses typically taken by undergraduates who will not be majors in any of the unit's programs. Are there specific learning goals in those courses designed to accommodate such 'non-major' students? If so, how is student achievement in reaching these goals assessed?

Students from all majors and areas of study take introductory courses in Near Eastern Languages and Civilization. Lower-level lecture courses such as "Introduction to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament" (NEAR E 240), "Introduction to the Ancient Near East" (NEAR E 220), NEAR E 150 "Israel: Dynamic Society and Global Flashpoint," "Introduction to Islamic Civilization" (NEAR E 210), "Introduction to Islam" (NEAR E 211), and "Introduction to Qur'an" (NEAR E 212) draw in many non-majors who need to complete I&S credits, and students take various literature in translation courses to satisfy VLPA credits. Though the department has grown over the past six years both in the number of undergraduate

students majoring in NELC and in the class sizes, the percentage of non-majors enrolled in lower-level courses has remained around 25%. This is because we have experience a concomitant growth in the number of departmental majors.

Students with heritage in one of the cultures within the Near East often take courses for personal growth and understanding, and native speakers will take advanced courses in the native language to meet VLPA credits. In the past, many non-majors have taken language courses to fulfill their foreign language requirement. With the recent change now allowing high school foreign language at the third year level to satisfy the UW requirement, we are seeing fewer non-majors in our language sequences. The only language that we partially restrict to majors is Arabic. Non-majors can register for first-year Arabic once majors have all had opportunity to register. Space limitations allow for only a few non-majors to take second-year Arabic.

NELC does not distinguish the learning goals of its majors from its non-majors since these courses are generalized and accessible to majors and non-majors alike.

Instructional Effectiveness

1. Including the use of standardized teaching evaluation forms, describe and discuss the method(s) used within the unit to evaluate quality of instruction.

There are three primary ways by which the unit evaluates the quality of its instruction. The first is by way of student teaching evaluations. Though it is mandatory UW policy that faculty members must have at least one student teaching evaluation performed every year, we encourage them to do evaluations for all their courses. The second means of evaluating instructional quality is by collegial evaluations. University policy requires that collegial evaluations be performed annually for teaching assistants, lecturers, and assistant professors, bi-annually for associate professors, and once every three years for full professors. A third means of evaluating the quality of instruction involves an assessment of the previous two types of evaluations by the department chair. In the event that areas for improvement are identified by way of the first two methods of assessment, the chair consults with the individual faculty member in question and suggests methods for improvement, either through the Center for Instructional Development and Research (CIDR) and/or faculty mentorship. In the rare case that serious areas of improvement are identified, the chair has consulted with the divisional dean on next best steps.

2. Please note all opportunities for training in teaching that are made available to any individuals teaching within the unit (including graduate students). These may be opportunities that support teaching improvement, innovation, and/or best practices, for example.

NELC encourages all new lectures to work closely with the Center of Instructional Development and Research (CIDR). Additionally, all teaching assistants who teach contemporary languages meet weekly with the Director of our Arabic Language Program to discuss best practices and to share stories and teaching experiences. All teaching assistants who offer sections in non-language courses work closely with the individual faculty member teaching that course.

In addition, NELC language lecturers have now created their own forum to discuss teaching and the lecturer experience. The first meeting began in the spring of 2010, where it was agreed that it should be held several times a quarter as a brown bag lunch event. The meetings will provide lecturers with opportunities to discuss issues that are specific to their instructional and departmental roles. Nevertheless, the meetings will be open to all members of NELC's faculty.

In addition, NELC has obtained several course development grants that have allowed for the creation of new courses and for the development of technological infrastructures that aid in course instruction. The chair of NELC received funds from the Institute for National Security Education and Research (INSER) for building technological infrastructures for several language classes, most notably Arabic, Central Asian Languages, and Modern Hebrew. INSER also provided funds for course developments, which allowed us to hire three graduate students to design and teach their own courses. The classes included Islam in America, Islam in China, and The Literature of Central Asia. INSER also provided funds for student travel abroad, and we created an academic study abroad program that allowed ten students a year to obtain \$5000 and advance the study of their languages in accredited study abroad programs. Starting last year, the university placed greater restrictions on the ways in which departments can use INSER funds. This has led to the elimination of course development funds and the student travel grants.

