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## **IV-A. Eight-Year Review Report of the UCLA Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures; Michael Heim's Email to Students; Revisionist Letter by Bethea/Timberlake**

1999-2000 ACADEMIC SENATE REVIEW OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF SLAVIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

Internal Reviewers:

Harold Martinson, Chemistry & Biochemistry, Graduate Council, Chair of Team  
Elinor Ochs, Anthropology, Graduate Council  
Fred Burwick, English, Undergraduate Council  
Chris Stevens, Germanic Languages, Undergraduate Council

External Reviewers:

Alan Timberlake, Slavic Languages & Literatures, UC Berkeley  
David Bethea, Slavic Languages & Literatures, U. of Wisconsin

Date of Site Visit: February 24-25, 2000

Date of Report: June 6, 2000

Approved by the Graduate Council: Approved by the Undergraduate Council:

Draft Report of Internal Review Team

Appendix I: External Reviewer Reports

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Response to Statement from H. Martinson

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Internal Report on the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures

Preface

The following Academic Senate review of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures was conducted during AY1999-2000 on the normal 8-yr cycle. The core of the review was the site visit on February 24 & 25, 2000 during which the four internal reviewers (Fred Burwick, UGC, Chris Stevens UGC, Elinor Ochs, GC, Harold Martinson, GC, Chair of Team) and the graduate student representative (Mark Quigley) were joined by the two external reviewers (David Bethea, Wisconsin, and Alan Timberlake, Berkeley). The site visit consisted of two full days of interviews with faculty, staff, students and administration. After the site visit, the external reviewers prepared and submitted a joint report (attached), based on the site visit plus additional data and information supplied by the Graduate Division and the Department. Meanwhile, the internal review team conducted additional interviews, as necessary, to clarify issues raised during the site visit. The following account is based on all of the above sources of information, and relies heavily on the report of the external reviewers (henceforth, ER).

### Introduction

The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at UCLA has, for decades, been recognized as one of the finest and most distinguished in the country. Not only are all the faculty individually of national or international stature, but also the department as a whole is unique in the breadth of its scholarship. This breadth is two-fold. First, while departments elsewhere tend to be strong in literature at the expense of linguistics, UCLA's strong literature component is paired with a linguistic component that is unmatched in the country. Second, following a period during which good departments nationwide have trimmed non-Russian components from their programs, the department at UCLA has remained dedicated to maintaining its comprehensive Slavic character. In the future, UCLA's continued pre-eminence in Slavic Languages and Literatures will depend both on maintaining the quality of this faculty and on ensuring that adequate FTE are available to sustain its breadth.

Slavic studies, at UCLA as elsewhere, has been uniquely buffeted by international events in recent decades. Shortly after the last review, the initial euphoria following the collapse of the Soviet Union gave way to apathy-and a nationwide decline in Slavic studies enrollments. Now interest is picking up again and Slavic studies at UCLA has emerged from this dark period stronger in comparison to departments elsewhere and is in a privileged position to capitalize on the trend. Indeed, the department worked tirelessly during the dark period to expand and advertise its undergraduate offerings and its undergraduate program is now probably among the best in the country. Undergraduates interviewed during the site visit were effusive in their praise of the program. In the future, to maintain its stature in the field, the department must turn its attention single-mindedly to the graduate program, which is in a state of complete disrepair and endures only because of the resilience and quality of its surviving graduate students.

### Faculty

The uniformly high quality of the faculty has been noted above, as has the remarkable breadth of scholarship in the department. However, recent departures have left gaps in current coverage of the literature component that must be filled before the department will be recognized as truly balanced, having equally prestigious linguistic and literature components (ER, pp. 4-5). Both external reviewers considered replacement of the 19th century specialist to be "absolutely crucial to the long-term health and viability of the department" (ER, p.4). This opinion was expressed repeatedly during the course of the site visit. Moreover, to raise the department to a position of unchallenged preeminence both reviewers argued that the appointment must be made at the tenured level (ER, p. 5, and repeated assertions during the site visit). The Dean has authorized a search at the assistant professor level. This search should continue, but it would be wise for the department simultaneously to try to identify a specific mid-career individual, highly respected in the field-and also here, who would be willing to move. The Dean may reconsider the rank if presented with a specific and compelling alternative.

The dilemma in this is that the ladder faculty are already 100% tenured, and only one of these is at the associate professor level. However, there were two faculty losses last year and the above appointment would replace only one of them. The external reviewers urge that the second FTE also be replaced, this time at the junior level (ER, p. 5) and with a twentieth century specialist which the department sorely needs ER, pp. 4 & 5). While the 19th century appointment is critical to the stature of the department, the 20th century appointment also is very important programmatically and (given a senior 19th century appointment) is essential as an opportunity to bring in young blood.

As mentioned earlier, a hallmark of the Slavic Department at UCLA has been the breadth of its scholarship. Essential to maintaining this breadth is representation on the faculty of a permanent South Slavist, an area of expertise represented in most major programs in the country (ER, p.5). Currently this position is filled by an Adjunct appointment which has been satisfactory as a stop-gap measure but which does not give the position permanence. Moreover, it makes it difficult for students because Adjuncts do not "count" on examination committees, and students hesitate to choose this area for their dissertations because they cannot be sure that the expertise will still be there when it comes time to read their theses.

