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October 17th, 2019

To: Robert Stacey, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Brian Reed, Divisional Dean, Humanities, College of Arts and Sciences

From: Joy Williamson-Lott, Dean of the Graduate School 

Kima Cargill, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Planning 

RE: Review of the Department of Classics (2018-2019)

This memorandum outlines the Graduate School's final recommendations from the Department of Classics academic program review. Detailed comments on the review can be found in the documents that were part of the following formal review proceedings:

- Charge meeting between review committee and administrators (May 31st, 2018)
- Self-Study (December 14th, 2018)
- Site visit (January 31st, 2019 – February 1st, 2019)
- Review committee report (March 11th, 2019)
- Department of Classics response to the report (April 19th, 2019)
- Graduate School Council consideration of review (October 17th, 2019)

The review committee consisted of:

Barbara Henry, Professor, Department of Slavic Languages and Literature, University of Washington
(Committee Chair)

Stuart Lingo, Professor and Chair, Division of Art History, University of Washington

John Marincola, Professor, Department of Classics, Florida State University

Kathryn Morgan, Professor, Department of Classics, University of California, Los Angeles

The Department of Classics offers the following: Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, Doctor of Philosophy.

Members of the Graduate School Council presented findings and recommendations to the full Council at its meeting on October 17th, 2019. A summary of this report, composed by Graduate School Council Members, is attached to this document.

Graduate School Council Recommendations

The Graduate School Council commends Department of Classics on the strength of its programs, faculty, and students. After discussion, the Council recommended the following:

- Full academic program review in 10 years (2028-2029)

We concur with the Council's recommendations.

cc: Mark Richards, Provost and Executive Vice President
Patricia Moy, Associate Vice Provost for Academic and Student Affairs, Office of the Provost
James J. Clauss, Acting Chair and Professor, Department of Classics
Becky Corriell, Director, Academic Affairs & Planning, the Graduate School
Jason Johnson, Senior Associate Dean, Undergraduate Academic Affairs
Academic Unit Review Committee Members
Members of the Graduate School Council
GPSS President

Attachment

University of Washington | Graduate Council

Summary of the review of Department of Classics

Academic Unit Name: Department of Classics

Degrees/Certificates Included in the Review:

Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, Doctor of Philosophy

Program Strengths:

The review committee was laudatory of the Department and noted its many strengths. Among these are its reputation nationally and internationally, based in large part on its faculty and graduate program. Their research strengths are in the areas of poetics, contemporary influences of the ancient world, and gender, sexuality, and class in the GrecoRoman Mediterranean. This latter scholarly focus on diversity is paralleled in the diversity of its majors and graduate students, with 33% of Classics majors and 19% of graduate students being underrepresented minorities, well above the national average. Additionally more than 25% of the graduate students and faculty identify as LGBTQ. To mark all of this, the department was the recipient in 2014 of the Award in Professional Equity from the Women's Classical Caucus.

Moreover, the Department has been a national leader in the expansion and transformation of the Classics field to make it relevant and central to current and future scholarship and practice. Their graduate students have a strong affection and connection to the department, for its intellectual, emotional, and financial support for their work and cite "a rich culture of respect, inclusiveness, and enthusiasm" with a highly innovative approach to pedagogy, resulting in undergraduate classes that students across the university seek out.

Challenges and Risks:

The few challenges for this productive and innovative unit appear to be based in limits to funding for both graduate students and adequate number of faculty to carry the large teaching demand while also grant-seeking and engaged in important scholarship. The Department offers 5 years of funding for its graduate students, but the support from UW to pay for graduate students has declined significantly. The Department has worked to streamline students to degree, although traditionally graduate students in Classics take more than 6 years, and longer-term funding could help in their success.

The size of the faculty is small, and the review committee notes with awe that the Department has built its esteemed reputation despite its small size. They note, however, that the demands of such a highly ranked and sought after program, and the faculty's commitment to scholarship of significance, puts a heavy strain on the faculty. This has led to some internal communication challenges that before now have been rare (and still remain rare but can be traced back to the pressures of their workloads).

Areas of concurrence:

In its self-study, the Department made a strong case for its need for more graduate student (ASE) funding. The Review committee is in complete concurrence with this assessment (and its "crisis" level). If things stay as they are, despite their attempts at flexibility, the department will only be able to fund 1-2 new students per year, which is

clearly “unsustainable.” The committee offered some course-specific recommendations, many of which the Department is already working to implement, and they concur with the committee’s idea about development of/support for junior faculty.

Graduate School Council Recommendations

We believe that the Department of Classics has been innovative and responsive to contemporary demands and remains one the jewels in the crown of UW. As such, we recommend that it be reviewed again in 10 years.