3. Describe specific instructional changes you have seen made by instructors in response to evaluation of teaching within the unit.

Responses to student evaluations have come in many forms including consultation with other faculty and with CIDR, the refining of courses and teacher syllabi, the creation of power point lectures, and the integration of emerging technologies into the classroom. The latter has helped in profound ways especially in the teaching of both biblical and modern Hebrew.

Teaching and Mentoring Outside the Classroom

1. Describe and discuss how faculty members are involved in undergraduate and graduate student learning and development other than through classroom teaching.

Faculty have engaged undergraduates and graduate students by way of informal learning opportunities such as language circles, a number of independent studies and senior essays, as well as specialized seminars and workshops. NELC's undergraduate and graduate students also have created their own student organization, which has been very proactive in organizing lectures and an annual symposium on a given theme. Several faculty members also have involved undergraduates in their research by way of Mary Gates fellowships, which tie outstanding undergraduate students to specific faculty research projects.

2. Describe how the unit recruits undergraduate and graduate students, in general, and any additional efforts to recruit students from under-represented groups.

NELC's student body is naturally diverse, given the geographic and cultural diversity represented by its faculty and curriculum. NELC serves a number of heritage groups, especially among the Arab (both Christian and Muslim), Iranian, Turkish, and Jewish communities. Recruitment from under-represented groups primarily takes place at the graduate level, and NELC has been fortunate in the past to obtain recruitment funds for recruiting promising young scholars from Graduate Opportunities and Minority Achievement Program (GO-MAP). Beyond GO-MAP, NELC has almost no funds for recruiting graduate students. The student exit survey that NELC asks of all graduating seniors and graduate students also provides specific questions that address issues of diversity (see Appendix H).

The chart below shows NELC student enrollments as they reflect gender and under-represented minorities. As the numbers indicate, the break down by gender is roughly 50%, even slightly more for graduate students, though the aggregate numbers reflect a slight decline over the last six years. Under-represented minorities among our students equal about 7% among our undergraduates, but 20% at the

graduate level. The latter shows no discernible pattern or trajectory, but rather reflects admissions and successful or unsuccessful GO-MAP opportunities.

Н	G	F	E	D	С	В	A	\diamond
	2009-10	2008-09	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05	2	1
UNDERGRADUATE					5		UNDERGRADUATES	2
Total Enrollme	96	107	102	97	80	60	Total Enrollment	3
% Change from Previous Yea	-10%	5%	5%	21%	20%	n/a	% Change from Previous Year	4
Total Wome	51	74	62	56	55	40	Total Women	5
% Wome	53%	69%	61%	62%	69%	66%	% Women	6
Total Minori	7	7					Total Minority	7
% Minori	7%	7%					% Minority	8
Total Degrees Grante	25	35	20	23	14	11	Total Degrees Granted	9
% Change from Previous Yea	-29%	75%	-13%	64%	27%		% Change from Previous Year	10
								11
	2009-10	2008-09	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05		12
GRADUATE					d		GRADUATES	13
Total Enrollme	5	11	6	5	9	13	Total Enrollment	14
% Change from Previous Yea	55%	83%	20%	-44%	-31%	n/a	% Change from Previous Year	15
Total Wome	5	5	1	0	5	6	Total Women	16
% Wome	60%	46%	17%	0%	56%	46%	% Women	17
Total Minori	1	2	0	0	2	1	Total Minority	18
% Minori	20%	18%	0%	0%	22%	8%	% Minority	19
Total Degrees Grante	3	4	1	3	9	2	Total Degrees Granted	20
% Change from Previous Yea	-25%	300%	-67%	-67%	350%	n/a	% Change from Previous Year	21

3. Describe how the unit works with undergraduate and graduate students to ensure steady academic progress and overall success in the program.

NELC's undergraduate and graduate advisors play crucial roles in ensuring the steady academic progress of its undergraduate and graduate students. Graduate students meet quarterly with the graduate advisor and departmental chair. In addition, we provide very specific guidelines and advice on achieving academic success on our web site and in the department's graduate student handbook. The chairs and other members of a graduate student's committee also play important roles in making sure that students succeed to matriculation.