The Slavic Department lost three FTE during the period under review. Ideally they should be replaced as outlined above, including a permanent South Slavist. However, recognizing that this may not be possible at the present time, but in view of the importance of making these appointments, we urge the department and the administration to explore aggressively the possibility of filling the 20th century and the South Slavist positions with joint appointments. This solution is being pursued increasingly across campus, and for a small department like Slavic would be adequate to maintain the breadth that has been a pillar of its reputation.

#### Undergraduate program (including language instruction)

The reader is referred to the department's excellent self-review (pp. 4-6) for a complete account of the department's many accomplishments in this area. The external reviewers, like the undergraduates mentioned earlier, were effusive in their praise of the Slavic undergraduate program (ER, pp. 1-2). Note that the 19th and 20th century literature appointments will be very important for the undergraduate program as well as for the reasons discussed above, as these areas (particularly 19th century) attract substantial enrollment.

However, while it is usual for literature to attract more students than linguistics, we wish to emphasize, along with the external reviewers (p. 2), that this should not be used as an excuse for the linguists not to participate in the undergraduate program. As the externals point out, "the linguists need not teach only highly specialized courses in linguistics per se." They, like the literature faculty can extend themselves to develop courses of more general interest, and thereby better serve their department and the university community at large. "The asymmetry in the utilization of faculty energy needs to be addressed" (ER p. 2).

#### Graduate Program

Student welfare. During the site visit the review team heard several amazing accounts of emotional abuse perpetrated on students by certain members of the faculty. So fearful were the students that several asked to meet in private "somewhere far from our dept" after the site visit was finished. These students told of still others who were too fearful to meet with us at all. These meetings led to additional interviews designed to assess the credibility of what was heard. In all, dozens of interviews were conducted with current students, former students, faculty and staff. The picture that emerged was one in which many students live in personal fear of specific faculty members, and in anxiety about their futures within a program perceived as capricious and self-serving. We note that the external

reviewers devoted more space to this issue than to any other single aspect of the Slavic program despite the fact that they heard but a fraction of all the complaints.

It is important to maintain the proper focus on what follows. The mandate to the review team was not to conduct a fact-finding mission or to determine the guilt or innocence of particular individuals, but rather to assess the welfare of the graduate students and to recommend corrective action, if necessary, to assure their well-being. Thus, the issue is not whether any or all of what we heard is correct in its detail or interpretation. The issue is the emotional trauma perceived by the review team in the students entrusted to the care of this department. This is not to cast doubt on any part of what we were told. Great care was taken to ensure the legitimacy of the information upon which we have based the conclusions at the end of this report. Several case histories from different sources were compared and no example of any significant discrepancy was found. In other instances different case histories involving similar situations were compared across time. The consistency was remarkable, even between former students who had never met. But to emphasize again: regardless of the details, the fear and the anxiety among the affected students is real, it is deep, it has interfered with the education of many, and it has crushed the careers of some. This level of graduate program dysfunction is unprecedented in the collective experience of this review team.

Without exception all who spoke with us feared retribution if they were planning to make their career in Slavic studies, and we heard reports of both threatened and perceived retaliation. Some students, initially willing to tell their stories, later requested (even in tears) that we not use any details. Therefore, to preserve anonymity, we will present most information only in general terms, and the students, about half of whom were directly affected, will be referred to collectively. However, we begin our account below with one specific case history whose several facets reflect themes we were to hear repeated over and over. This student, whom we will call simply XX, did not fear recognition because she has left the field. The following is her story.

XX entered the program with excellent credentials. For various reasons-and on the advice of another faculty member-XX decided it was best to drop a particular graduate course during her second quarter. When XX spoke to the professor involved, the professor reportedly went on the offensive, not only insulting XX repeatedly, but also disparaging, with gestures and sarcasm, the other members of the faculty from whom XX had obtained advice. When exchanges like this continued unabated-and after being reduced to tears, XX concluded that she was merely a pawn in a jealous rivalry between this professor and other members of the faculty. Therefore, XX resolved to go to the Chair. According to XX the Chair responded with soothing words, and a statement to the effect that "there are problems among some of the faculty in this department. It is too bad that you have been caught in the middle of it. You just have to work around them." Accordingly, rather than addressing the problem, and with a comment to the effect that enrollment was low, the chair suggested that she re-enroll. Having heard numerous stories about the professor in question, and concluding that the Chair was merely circling the wagons, XX, in "the saddest decision I've ever made", left the program and the field. The "sad decision" quote above was not provided to us by XX simply for effect. Others have quoted her as saying at the time, "I have a broken heart .... This was the love of my life."

