

Approved by Senate on May 11, 2011

Final Assessment Report Academic Review

Classics

A. Introduction

The undergraduate review of the Department of Classics was conducted primarily during the 2009-2010 academic year. The Department's Self Study was considered and approved by the Governance Committee of Senate on January 27, 2010. The Review Committee consisted of two external reviewers: Alison Keith (University of Toronto) and Joann Freed (Wilfrid Laurier University) and an internal reviewer, Adonis Skandalis (Biological Sciences). The site visit occurred on March 18 and 19 and the Reviewers' Report was received on April 23, 2010. An initial Departmental response was provided on June 16 and an "Action Plan on August 31st". A decanal response, from Dean Douglas Kneale, was submitted on October 6, 2010.

The academic programs offered by the Department, which were examined as part of the review included a single or combined major program in Classics, with three streams (Classical Languages, Ancient Art and Archaeology, and Classical Studies), leading to a pass or honours degree.

It should be noted that the review commenced under the terms and conditions of Section III: 20 of the Faculty Handbook which pertained in 2009-10 and concluded under the revised terms, which were approved by Senate on May 16th.

B. Strengths of the Program

In the Department's response, the following is noted:

We are pleased and proud that the reviewers see the department as “poised to become a national force” (p.1) and that it is set “to gain national prominence” (p.5). The reviewers highlight a number of the strengths that make the Department of Classics at Brock unique. These include:

- the young, dynamic and engaged faculty;
- a demanding and vigorous academic program that shows continuing student demand;
- emphasis on material culture of the ancient world;
- interdisciplinarity both within the program and with the Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences (Classics is the home for cross-listed courses in HIST, WISE, VISA, LART, DRAM) with further expansion planned (with MARS and ENGL);
- student camaraderie, incubated in the dedicated Undergraduate Workroom;
- the collection of Cypriot antiquities, soon to have a proper home in the Classics Archaeological Museum;
- the annual student-run *Scholarly Symposium*;
- the yearly overseas opportunities for students (study-tours and archaeological practica);
- the departmental efforts to engage the community (especially through the local chapter of *Archaeological Institute of America*, and the *Ontario Student Classics Conference*).

As the reviewers note (p.1), the department has virtually rebuilt itself in the last several years, making outstanding hires. Moreover, the department is quickly developing a solid research profile: at the time of writing fully 50% of the faculty (5 of 10) hold SSHRC Standard Research Grants while all show a commitment to ongoing research and publication programs. We are at a pivotal moment in the department's development, with the opportunity to build on these proven strengths. The reviewers see Classics at Brock becoming one of the leading programs in the country “on a clear upward trajectory towards national recognition” (p.10).

C. Opportunities for Improvement and Enhancement

1. Curriculum Revision: Review of the Curriculum

Course offerings and curriculum requirements in the Department imply that a much older curriculum has been slowly adapted without a systematic rethinking of the whole slate of offerings. The rebuilding of the faculty complement offers the Department the opportunity to rationalize the courses offered, renew and rebalance.

In its response, the Department noted that: “We have formed three working groups to consider the different areas (literature, ancient history, art and archaeology) and will

prepare adjustments for UPC next fall.” The Dean’s response noted the addition of a fourth group and called the Department’s response a “reasonable step”.

ARC is satisfied that this recommendation has been accepted and implemented.

2. Curriculum Revision: Concerning a proposed new stream in Classical Studies without language requirements.

In its self-study the Department had suggested, in view particularly of the repeal of the Humanities Language Requirement, a degree in Classical Studies with no classical language credit. The Reviewers recommend the current Classical Studies Stream with a reduction in, but not the elimination of, language requirements down to one full credit.

In his response, Dean Kneale states: “This is a judgment call which one must respect. A Classical Studies degree with no classical language is perhaps a perfectly respectable and tenable undergraduate degree in Humanities, but the Dean understands the sense the reviewers had that this is not a preferred option from a disciplinary perspective.” He goes on: “the question remains, however, whether a three-year Classical Studies degree without a language is tenable academically. It is the view of the Dean that it is, as long as students who may wish to proceed to an Honours year are adequately informed and accommodated. “

ARC accepts that the reviewers’ recommendation has not been accepted.