4. Describe how the unit works with undergraduate and graduate students to prepare them for the next phases of their academic or professional lives.

The Near East is a region of critical importance. As its many nations continue to play pivotal roles on the world stage the need for firm knowledge about Near Eastern languages and cultures becomes increasingly clear. Our courses offer great breadth, in terms of the number of different languages and types of content taught, and great depth, in terms of the historical range our courses cover (from ancient to medieval to modern periods). In serving our educational mission, we inspire and educate a new generation of citizens informed about the Near East and Central Asia.

Section III: Scholarly Impact

1. Describe the broad impact of faculty members' research and/or creative work. Feel free to note specific individuals and how their work embodies the unit's mission, or distinguishes the unit from those at peer institutions.

Last year, NELC was ranked third in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*'s Faculty Scholarly Productivity rankings, with only Harvard University and University of Arizona rated higher. Indeed, the NELC faculty is full of talent and distinction, at a time in which the national importance of and demand for Near Eastern Studies has risen sharply.

Moreover, a number of NELC faculty serve as editors of journals and as reviewers for major journals. To mention but a few: Naomi Sokoloff serves on the Editorial Board for the journals *Hebrew Studies* and *Shofar*, and is a reviewer for the National Foundation for Jewish Culture Dissertation Awards. Scott Noegel currently is the Co-Editor-in-Chief of *Religion Compass*, an online journal published by Wiley-Blackwell in London, and the Ancient Near Eastern Section Editor of the same journal. He also serves on the Editorial Board for the *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*. Hussein Elkhafaifi continues to serve on the Executive Board of the American Association of Teachers of Arabic. Among other acts of national service, he is a member of the steering committees for the National Foreign Language Institute's Arabic for Interactive Communication (AFIC) project, the National Middle East Languages Resource Center, and the Concordia Arabic Language Village Steering Committee. He also has served as an evaluator for the CAPA Arabic Language Flagship Program (Georgetown University) and as the lead for the Arabic Assessment Test Development Group. Such records are generally representative of NELC's faculty and its contributions to its many disciplines. In addition, NELC boasts the following list of faculty accomplishments.

3 National Endowment for the Humanities grants

- 3 Fellows, American Research Center in Egypt
- 1 Senior Fellow, American Center for Oriental Research
- 2 Presidents, Middle East Studies Association
- 1 President, Society for Iranian Studies
- 1 President, Middle East Medievalists
- 1 President, Pacific NW American Research Center in Egypt
- 1 President, Pacific NW American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature
- 1 Director, American Research Center in Egypt
- 1 Director, Center for Arabic Study Abroad
- 1 Samuel and Althea Stroum Chair
- 1 Mentor Award, Middle East Studies Association
- 1 Service Award, Middle East Studies Association
- 7 Editors of leading journals

2. For undergraduate and graduate students, describe significant awards, noteworthy presentations, or activities that have had an impact on the field while in the program.

Many NELC undergraduate and MA students, as well as Ph.D. students in the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program supervised by NELC faculty, have received significant awards including: Boren Scholarships, FLAS scholarships, Fulbright Fellowships, Mary Gates Research Scholarships, and McNair Scholarships, to name a few. I provide a complete list of students and their awards for the years 2004 to 2010 in Appendix G, but below is a generalized list of student awards over the last ten years.

1 Rhodes Scholar 6 Mary Gates Scholars

- 1 Elizabeth Kerr MacFarlane Scholarship in the Humanities
- 8 Dorot Fellowships for Study in Israel
- 2 Ronald E. McNair Scholars
- 4 National Fellowships for Advanced Arabic Study

25 Maurice and Lois Schwartz Fellowships for Study Abroad

4 Roshan Institute Fellowships for Excellence in Persian Studies

4 Naficy Scholarships in Persian Studies

4 Turkish and Ottoman Literature Endowed Fellowships

34 Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships

In addition, NELC students have taken upon themselves to organize and self-govern the NELC Student Association. The organization meets regularly, organizes events, invites speakers, and hosts an annual student conference in the spring for both undergraduates and graduate students around a central topic or theme. The annual event is attended by students and faculty alike and is a source of pride for NELC faculty.