If the above case history were an isolated report it could justifiably be overlooked. However, every detail in this account has counterparts in the accounts of others dealing with this professor. We were told of other highly qualified students who were driven away, of another chair who sat idly by (indeed, reportedly suggesting that a student apologize to the professor for requesting to drop the class!). Thus, the perception of students that this professor takes even the most routine matters personally led XX to leave rather than spend "5 years worrying that the most innocent move or comment can turn into a major battle." And so a highly qualified student with a passion for the field, was lost.

The above is the only case history we have been given permission to present explicitly. However, during the course

of our interviews we were told of

- physical displays of faculty anger including frequent yelling and even slamming a chair on the floor
- students being intimidated into taking particular classes because of enrollment concerns
  - students who fear writing anything but laudatory comments in the "anonymous" course evaluation forms
- a fractious faculty so immobilized by disagreement that no common reading list can be agreed upon (at least for linguistics) to assist the students in preparation for their exams
- students who feel compelled to tailor their intellectual approach in exams to the committee membership, and who are advised to "get one on your side" before going into exams
- students who don't dare complain for fear of retaliation in the MA or PhD exams, or in obtaining a dissertation signature
- students who feel that the only value of their comments is for use as ammunition in the internal squabbles of the faculty
- repeated episodes of students being ridiculed for having various deficiencies in their background; e.g. "What the hell are you doing here?" or "Well, you might as well just be an undergraduate!"
- students feeling abandoned and with no place to turn
  - faculty who appear to change their minds about the quality of work in response to unrelated circumstances
- ladder faculty conspiring against non-ladder faculty in the presence of students
- faculty playing out their rivalries by deprecating students' choices of dissertation advisor
  - students being threatened with loss of funding in arguments with faculty, e.g. " ... and don't think you are going to get funding next year..."
- students being threatened with disciplinary action for voicing disagreement with faculty

Funding. A persistent complaint among students for years has been the chronic shortage of funding and the apparently capricious manner in which it is distributed. Students complain about lack of transparency in the criteria and processes governing the awarding of graduate student support. Certain jealousies and rivalries among the faculty are said to be so conspicuously displayed as to be common knowledge among the students. So vengeful are the faculty, we were told, that many students sincerely believe they are merely pawns among these colliding ambitions and that the awarding of support often is little more than manipulation resulting from jealousy or retribution.

The issue is not the nature of the details giving rise to this perception, but rather the perception itself of a systemic disrespect of graduate students, and their apparent treatment as chattel in the department. The chronic shortage of funds, almost universally identified by the faculty as the principal source of student dissatisfaction, is secondary to the spiritual blight in the department in the eyes of the students. Nevertheless, the inability to find adequate student support is also unacceptable and must be remedied (at least in the short term) by reducing the

number of acceptances into the program.

Attrition. Based on the above one would expect the level of attrition in the Slavic department to be quite high. While attrition cannot reliably be determined from statistics alone, a rough estimate based on the total number of degrees awarded (MA+PhD) compared to the number of admittances between Fall of '88 and Spring of '98 suggests that Slavic has the highest record of attrition of any comparable department in the Humanities (comparison among 10 departments). But the reported mistreatment of students appears not to be the only reason for attrition in the Slavic department. A cursory survey of case histories for students who have left the program in recent years suggests that several were underqualified from the start. In addition, many of the others have had backgrounds considered grossly inadequate by some of the faculty ("What the hell are you doing here?"). In particular, students frequently reported being castigated for insufficiency in Russian. The impression is that the department over-admits and then relies on attrition to select for the students that will eventually get their degrees. Under normal circumstances this would be a healthy selection-capable, well prepared students would be admitted and the motivated ones would persevere and succeed. However, in this department the reports we heard paint a picture of a process that results not in cultivation of the best and the brightest, but in the survival of the toughest and the most resilient-with the rest simply being discarded as damaged goods.

Attrition is a terrible waste. Resources, desperately needed by other students, are squandered on students who do not return. Precious time in the young lives of these students is needlessly lost; they either should not be admitted or, once admitted, they should not be driven away. Talent, important to the field and to UCLA, is shunted aside or destroyed. It is imperative that the department reform its attitude towards graduate students. These are young human beings entrusting themselves to the department for intellectual nurture and professional training. The department should consider more carefully exactly what background and capabilities it expects its students to bring to the program and then should screen the applicants rigorously. But once the students are admitted to the program the department is obligated to work as conscientiously as possible to mentor *each* student to success.

Apparently some faculty have very strong opinions about the level of preparation required of students who enter the program. The admissions committee should enlist these faculty in the screening of the applicants. Where possible, interviews in person should be conducted. When this is impractical, telephone interviews should be substituted. But some kind of direct interaction appears to be necessary to avoid admitting students who are considered inadequate. However, once the students are admitted, no faculty member has the right to ridicule their level of preparation-the faculty are responsible for whom they admit.

Graduate requirements. A number of specific issues were discussed with the review team, leading to the following recommendations by the external reviewers (ER, p. 6). "Reasonable and coherent reading lists [must] be established". The "exam format [must] be regularized ... and the expectations for student performance be made explicit". "The graduate program [must] be simplified and the time to-PhD be reduced". The internal reviewers strongly support these recommendations and refer the reader to the report of the external reviewers for a complete discussion of the issues. However, because none of these issues-nor others the internal reviewers would ordinarily have raised-can be meaningfully addressed unless the problems above are resolved, we forgo further elaboration here.