3. Curriculum Revision: Concerning an increased presence of literature courses in the curriculum.

- i) Paucity of Literature Courses “The review team identified the paucity of literature in translation courses as a particular problem for the department in the light of the abolition of the language requirement.”
- ii) Related – LOPs “We believe there should be a place for letters of permission to take a [face to face, not on-line] course in this area from a neighbouring university to deal with demand for courses to graduate, especially from students entering the major late.”

On the matter of literature courses, the Dean “accepts the reviewers’ judgment about this aspect of the program” and reports that the Department “instituted a curriculum review on this matter, has subsequently revised and modestly expanded its literature in

translation offerings in this year’s UPC submission, and has changed the full-credit to half-credit courses.” Concerning LOPs, the Department notes that it “continue to allow LOPs for classroom taught courses at nearby universities that meet departmental standards.”

Thus, ARC considers that this recommendation has been implemented.

- 4. Curriculum Revision: Further augmentations of the curriculum**
- i) “The reviewers noticed that there was also the potential for development of CLAS courses in the areas of: etymology, classical philosophy, classics and film, classics and popular culture, ancient science and technology.”
 - ii) “In looking for collaborations with other departments, these are some of the gaps that could be filled. For example, could a first-year etymology course help to build bridges with English, or even be structured in such a way as to fill the language requirement gap, as an option to attract students who won’t take Greek and Latin or will not take as much. The fact that the Department has many reasons to rethink their courses at a major level is an opportunity to consider new courses and creative course content.”

The Dean notes that “The Department in its response reports it is intrigued by the suggestions but records no plan for accommodating or addressing its intrigued state...” However, there does not seem to be any concrete plan to address this particular recommendation.

ARC would suggest that this be part of the review noted in regard to Recommendation 1 above.

5. Curriculum Revision: A reduction of the number of ancient history credits required from two to one

[given small number of courses the Department can offer,] “we see the requirement of two full credits in ancient history as too inflexible given faculty resources and students’ academic needs. One full credit in ancient history (perhaps chosen from a slate of four that could be offered on a regular cycle) would satisfy the department’s pedagogical goals while also offering more flexibility in program delivery.”

In its response, the Department rejects this recommendation indicating that:

Though requiring only one credit of ancient history would free some room in the requirements of our majors, the requirement of a full year of Greek history and a full year of Roman history does serve as a broad foundation for understanding the context for all of classical antiquity.”

Both the Dean and ARC accept the Department’s position.

6. Curriculum Revision: A reduction in the number of courses required in the Art/Archaeology Program

- i. “The Art/Archaeology Program requires 14 full courses, and it is difficult for students to complete the program in four years.”
- ii. “The program progression should also be clarified in the Calendar to aid students in planning their studies year-by-year. A note should be included in the calendar about visits to the Academic Advisor: e.g., ‘Classics students are strongly advised to consult the Academic Advisor in their second year.’”

The Dean indicates support for these proposals and reports that the Department has also indicated acceptance. In its response, the Department reports that it “has already clarified the requirements for the Art and Archaeology stream and reduced the required credits from 14 to 13. We are planning to bring this in line with the 12 credits required for the other streams.”

ARC considers that this recommendation has been accepted and will be fully implemented.

7. Curriculum Revision: A consideration of upper-year course renumbering

- i) Upper-level language courses could be renumbered to the 400-level to reflect the difficulty of the classes and to speed up time to completion of the degree.
- ii) “The recent renumbering of the archaeological practicum to a 300-level has also generated concern among students, who need more fourth-year courses, and the Department should consider whether the renumbering has met their pedagogical goals.”

In its response, the Department reports that it “will ...elevate GREE/LATI 3P01, 3P02, 3P11 and 3P12 to the 400 level, recognizing the level of work in all courses above the 200 level and thereby increasing the number of 400 level courses available.” It will not,

however, renumber the archaeological practicum to the 400 level since it was only recently reduced to the 300 level.”