3. In what ways have advances in the field or discipline, changing paradigms, changing funding patterns, new technologies and trends, or other changes influenced research, scholarship, or creative activity in the unit?

Disciplinary changes have been most profound in three primary areas: a) the teaching of contemporary languages, b) funding structures, and c) the emergence of new technologies.

a. With regard to the teaching of contemporary Near Eastern languages, students are increasingly undertaking language study in order to apply them vocationally in government services (foreign, intelligence, diplomatic, security, etc.), commerce, or in global humanitarian and charitable occupations. This is most pronounced in the Arabic sector of the unit, which is enrolling an ever-growing number of engineering and business students. Nevertheless, other language programs, such as Turkish, Persian, and Modern Hebrew continue to attract heritage students and/or students who aim to become scholars and teachers.

b. Funding for NELC's language programs has been a perennial problem. State universities nationwide have seen the gradual disappearance of tenure-track positions in Near Eastern and Central Asian languages and a concomitant increase in lecturer positions. Moreover, funding cuts make it impossible to enlarge a language program even it is healthy. Thus, units are forced to reduce basic courses and eliminate higher-level courses. Consequently, some students abandon their original plans to become language experts and take different career paths. These cuts also result in fewer employment opportunities as universities reduce their offerings and hire fewer instructors.

Budget cuts also have adversely affected the professional development of our faculty. There is currently no travel budget and there is a university moratorium on using discretionary funds for faculty travel. This eliminates opportunities for professional talks at national conferences and symposia. Faculty members must now finance all of their own research activities.

Budget concerns also constrain long-term curricular planning since there are no guarantees of future funding for courses and instructors. For example, the Middle East Center provides NELC with Title VI funding for lecturers in Arabic and Persian, but the Center must apply for said funds every four years. This makes long range planning in these language areas impossible and cuts off any attempt to enlarge the curriculum into areas such as distance learning.

c. The emergence of new technologies also has had a profound impact on our unit. As mentioned above, a couple members of NELC's faculty, most notably Noegel and Sokoloff, have developed teaching tools such as CD-ROMs and online language teaching and assessment tools. These have helped speed the rate of language acquisition in some courses, such as biblical Hebrew, and have provided students with a learning environment that they increasingly grow to expect. At the same time, faculty members are increasingly integrating the internet, online video and sound files, and the rapid distribution of new technological and cultural resources into the classroom and student homework. This has resulted in improved instruction and greater student proficiency.

The proliferation of on-line pedagogical capabilities also has impacted the teaching of literature and cultures. The capacity to bring YouTube videos to students' attention means that instructors can talk about current events, contemporary popular culture, changing vocabulary and slang, and much more, on a regular basis, even in real time if they so choose. The proliferation of on-line materials pertaining to ancient, medieval, and modern literatures offers possibilities that did not exist even five years ago. Many important texts, commentaries, and visuals have become accessible online and have transformed the way we teach in NELC. Social networking tools like Facebook and Common View also allow instructors to reach students beyond the classroom.

New and emerging technologies also have enhanced the classroom experience. Increasingly students are expected to master foreign language keyboards and to make oral power point presentations in addition to written papers. Other instructors ask students to incorporate technology into the classroom by building websites devoted to specific research topics. On the downside, we increasingly are finding students preoccupied with iPad touch and social networking tools in the classroom, rather than focusing on lectures, and it is the perception of many faculty members that student critical thinking skills have diminished. Students increasingly tend to grab random information off the World Wide Web rather than follow up on recommended readings (even when they are available through UW Libraries e-journals). This is a notable difference even from a few years ago. At the same time, these digital natives often have inflated ideas about what grades they deserve, and they attribute less importance to regular class attendance. As more of the instructors' materials are made available, for example, on CommonView, many students believe that they can catch up without having to worry about attendance.

The digital age also has influenced faculty research and publishing efforts. Faculty members are increasingly able to publish their work in online peer-reviewed journals, making this work available to a larger audience more quickly. One member of the faculty (Noegel) also edits a peer-reviewed on-line journal and serves on the editorial board of another. Online publication benefits the faculty member and his or her discipline. On the other hand, such activity also increases the need for university college councils to recognize the importance and necessity of digital publishing in tenure and promotion cases. Moreover, the rise of digital publications coincides with a decline in monographs in print in some disciplines, such as Modern Hebrew Literature and Linguistics.