Moreover, there is an additional problem that must be solved before these graduate program issues can be dealt with. The faculty must find some way to make collective decisions. Repeatedly we were told that particular issues had not been resolved because no consensus could be reached. In some cases this involved dissertation committees whose members, we were told, changed their minds or could not agree-leaving the student stranded! In other cases departmental issues were involved, such as the infamous (and functionally non-existent) reading lists. When we asked the chair what the vote of the department had been, we were told that there had been no vote! Further questioning left the review team, with the impression that the faculty avoids voting on issues that might go against

the strongest personalities in the department. This tendency would be consistent with reports of attempted intimidation following such votes in the past.

Some way must be found for the department to make collective decisions so that the students can have the security of knowing what is and what is not expected of them. In the current climate many students feel obliged to tailor their preparation to the perceived idiosyncratic preferences of specific members of the faculty.

### Action

Although the problems reported to us centered primarily on just two members of the faculty, the greatest anger of the affected students was often reserved for the majority of the faculty who they say take no interest in, and no responsibility for, their plight. Again and again the review team heard of mistreated students who received only soothing words from the Chair and from other members of the faculty. In one instance the Chair actually did approach the faculty member involved to suggest outside mediation. When (predictably) the faculty member objected, the matter was dropped. Thus, a situation with its origins in a small minority has become the responsibility of the entire department because of the inaction and complacency of the faculty (with one exception). Therefore, with but this one exception, the entire faculty, collectively and individually, is culpable.

Accordingly: 1) To reduce the burden of students in the department and to preclude additional students from entering an unhealthy environment, the Graduate Council has voted to suspend admissions to the graduate program of the department of Slavic Languages and Literatures until such time as conditions for graduate students in the department improve.

2) To protect students already in the program from further abuse, and to prevent any possibility of retribution against those who may have cooperated with the review team during this review process, it is hereby recommended that the Administration place the department of Slavic Languages and Literatures in receivership until such time as external oversight is no longer deemed necessary to protect the legitimate rights of the students to:

- be treated with respect
- take courses that benefit their education rather than the need for enrollments
- be provided with reasonable and coherent reading lists
- be informed explicitly of the format and expectations for exams
- have their dissertations read in a timely fashion and to receive constructive and useful criticism
- and in other ways, not specified above, to be enabled, not impeded, in their education.

It goes without saying that the willingness of numerous students to speak with the review team (but not to be quoted) was critical in arriving at the decision to take the above actions. Let it, therefore, be clearly understood that the slightest indication of retaliation by faculty against students will be aggressively investigated by the Graduate Council to determine whether charges should be filed with the appropriate Senate Committee for violations of the Faculty Code of Conduct, not only for recent but also for any past offences.

### Recommendations

It is the goal of the councils to use the review process to strengthen departments. Therefore, we urge the Administration to refrain from imposing punitive measures (such as withdrawing the 19th century FTE). This would diminish the department's stature and would harm even the graduate students we seek to protect. Instead, we offer the recommendations below in the hope that they will be supported by the administration so that the department may emerge stronger and more respected than before. The department, for its part, can minimize the inevitable stain on its reputation resulting from the measures outlined above, by working quickly to address and redress the problems described in this review.

#### To the department and the administration

1. To maintain the stature of the department and to bolster undergraduate teaching, raise the current search for a 19th century specialist to open rank, preferably someone already highly respected in the field, and ideally someone who might take a leadership role as the department emerges from the present crisis. It is understood that recruiting such a person may be temporarily delayed by the measures outlined above, however the delay can be shortened by aggressive cooperation on the part of the department to correct the problems that have been noted above.
2. Seek a joint appointment to fill the 20th century position.
3. Seek a joint appointment to provide a permanent South Slavist.

#### To the department

4. Engage the linguistics faculty in the development of a more balanced undergraduate curriculum in which the linguists share in the undergraduate teaching.
5. Increase the selectivity of admissions to reduce graduate student attrition. The goal should be to generate a smaller (by half), better prepared student body, with more funding per student. Simultaneously, efforts to find additional sources of funding should continue. Any subsequent increase in admissions should be accompanied by commensurate increases in funding opportunities for the students.
6. The procedures for and the criteria upon which funding decisions are made must be clearly explained to the students in writing.
7. Lift the veil of secrecy characteristic of the department. For example, admit the MSO to faculty meetings as is done for all other departments in the Kinsey Humanities Group, and allow graduate students meaningful participation.

#### Time line

A follow-up review of the department will be conducted in the Spring of 2001 by a process to be decided before June 30, 2000.