Both the Dean and ARC accept the Department’s position.

8. Addition of a Concurrent BA/BEEd Program

“We recommend the development of a concurrent Education program with the Faculty of Education for a concurrent BA/BEEd in Latin. In conjunction with such an initiative, we would recommend that the department explore the current availability of courses that could be counted towards Teachable Subjects such as History, Art, and Drama in Performing Arts.”

The Department responds:

[It] is in contact with Margaret-Anne Gillis of Barrie Central Collegiate, who is working with the Ontario Ministry of Education to rethink the training of Latin teachers in Ontario. The Department also would like to see CLAS 3P03/4/5/6 count towards a teachable in History and CLAS 3P22/23/24/25 count towards a teachable in Visual Arts. These courses introduce students to historical method and questioning, to object analysis and classification, and provide important background and context to studies in western culture and art.

Dean Kneale comments: “The Dean is pleased that the Department is actively pursuing this, but recognizes that there would be some demands on the Faculty of Education were this to proceed.”

ARC considers that this recommendation is being investigated in conjunction with the Faculty of Education.

- 9. Assure Adequate Provision for Student Work in the New Building**
- i) “The new space in the International Building is both a challenge and an opportunity. We are concerned that student life in the department will be adversely affected if the new space does not provide access to computers, and particularly to printing and photocopying facilities for students. Since students are very dependent on internet access and use e-books and databases for their assignments, they need access to these materials in the department. Of particular concern is the planning for the annual symposium (BUAS) in this context.”
 - ii) “Students meet and plan in the undergraduate workroom where they enjoy access to faculty mentoring.”
 - iii) “Enhancing the library holdings in the department to provide students with an upgraded study facility on site would ensure student presence in the new space.”

Dean Kneale comments that “These are ideals which we would realize for every department and which are more fully realized for Classics than for many.” The Department responds “ The Department now has ample space for students in its new location and so no action is needed with regard to space. The Department will a) post posters informing students of photocopy facilities at *Footnotes* and b) organize an orientation and welcome event for incoming majors for September 10, 2010 that will include a tour of the Department, an introduction to the members of BUAS, and informal interaction with faculty to help foster a student community in the new space.”

ARC supports Dean Kneale’s position that “The Department as usual is acting in a constructive way and supports its students well.”

- 10. Leverage The Cypriote Collection: A Virtual Museum**
- “The Cypriote collection is effectively lost at the moment because of the difficulty of accessing it, but it will be adequately housed in the new space; the construction of a virtual museum of the Cypriote artifacts would be a resource for undergraduate students interested in pursuing Museum Studies. Perhaps a course could be designed around the collection and its conservation. Collaboration with the department of Computing might allow the department to mount a course in which students get credit for Digitizing images and mounting them on a website.”

The Department reports:

The curators of the collection, Professors Burrell, Greene and Smith, will consider safe uses of the collection now that it is housed in a more usable space.

- a) Professors Burrell and Greene have applied for and won an *Experience Works* position for an undergraduate student to work with the museum collection under their supervision for 2010/11. The successful applicant will assist in creating a

digital archive and updated database of the collection and, in consultation with the curators and the *Center for Digital Humanities*, consider how best to exploit this collection in a virtual museum and for teaching; b) a current MA student, Lana Radloff, is writing a MRP on the use and utility of such collections that includes suggestions for pedagogical uses of the collection. Her project will provide the Department with suggestions on how best to exploit the collection as a teaching tool; c) the Department will also explore the possibility of hiring a visiting scholar using the VIP programme and consider fund raising for an endowment to support such a position.

Dean Kneale notes that “This is a valuable resource which the Department should be encouraged to continue developing and leveraging.”

ARC considers that this recommendation has been accepted and will be fully implemented.