4. List any collaborative and/or interdisciplinary efforts between the unit and other units at the University or at other institutions, and the positive impacts of these efforts.

NELC is a hub for many other units on campus that depend upon its language and content courses and upon its faculty resources. Such units include the Department of History, the Jackson School of International Studies, the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program, Comparative Literature Department, Jewish Studies Program, Comparative Religion Program, Middle East Center, and Ellison Center for Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies.

5. How does the unit work with junior faculty to maximize their success?

Effort is placed on protecting assistant professors by lightening the burden of administrative duties, such as on committees and the faculty senate. Annual spring discussions with the chair also provide opportunities to offer junior faculty an assessment of their progress. This assessment derives from annual discussions with the senior faculty concerning the faculty member's progress toward tenure and/or promotion. Faculty also are encouraged to apply for research grants and internal development grants, such as those offered by the Simpson Center for the Humanities, that will assist in securing for faculty release time or additional resources to reach their publication goals.

6. What specific strategy has the unit employed to recruit, and support the career success of, faculty members from under-represented groups? To what extent has the unit been successful in diversifying its faculty ranks?

The faculty of NELC is a very diverse group that includes, *inter alia*, individuals from Iran, Israel, Libya, China, Tajikistan, Morocco, and Turkey. The faculty is also rather balanced in terms of gender. Among the permanent faculty in NELC there are four females and fives males, and among lecturers, there are four females and four males. In addition, in the past, when positions existed for which we were permitted to search, we strongly encouraged those of under-represented groups to apply.

Section IV: Future Directions

The State of Washington requires all programs and units being reviewed to provide a statement of 'continuing need.' Rather than simply addressing this by reiterating previous sections of the self study thus far, address this in a way that is constructive for the unit as it thinks about its future.

1. Where is the unit headed?

The unit is currently headed for a transformation of unforeseeable consequence. Budget cuts make it unlikely that the unit will fill the position in Islamic literature and history recently vacated by the departure of Jonathan Brown in the next few years. At the same time, like all units on campus, the department will need to accommodate an ever-growing body of students. The pressures on some language areas, especially Arabic, is already beyond our ability to match the demand, and other language programs, such as modern Hebrew and Persian are not far behind. Thus, just at the time when we have experienced a loss in faculty positions, the unit is headed for increased demands for student enrollments. Just how this will be negotiated is unclear, and if the financial forecast for the next biennium is even remotely accurate, the impact on this unit could be devastating. It is possible that the situation will likely require action and perhaps reorganization at the College and Division levels. Nevertheless, the productivity of NELC's faculty continues to be strong as is the success rate of its students, both undergraduate and graduate.

2. What opportunities does the unit wish to pursue and what goals does it wish to reach?

Give that the financial future is beyond the unit's control, NELC would like to pursue goals that are within its control. This translates into the creation of a streamlined curriculum, one that can accommodate larger numbers of students at the 100 and 200 levels, while still maintaining the excellence of its upper division language and content courses.

3. How does the unit intend to seize these opportunities and reach these goals?

The unit intends to reach these goals through careful planning and on-going discussions with the faculty and undergraduate advisor.

4. Describe the unit's current benefit and impact regionally, statewide, nationally, and internationally. Given the unit's envisioned future, describe how reaching this future will augment that benefit and impact.

Last year, NELC was ranked third in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*'s Faculty Scholarly Productivity rankings, with only Harvard University and University of Arizona rating higher. Individual faculty members also are very active in numerous national and international professional organizations, and in many instances have held and/or hold positions of leadership nationally, as is attested in the information included in the curriculum vitae section in Appendix C.

The department has engaged in a wide array of partnerships and activities with other institutions and organizations. We have maintained memberships in organizations such as the Center for Arabic Studies Abroad (CASA), American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE), Society of Biblical Literature, and the American Research Institute in Turkey. NELC also has a strong partnership with the ARCE's Northwest Chapter that has resulted in numerous co-sponsored lectures by scholars from both the University of Washington and other institutions regionally and nationally. Three years ago ARCE/NW worked with NELC to bring the annual ARCE meeting to Seattle. In addition, NELC also has hosted or co-hosted several important national and international conferences involving cooperation with colleagues and departments elsewhere.