Approved by the Graduate Council: June 9, 2000

Approved by the Undergraduate Council: June 9, 2000



## Appendix I: External Reviewer Reports

### Appendix I External Reviewer Reports

Alan Timberlake, Slavic Languages & Literatures, UC Berkeley  
David Bethea, Slavic Languages & Literatures, University of Wisconsin

TO: Duncan Lindsey, Chair, Graduate Council, Academic Senate Office, UCLA

FROM: David Bethea, Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures, University of Wisconsin-Madison;

Alan Timberlake, Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures, University of California at Berkeley

ABOUT: External Review of the Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures, UCLA, February 23-25, 2000

*1. General.* For several decades UCLA has been a leader in Slavic studies in North America, the hallmarks of its program being an enviable breadth and rigor. It has been especially strong in the area of linguistics and poetics. Perhaps more than any other department in the country, UCLA's has embodied, and to a significant degree still embodies in some of its faculty, what the great structural linguist Roman Jakobson called the study of the "Slavic word"-- the investigation of how the disciplines of linguistics, poetics, folklore, and literary study interrelate and interpenetrate on Slavic soil. UCLA's Slavic faculty are virtually without exception highly productive and distinguished, with national and in several cases international reputations. On the undergraduate level, the department has generally worked hard to make itself accessible and relevant to today's students, and it has done so without abandoning its traditions and high standards. The language program at UCLA, about which we will have more to say below, is one of its singular strengths. With regard to the graduate program, the students appear to be exceptionally well trained, a fact further corroborated by the department's record of placing seven out of seven new Ph.D.s over the past five years. This record of placing students in recent years is unparalleled among Slavic programs in America.

UCLA has thus managed to keep intact a basic infrastructure for Slavic study which should allow it to be well positioned for the future. This depth and breadth will be necessary as a kind of gold reserve, which can be drawn upon over time, as the needs of the world at large and of the student body at UCLA change. It goes without saying that no Slavic program, in the country has been immune to the vast cultural and demographic shifts brought on by the fall of the former Soviet Union and the onset of the new global economy and changing interests on the part of American undergraduates, who ever more treat undergraduate education as training for future employment. The key is to find a way to adapt to external changes while still maintaining the basic integrity of one's programs-to provide needed training to undergraduate and graduate populations without becoming in the process a service department.

The external reviewers sense that Slavic at UCLA can successfully adapt to the demands of a smaller (yet still strategic) language, literature, and culture program in today's academy, but some of the decisions it will have to make will not be easy and will necessarily go against the grain of the department's own traditions. In what follows we try to offer some points of orientation as well as concrete recommendations that the department and administration may want to take into account as they consider the future.

2. *Undergraduate Program.* The interviews with the department's undergraduate students were one of the most pleasant aspects of our two-day review experience. Slavic appears to be blessed with a number of gifted undergraduate instructors. We cannot recall an instance where one of the students being interviewed said something negative about the department or the individual course or courses. So-called "heritage" (émigré or second-generation) students were especially numerous and enthusiastic: they stated repeatedly that the new courses designed to educate them further in a language and culture they left prematurely are both much needed and well taught. Several individuals praised the accessibility of the instructors and TAs. They felt themselves to be part of a small "collective" on a large campus, with the staff making time to accommodate their needs in a cheerful and always professional way. The "Russian room," a specific location where students can drop to chat with TAs or a native Russian speaker (Ninel Dubrovich) is a demonstrable success. The system of offering three parallel tracks for majors (Russian language and literature, Slavic languages and literatures, and Russian studies) appears to work well and to, build on the strengths--especially the breadth--of the department. We would also like to applaud the new major in European studies, which further integrates Slavic into the campus mainstream. The department is to be commended for the efforts it has made in the last decade to broaden its appeal. We are confident that the department is genuinely committed to these efforts, and under the department's present enlightened leadership, even more new courses will emerge and the efforts will continue, organically and effectively, to broaden Slavic's undergraduate presence on campus.

We would like to note, however, that, based on enrollment data for the 1997-98 and 1998-99 academic years provided by Academic Planning and Budget, there appears to be a significant asymmetry between the literature and linguistics faculty in terms of their respective undergraduate teaching assignments. Literature faculty regularly teach undergraduate courses, linguistics faculty do not. It looks to us that virtually every course that contributes substantially to the undergraduate student credit hour numbers for Slavic-Russian 25 (The Russian Novel in Translation), Russian 99A (Introduction to Russian Civilization), Russian 99B (Russian Civilization of the 20th Century), Russian 124D (Dostoevsky), Russian 130B (Russian Poetry of the Late 18th to the Early 20th Century), Russian 140B (Russian Prose from Karamzin to Turgenev), etc.-is taught by a member of the literature faculty, and those student credit hours have allowed their departments to offer low-enrolled graduate courses and thereby to keep these programs going. This creates the impression that, at present, the senior linguists are doing the majority of their teaching at the graduate level, a distribution of faculty energy which naturally results in problems with enrollments and student credit hours. Linguists need not teach only highly specialized courses in linguistics per se, which in any event would have trouble drawing from an undergraduate population; instead, they might consider offering courses in such related fields as folklore, mythology, culture, history of culture, etc. After all, literature faculty around the country have been called upon to "reinvent themselves" by offering more general education and writing-intensive courses that serve the larger college population; literature faculty regularly extend themselves to develop courses in film, art, or periods of literature in which they are not research specialists. Another possibility is that the department's linguists offer already existing courses for other departments and programs--for example, a course on dialectology for the Linguistics Department or a course on discourse theory for Applied Linguistics.