11. Addressing Scheduling Concern

- i) The scheduling of language classes: “Scheduling of language classes seems to be a problem. It is pedagogically counterproductive to schedule language classes at 8 am because students need to be alert to succeed in a foreign language.”
- ii) Avoiding conflicts: “Other scheduling conflicts were mentioned frequently by students, often serious enough to prevent them from graduating within the four-year time-frame. A very high 17% of students surveyed said that courses they wanted to take conflicted with required courses in their program.”

Dean Kneale comments that The problems identified here are likely not different from those encountered by any student. Some scheduling problems are addressed in the review of the Brock scheduling system. It is not clear that 8 am classes are worse for language learners than for students in other disciplines” and that “The Department is correct in noting that it cannot do much about this, and has done what it can do.”

ARC accepts that the reviewers’ recommendation has not been accepted.

12. Improve The Library Resources

“The need for expanded provision of monographs, archaeological reports and a range of journals that reflect the range of research specialties in the Department has been discussed above.”

The Department seems to feel disadvantaged in this area. It states:

The Department has had much growth since the last review, including new faculty hires and the implementation of an MA programme. The departmental library budget, however, has had only a small increase. We have had graduate students reject our offers based on gaps in our collection. This gap is particularly acute for Classics. Unlike other disciplines, especially the sciences and social sciences, Classics is still very much dependent on print material for research. Student assignments also rely heavily on book research. Every year, the Department spends its full library budget, but still has more requests. The library is particularly weak in archaeological site reports – typically more expensive than other types of monographs – but important for faculty and all levels of student research.

However, neither ARC nor the Dean are convinced that Classics is in a very different position from other departments and centres. Special support for the Department does not seem warranted.

13. Future Expansion of the Department

“While the Department has a full complement of faculty members at the moment . . . it is always valuable to have a clear idea of where a new appointment would be most valuable.”

“Many faculty and students identified Late Antiquity as a period in which the department should expand, although the area of teaching need is literary. . . . the department should also consider a literature appointment in this period. Such a faculty position would consolidate the department’s relations with MARS and could also facilitate increased collaboration with English and Modern Languages and Literatures, and an undergraduate Comparative Literature program.”

The Dean notes that he “agrees that the Department could well do with an additional faculty member, but cannot commit to providing one in the current deficit situation.”

ARC, regretfully, agrees that the recommendation cannot be implemented at this time.

14. Appointment of a Visiting Scholar

“Another suggestion was for a short-term visiting scholar series, especially for someone with Cypriote expertise to work with the artifacts owned by the department in the undergraduate curriculum. The presence of such a visiting scholar could be tied to a course or to a museum studies practicum on site.”

Dean Kneale notes that “Visiting scholars, particularly associated with specific undertakings or resources, is almost always a good idea” and that “The Department will explore the possibility of hiring a visiting scholar using the VIP program and consider fundraising for an endowment to support such a position.”

ARC supports a positive response to this recommendation.

15. Establish a BSc in Archeology

“The renewed strength in archaeology has prompted new faculty to explore the development of links with Earth Sciences, Geography and GIS, and Geology. There is expertise at Brock in carbon-dating, paleontology, and dendrochronology that would complement archaeological training in Classics and would offer new opportunities for undergraduate training in technical archaeological skills. We recommend that the Department consider offering a BSc in Archaeology. With some additional training in scientific techniques, students could earn a BSc in Archaeology with a reduced requirement for languages, replaced by courses in scientific disciplines.”

In its response, the Department notes:

The Department is keen to develop links with Earth Sciences, Biology, Geography and Geology as well as anthropologists at Brock University. Professor Angus Smith already has contact with technical specialists in these areas at Brock. We are keen to explore how best to develop these connections further, either through a new degree programme or the establishment of a Research Group or Institute. ...[but no] action will be taken at this time as two of our three archaeologists are on sabbatical over 2010/11.

Dean Kneale indicates that a “serious investigation of the possibility has the Dean’s full support.”