One of our faculty members (Kuru) also organizes the Cunda Ottoman and Turkish Summer School as well as an annual workshop on Ottoman Studies, both in Turkey. The school and workshop draw dozens of students and scholars from around the world to study and discuss Ottoman Turkish texts.

The department also was involved (with the Comparative Religion Program and Ellison Center) in inaugurating an educational partnerships grant with collaborating institutions in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. A field office was established in Tashkent, and many faculty members from NELC and other units have visited it and have worked with colleagues there. Representatives from those institutions also have come to the UW campus for three-month terms involving collaboration on research and instructional methodologies. The collaborative projects succeeded in broadening the range of teaching materials that will be of value both to Uzbek institutions of higher education as well as to American programs that offer courses in Comparative Islamic Studies.

Part B: Supplemental Questions Generated by Unit under Review

The following six queries have been identified as core questions by this unit. They have been discussed at the charge meeting and aim to guide the review committee in its work. A response from the unit follows each question. The first item is more of a request than query.

1. NELC is undertaking a fundamental revision of its entire curriculum that appears in outline form in Appendix F. We view this as our most significant undertaking worthy of the review committee's consideration. We will want to obtain feedback on the outlined proposal. We also would like to know what impact the revised curriculum might have on other units at UW.

2. There are many units on campus that have their own needs and agendas (e.g., Middle East Center, Ellison Center, Jackson School of International Study, the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program, History Department, etc.), What is NELC's relationship to these other units at the UW? What should it be? What is the affect upon our students and upon the public of having several similarly named units on campus?

The faculty of NELC envisions the department as a hub with spokes that connect it to many other units on campus. These units depend upon NELC for language instruction, content courses, and faculty resources. While the NELC faculty enjoys the relationships it has with the faculty in these many units and the interdisciplinarity and potential for synergy they bring, many of the NELC faculty are not pleased with their standing in relation to these other units. This was noted already by the previous decennial review, which I quote:

...some of the faculty (and several students) expressed the view that NELC was being used only as a 'service unit' to provide language training for other units, and that they are not being recognized for their scholarship and intellectual contributions, and hence are not being supported sufficiently for their mission. NELC is one of the five programs out of the 37 departments in the College of Arts and Sciences that is not permitted to offer a Ph.D. degree (the four others being Art, Dance, International Studies, and Spanish & Portuguese Studies), yet the current Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Near and Middle Eastern Studies arguably could not sustain itself without the help of NELC faculty. Indeed, a considerable number of students who received their Ph.D. degree from Near and Middle Eastern Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program were directed exclusively by NELC faculty. The fact that NELC is not smaller than some of the Ph.D. granting units, such as Women Studies where most of the faculty are adjuncts, intensifies the impression that it is regarded as a secondclass department.

3. How can we best deploy our permanent faculty so that they are not teaching only first year language courses, but are free to teach other advanced courses?

The last self-study and decennial review were clear on the answer to this question and we are in full agreement with their recommendation. The university should commit resources to hiring lectures who will teach first and second year language instruction and thus free permanent faculty to teach upper level language and content courses.

4. NELC's MA program. Is it working? What are its strengths and weaknesses? Should NELC have a Ph.D. Program?

The MA program in NELC is a concentrated program that focuses heavily on languages. MA students must master two Middle Eastern languages as well as one European research language (French, German, etc). NELC is proud of these requirements and seeks to maintain them, because they have resulted in

turning out excellent students. Many of these students have entered the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Near and Middle Eastern Studies at UW or Ph.D. programs at other institutions. Moreover, the requirement of two languages rather than one has not deterred timely matriculation.

The review committee will note that NELC has experienced a relatively large drop in MA enrollment. There are two reasons for this. First, two years ago we had an unusually high number of MA students graduate. Second, due to the budget crisis, it was agreed upon last year that we would skip a year in admitting graduate students. However, out of 34 applicants this year, we admitted 13. Of these 6 have formally accepted. The 7 students who did not accept each cited a lack of funding as the primary reason.