We might note parenthetically that small departments like Slavic would be encouraged in attempts to reach larger audiences if the University were to adopt a policy of crediting the home department of the instructor rather than the department offering the course; this would be an incentive for faculty in small departments to teach established, high-enrollment courses for other departments. And even if it is not UCLA's policy (for now) to give official credit for enrollments logged by home faculty in visiting departments, Slavic in this instance would still get the reputation for being good citizens. The asymmetry in the utilization of faculty energy needs to be addressed and something approaching equality of undergraduate-graduate teaching assignments for all ladder faculty ought to be instituted.

*3. Language Program.* UCLA is fortunate to have an exceptionally strong and well-integrated language program with a bright and responsive staff. Professor Olga Kagan is generally recognized as one of the three leading experts on Russian language pedagogy in the country, along with Patricia Chaput at Harvard and Benjamin Rifkin at Wisconsin. She has remained active as a writer of a widely-used textbook and course materials, and her writing and boundless professional activity also serve to raise the visibility of the department. Her leadership and highly professional manner are in evidence throughout the program. The departments TAs seem very satisfied with Professor Kagan's supervision of their teaching duties and with the preparation they receive in Slavic 375 (Teaching Apprentice Practicum). When we interviewed all the language instructors together, including those in Russian, Czech, Polish, Ukrainian, Hungarian, Romanian, and Serbian/Croatian, there appeared to be excellent camaraderie among them. We were particularly impressed with the numbers of students in Dr. Galateanu's Romanian classes. The enrollments in most upper-level Russian classes are relatively robust, comparing favorably with enrollments in other institutions, and that is a good sign. It is also impressive that there is remarkably little attrition from one quarter to the next in the basic sequence of language courses. There is also much more emphasis on non-linguistic content in the language courses than was the case just a few years ago. Again, students seem to reflect the well organized nature of the program and the dedicated attitude of Professor Kagan and her colleagues with their comments, which virtually to a person show a high degree of satisfaction. It was a wise move to fix Olga Kagan in place as permanent faculty, at a time when it was difficult to make lecturer appointments with SOE. It is our judgment that the language program, while forced like many sister programs around the country to pay heed to enrollments and to continue to reach out to a changing student population, is in good hands for the indefinite future.

Given the relative difficulty of languages in the Slavic group, we would urge the administration to give the department some flexibility in setting smaller class sizes in lower level courses: aiming for the mid-20s (with maximum at 26) seems high to us; a limit of 15 would be better, given the context.

*4. Graduate Program.* As we suggested in our opening remarks, at present Slavic is undergoing as much change as any field in the humanities. Without doubt much of this change has to do with demographics and the "new" economy, but some does not. At many universities deans are not replacing slots automatically, but are waiting to see if student demand warrants the same outlay as in the past. Financial aid for graduate study in the humanities, usually one of the more difficult sells to campus administrations even in prosperous times, has not been helped by news of shrinking applicant pools and the ever fragile job market for new Ph.D.s. Thus, we would like to stress that there are various factors over which no Slavic program, including that of UCLA, has had control since the time of the last review in 1992. Disciplines can grow up when there is a need (say, the "Cold War" or "sputnik"), but they can also languish when that need disappears. We are all historically situated in this way, as any look in a course catalogue just a few short generations ago will show. It is a cliché, but it is perhaps worth repeating: in order to remain viable, today's Slavic departments and programs will have to attract and train today's, not yesterday's, students; they will have to find ways to maintain intellectual integrity while still being responsive to different audiences.

Having said this, we believe that Slavic at UCLA is at an historical crossroads for other reasons as well. If the "infrastructure," in terms of faculty resources and national reputation, is there to insure that the program is well situated to face the future, there are also real challenges that need to be addressed soon, and in a thorough, collegial manner. As capable as UCLA's graduate students in Slavic are, and as appreciative as they are of the intellectual training they receive, they suffer from an alarming level of anxiety, bordering on demoralization. (The issue of faculty collegiality will be addressed farther on.) We realize that to be a graduate student is to be, by definition, in a vulnerable, transitional status, with the result that a certain amount of legitimate (and sometimes less than legitimate) "ventilating" is to be expected. Bearing this in mind, we must nevertheless report that what we found during our visit was much more than what can be attributed to run-of-the-mill graduate student anxiety. We would urge the department to do everything in its power to address these problems in an open, fair, and non-defensive manner. We

do not wish to be alarmist, but neither do we wish to treat euphemistically an atmosphere that can poison and further undermine the continuing life of the department.