ARC would suggest that this proposal be part of the curriculum review noted in connection with Recommendation 1 above,

D. Recommendations to be Implemented

The IQAP requires that ARC “set out and prioritize the recommendations that are selected for implementation.” Using the specific ARC proposals enunciated above, the following priorities are proposed:

First Priority:

1. Curriculum Revision: Review of the Curriculum
3. Curriculum Revision: Concerning an increased presence of literature courses in the curriculum.
4. Curriculum Revision: Further augmentations of the curriculum
10. Leverage The Cypriote Collection: A Virtual Museum
14. Appointment of a Visiting Scholar
15. Establish a BSc in Archeology

Second Priority

6. Curriculum Revision: A reduction in the number of courses required in the Art/Archaeology Program
7. Curriculum Revision: A consideration of upper-year course renumbering
8. Addition of a Concurrent BA/BEEd Program
9. Assure Adequate Provision for Student Work in the New Building

E. Recommendations that Will Not be Implemented

2. Curriculum Revision: Concerning a proposed new stream in Classical Studies without language requirements.
5. Curriculum Revision: A reduction of the number of ancient history credits required from two to one
11. Addressing Scheduling Concern
12. Improve The Library Resources
13. Future Expansion of the Department

F. Implementation Plan

The IQAP requires that this report include an implementation plan which will identify:

- a) who is responsible for approving the recommendations set out above;
- b) who will be responsible for providing any needed resources;
- c) who will be responsible for acting on the recommendations; and
- d) the timeline for all of the above.

These are set out as follows:

1. Curriculum Revision: Review of the Curriculum
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Responsibility for approving this recommendation lies with Senate. The Department Chair (Professor Alison Glazebrook) and Dean Kneale are jointly responsible for providing any needed resources and implementing the recommendation. It is expected that the review will be completed, and report submitted to ARC, by the end of the 2011-12 academic year.

3. Curriculum Revision: Concerning an increased presence of literature courses in the curriculum.

ARC considers that this recommendation has been implemented.

4. Curriculum Revision: Further augmentations of the curriculum

ARC would suggest that this be part of the review noted in regard to Recommendation 1 above.

6. Curriculum Revision: A reduction in the number of courses required in the Art/Archaeology Program
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Responsibility for approving this recommendation lies with Senate. The Department Chair (Professor Alison Glazebrook) and Dean Kneale are jointly responsible for providing any needed resources and implementing the recommendation. It is expected that the changes will be completed, and report submitted to ARC, by the end of the 2011-12 academic year.

7. Curriculum Revision: A consideration of upper-year course renumbering
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Responsibility for approving this recommendation lies with Senate. The Department Chair (Professor Alison Glazebrook) and Dean Kneale are jointly responsible for providing any needed resources and implementing the recommendation. It is expected that the changes will be completed, and report submitted to ARC, by the end of the 2011-12 academic year.

8. Addition of a Concurrent BA/BEEd Program

Responsibility for approving this recommendation lies with Senate. The Department Chair (Professor Alison Glazebrook), Dean Kneale, and the Dean Blaikie of the Faculty of Education are jointly responsible for providing any needed resources and implementing the recommendation. It is expected that the program will be developed, and report submitted to ARC, by the end of the 2011-12 academic year.

9. Assure Adequate Provision for Student Work in the New Building

Responsibility for approving this recommendation lies with Senate. The Department Chair (Professor Alison Glazebrook) and Dean Kneale are jointly responsible for providing any needed resources and implementing the recommendation. It is expected that the changes will be completed, and report submitted to ARC, by the end of the 2011-12 academic year.

10. Leverage The Cypriote Collection: A Virtual Museum
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14. Appointment of a Visiting Scholar

Responsibility for approving this recommendation lies with Senate. The Department Chair (Professor Alison Glazebrook) and Dean Kneale are jointly responsible for providing any needed resources and implementing the recommendation. It is expected that a report will be submitted to ARC, by the end of the 2011-12 academic year on the outcome of this recommendation.

15. Establish a BSc in Archeology

ARC would suggest that this be part of the review noted in regard to Recommendation 1 above.

May 4, 2011
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