Despite the hiatus we have experienced in the MA program, it has been very strong in terms of placement in strong Ph.D. programs nationally. Its frequent and equal success at placing NELC MA students in UW's own Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program naturally raises the question of whether NELC should possess its own Ph.D. program or whether the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program should become part of NELC. As cited above, the external recommendation of the last ten-year review strongly advocated that NELC should possess its own Ph.D. program. It is important to recognize that some of NELC's faculty already put a great deal of their time and energy into advising Ph.D. students in the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program and to serving on its admission committees. Moreover, though the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program has been very successful in many ways, its interdisciplinarity does not necessarily serve the needs of NELC students. Many members of the NELC faculty perceive the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program as focusing primarily on the social sciences. The previous ten-year external review committee observed this and noted:

The disjuncture between NELC and the Ph.D. program is perhaps indicated in the attitude of its [previous] director who said of the Ph.D.s that the successful ones were in the social sciences (even though there have been eight NELC students getting a Ph.D. from the program, also getting faculty positions, etc.).

Indeed, one could argue that were it not for the involvement of NELC faculty, the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program would have severe difficulty maintaining itself. NELC faculty are responsible for all advanced language instruction and many cultural courses on which the Ph.D. students depend. As NELC continues to grow and the number of its internal responsibilities increases, and as NELC's commitments to the Title VI Centers continues to place additional burdens on NELC faculty, the attraction of working with graduate students in a unit outside the department will become increasingly unappealing. One might say that this prospect is already imminent. However, the current era of transition may well afford an opportunity for significant improvements. We imagine a constructive discussion that could result in much better integration of the UW's full array of proven resources for doctoral work in fields involving the Near and Middle East.

5. What are the most promising prospects for future development given the current budgetary realities?

Given the rather bleak economic forecast for the university and college, we believe the answer to this question to be the transformation of our curriculum.

6. What can be done to meet student demand in an era of diminished resources and growing student body?

As emphasized in the previous self-study and external report, the faculty of NELC already is being asked to teach too many courses, especially languages. The last external committee recommended in the strongest terms that a cadre of permanent lecturers be hired to teach the first and second year language

courses, thus enabling the tenure-line faculty to focus primarily on advanced content courses. If NELC has no support to hire lecturers its faculty will be forced to teach fewer courses. Not only will this weaken the department and its ability to provide the principal languages and cultures of the Near East and Central Asia, but it will jeopardize the next refunding cycle of the Title VI Center for Middle East studies. It is particularly imperative that lecturer positions be created and that the assistant professor position in Islamic literature and history, recently vacated, be replaced.

Part C: Appendices

Appendix A: Organizational structure of unit

The following list depicts the unit's organizational structure. It divides into two essential units both of which fall under the direct supervision of the department chair. The first is the unit's administrative unit and the second includes the unit's program areas. The department Administrator serves as the immediate supervisor of the other administrative staff members.

1. Department Chair: Prof. Scott Noegel

A. Administrative Unit

Adminstrator: Ourania Abell Program Assistant: Valerie Brunetto Undergraduate Advisor: Kattie Dang Work Study Students: as needed

B. Program Areas:

Arabic and Islamic Studies: Assoc. Prof. Hussein Elkafaifi Biblical Hebrew and Ancient Near Eastern Studies: Prof. Scott Noegel Turkic and Central Eurasian Studies Program: No director Modern Hebrew and Israeli Studies: Prof. Naomi Sokoloff Persian and Iranian Studies: Asst. Prof. Firoozeh Papan-Matin Turkish and Ottoman Studies: Assoc. Prof. Selim Kuru

Each of the program directors is responsible for general guidance of the area and curriculum. None of the program directorships are paid positions.

Appendix B: Budget Summary Charts documenting the unit's three more recent biennial budgets follows.