To begin with, too many applicants have been accepted in the past relative to the level of support that the department is capable of providing. This in turn has translated into a system where: 1) some (many?) continuing students do not have a reliable sense of their possibilities for aid in the future; 2) not everyone is given the opportunity to teach (a real liability for those going on the job market); and 3) the program has more people in the on-leave status than it ought. (The practice of dividing TA positions into two in order to spread the opportunity to teach perhaps has a certain logic, but it is unheard of at other institutions, and should be eliminated.) We anticipate that the shrinking applicant pool will probably take care of this problem by itself, but even so, the department should as a policy decide to admit fewer students and to provide more initial funding and continue to fund those it does admit on a more regular, longer basis. In addition to being the responsible thing to do given the current job market in Slavic, this would both improve student morale. Some change in initial funding—a commitment to four- or five-year support packages is absolutely necessary to compete successfully against the other strong programs that offer multi-year financial aid packages.

One thing that became clear from the review team's discussions was the need to make a more concerted effort to find teaching and research support positions for Slavic graduate students on campus. It appears that there are very real opportunities for Slavic graduate students to teach in other programs, to serve as: TAs in ESL courses (after the minimal training), TAs in other languages of competence (many grad students in Slavic are foreign), TAs in writing-intensive or composition sections and in literature discussion sections of large General Education lecture courses (if this is a possibility); possibly TAs in content courses in Linguistics, etc. It would take a little effort to learn what the realistic possibilities are, but once the paths of employment in other programs, once discovered, quickly become worn. (sic)

The department also has in place some specific projects, specifically the journals edited by Professors Ivanov and Klenin, that are of value to the profession as a whole. It would be a valuable source of modest support for one or two graduate students if such projects could be funded on a reliable and recurrent basis.

The graduate students interviewed complained repeatedly that the procedures for selecting those to be funded in a given year are not explained to them in a consistent fashion. (For the record, the external reviewers are of the opinion, based on their experiences at home institutions, that the *procedures* for determining who receives financial aid should be made explicit, but that publicizing the actual ranking of all the students can be divisive and ought to be avoided.) Equally troubling were the numerous stories of confusion and frustration with regard to exams and readings lists: there does not seem to be an understanding of what the core material is that all students should know for their M.A. exams (linguistics), as apparently the faculty cannot agree on a single format; likewise, there does not appear to be a clear policy on the composition of examinations: what should come from relevant course work and what from outside reading (NB: no reading list exists). Finally, the Ph.D. exam (linguistics) too often repeats "broad knowledge" aspects of the M.A. exam without allowing the student to do the sort of in-depth analysis he or she will have to show at the dissertation level. On the literature side, the students asked that the reading list be updated, a course on recent Russian literature be instituted (in the bargain, probably displacing moving the requirement of Medieval Literature to the Ph.D. level), and the Movements and Genres course be replaced by Introduction to Graduate Study (or in Other terminology, a pro-seminar on literary theory and research methodology). These are all reasonable requests in our view.

As stated, one of the special strengths of the UCLA graduate program in Slavic has been its breadth in linguistics offerings and its expertise along the "seam" of linguistics and poetics, and some faculty (especially from

the linguists side) continue to teach and do active research in this tradition. But this strength has also created its own weakness. This broad interest could be one of the sources of a problem that we sense both the faculty and the grad students are loathe to acknowledge: the average time to Ph.D. for 21 students from 1988 to 1998 was, by our calculations, 9.347 years (based on the "Profile for Slavic Languages and Literatures," p. 2). Despite some improvement in recent years, we believe this time frame is much too long, given the department's financial aid constraints and the job market in Slavic. Programs should make every effort to advance their (hopefully now better funded) students through all the requirements, including writing the dissertation, in a 5-6 year period.

Understanding this outer limit as a reality will force the department to make some changes in its program. Some of these changes might (and probably should) be: 1) instituting an 4-6 course outside minor (French, Philosophy, History, Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, Film, etc. the list is quite open-ended) that would give the students an added area of expertise (very attractive in today's market) but would have to come *at the expense* of existing requirements; 2) doing away with a formal M.A. exam (with obvious exceptions: when a student comes with a M.A. from elsewhere and needs to be tested or when the M.A. is terminal) and focusing attention entirely on the Ph. D. qualifying exam; 3) using the Ph.D. written examinations to test the student's comprehensive knowledge of the field, but using the Ph.D. oral examination as an opportunity to discuss and refine the dissertation proposal (i.e., replacing what is now called the "qualifying paper" by a new category); 4) considering requiring reading knowledge of French or German rather than French and German; 5) establishing thorough, up-to-date (both in terms of the primary and secondary literature), yet manageable/"realistic" reading lists in linguistics and literature; 6) announcing as policy to students that they be expected to take the qualifying exams by the end of their fourth year of graduate study; 7) making the study of the "second Slavic" language and literature an option for a minor rather than a requirement.

By calling for these or analogous changes, we recognize that in some cases we are asking the department to move in a direction opposite the one they would prefer. For example, we gather from the linguistics graduate students and faculty that many would like for all M.A. students to have demonstrated proficiency in several "core" courses- Introduction to Phonetics, Introduction to Historical Linguistics, Phonology, Syntax-before being admitted to the Ph. D. program. Here the implication is that until all the Ph.D. candidates are on the same level playing field, it is disruptive and inefficient to have them study together. Only by having capable but insufficiently trained new students take the requisite courses outside of the department, presumably in Linguistics, can the situation be dealt with, goes this logic. Again, the impulse to fix the problem has been to add rather than subtract. But we fear that this solution, while understandable and perhaps desirable in a world of unlimited resources, could end up extending further the time to degree of these students. Similarly, students were enthusiastic about the possibility of courses that would extend in the twentieth century past the thirties, but at the same time seemed unwilling to understand that any such addition will lengthen the program.