33	32		30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18		16	1.50	14	13	12	11	10	9 S	00	7	6	S	4	ы S	2	1 2	
		* As of July 2005														Gifts and Endowments*		Total State Allocation						State: Program Operations						State: Salaries	Budget Category	2005-2007 Biennium	
			Turkish Ottoman Fellow	Bateh Fellowship	Near Eastern Fellow	Roshan Institute Endow	Williams Endowment	Turkish Endowed Fund	Training Surplus Fund	Afrasiabi Endowed Fund	Naficy Family Endowment	Ziadeh Endow Fund	Ancient Egypt Studies Fund	Friends of Persian Fund	Hebrew Bib & NE Studies	Friends of Near East L & C			subtotal	Equipment	Supplies and Materials	Travel	Other Contractual Services		subtotal	Student Hourly	Grad Student Appts	Professional Staff	Classified Staff	Faculty	Details		
Gran		Tota																()	÷	÷	÷	÷	÷		ŝ	÷	÷	÷	÷	÷			
Grand Total		Total Gifts and Endowments																1,231,310.00	25,540.00		3,880.00	800.00	20,860.00		1,205,770.00	8,312.00	141,930.00	98,496.00	26,290.00	930,742.00	Permanent Allocation		
																		\$	69	69	\$	\$	\$		\$	69	S	S	69	S	Tempo		
																		205,958	45,801	4,259	23,988	4,123	13,431		160,157		60,960	16,110		83,087	Temporary Allocation		
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1,492,529.00		55,261	4,839	15,395	4,916	•	•	2,836		468	1,221	2,236	2,000	3,632	2,130	15,588		1,437,268.00	71,341.00	4,259.00	27,868.00	4,923.00	34,291.00	•	1,365,927.00	8,312.00	202,890.00	114,606.00	26,290.00	1,013,829.00	Total		

	Grand Total		
	Total Gifts and Endowments		* As of July 2007
		Turkish Ottoman Fellow	
		Bateh Fellowship	
		Near Eastern Fellow	
		Roshan Institute Endow	
		Williams Endowment	
		Turkish Endowed Fund	
		Training Surplus Fund	
		Afrasiabi Endowed Fund	
		Naficy Family Endowment	
		Ziadeh Endow Fund	
		Ancient Egypt Studies Fund	
		Friends of Persian Fund	
		Hebrew Bib & NE Studies	
		Friends of Near East L & C	Gifts and Endowments*
75.00	\$ 1,493,675.00		Total State Allocation
08.00	\$ 28,708.00	subtotal	
î.	\$	Grants and Subsidies	
0.00	\$ 3,880.00	Supplies and Materials	
800.00		Travel	
3.00	\$ 24,028.00	Other Contractual Services	
			State: Program Operations
.00	1,46	subtotal	
1.00	\$ 8,144.00	Student Hourly	
1.00		Grad Student Appts	
2.00		Professional Staff	
.00		Classified Staff	
.0	\$ 1,136,207.00	Faculty	State: Salaries
	Permanent Allocation	Details	Budget Category
			2007-2009 Biennium
	(A

5 1.721.352.00				
		Grand Total	G	
		Total Gifts and Endowments		* As of July 2009
			Turkish Ottoman Fellow	
\$ 1,195			Bateh Fellowship	
			Near Eastern Fellow	
\$ 38,358			Roshan Institute Endow	
			Williams Endowment	
\$ 19,253			Turkish Endowed Fund	
			Training Surplus Fund	
\$ 2,029			Afrasiabi Endowed Fund	
			Naficy Family Endowment	
\$ 6,279			Ziadeh Endow Fund	
			Ancient Egypt Studies Fund	
\$ 1,358			Friends of Persian Fund	
			Hebrew Bib & NE Studies	
\$ 3,676			Friends of Near East L & C	Gifts and Endowments *
\$ 1,640,428.00	\$ 91,772	1,548,656.00	\$	Total State Allocation
\$ 26,468.00	\$ 2,500	23,968.00		
\$ 3,880.00	ب	3	Supplies and Materials \$	
\$ 800.00	•		Travel \$	
\$ 21,788.00	\$ 2,500	19,288.00	Other Contractual Services \$	
				State: Program Operations
\$ 1,613,960.00	\$ 89,272	1,524,688.00	subtotal \$	
	\$ 3,636		Student Hourly \$	
\$ 182,260.00	\$ 66,094		Grad Student Appts \$	
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\$ 44,240.00	•	44,240.00	Classified Staff \$	
\$ 1,205,856.00		1,186,314.00	Faculty \$	State: Salaries
Total	Temporary Allocation	Permanent Allocation	Details	Budget Category
				2009-2011 Biennium
m	D	C		A