Evidently some changes need to be made to adjust the real preparation of incoming students. Perhaps it would be better for the colleagues teaching the graduate curriculum in Slavic linguistics to think of ways to provide some of this rudimentary knowledge in phonology or syntax in already existing (or, if necessary, newly designed) courses. Or if they truly believe that students entering the program need to do work outside the department before they are qualified to study with their peers, then the burden will be on these same colleagues to come up with a way to reduce the students' requirements at a later stage.

And lastly, in the spirit of morale building, we would urge the faculty to have an open discussion among themselves and come up with simple guidelines for how to provide feedback to students when correcting papers. Although students applauded the faculty for being generally accessible and responsive in one-on-one situations, they want more explicit feedback on their written work (especially when the professor possesses competence in their

native language). As this is a culturally nuance issue, the best solution may be to establish some general "do's" and "don't's" (including silence). With regard to faculty advising, the students ask that their own professional needs be placed above enrollment issues when recommending courses. They would also like the option of taking exams either by hand or on the computer (a fairly widespread practice these days), and they would like to have greater access to the reading room, but in a way that doesn't jeopardize security.

5. *Faculty.* The Slavic faculty at UCLA gets high marks for its splendid publication record and its national and international visibility. It is true, moreover, that the department has made strides in the 1990s to balance its profile between linguistics/language, on the one hand, and literature, on the other. Professors Ivanov and Yokoyama are major appointments by any standards, and Professor Koropeckyj has been an excellent addition as Polonist with other areas of expertise. Be this as it may, there are gaps in current coverage that will need to be filled before the department can be considered to be at full speed and competitive with the top programs in the country: 1) a specialist in "Golden Age" prose (Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, etc.) with theoretical sophistication and a well-established record in the field; 2) a specialist in twentieth century Russian literature, particularly the contemporary period; 3) a South Slavicist. It is our belief that the first position, the Golden Age specialist, is absolutely crucial to the long-term health and viability of the department: this is where the biggest enrollments reside in any Slavic program, and to have a well-known person representing this area would certainly add to the luster of the department. It is the core area of any graduate program, and it would not be unnatural to expect the person filling the position to exercise a leadership role in the definition of the literature program. For this latter reason, we recommend that the search be open as to rank; the department might be extremely well served if it could identify and attract a prominent colleague at an intermediate rank (approximately, the senior associate rank-that is, ready to be promoted to full professor) and with one or more outstanding books to his or her credit. To repeat, however, nothing in our estimation would do more to raise the profile of the department and to solidify its orientation as an equal parts literature and linguistics faculty than this appointment.

The second literature appointment is also important programmatically and politically: the graduate students would like more training in contemporary literature and they are right to assume that this would make them more marketable-but perhaps a little less so strategically. It could and probably should be at the junior level. The South Slavic position, which both the linguistics faculty and students lobbied for eloquently and for years, is an area that most major programs in the country still have coverage in. Since breadth has always been UCLA's hallmark, it would be a significant blow to its tradition and reputation to do away with this position. The question seems to be whether to fix it in place as a permanent ladder position or to continue to fill it on a visiting/adjunct basis. The adjunct position has evidently been a satisfactory temporary and ad hoc measure (with the reservation that no adjunct person can serve on examinations). If one of the senior linguist positions (two are relatively close to retirement) could be "mortgaged" for this one, and if the position description were crafted not for a narrow linguist but for a person genuinely able to teach the language(s), literature(s), and culture(s) of the former Yugoslavia, then it would make sense to make the appointment sooner rather than later. For, to reiterate, we do believe that UCLA should have a South Slavicist.

6. *Leadership and Collegiality.* We understand from the faculty, graduate students, and staff that the period since the last review has not always been easy for the department. The Slavic field has changed and business as usual, probably never a viable option, is even less a possibility today than it was eight years ago. Moreover, there have on occasion been personnel issues in the department, which we will touch on briefly below, that have sometimes strained relations and caused problems with morale, especially the morale of the graduate students. But we do not believe the fabric of trust and collegiality has been irreparably torn, only frayed. In this respect, it seemed obvious to us that the current chair, Michael Heim, with his patience, good will, sensitivity, and the respect he universally enjoys, has done an admirable job of bringing the department out of a situation of potential crisis; he is

the right chair for the department at this time. It was especially encouraging to us to see the solid relationship that Professor Heim had forged with Dean Yu and the administration-this at a time when a positive relationship needs to be and can be developed. Indeed, in our view (and here we rely on observing analogous situations at our own and other institutions), it can be catastrophic when trust between department and administration breaks down, and there is no justification in this instance for the department not to work cooperatively with the current administration.

Yet all of the patience and intelligent stewardship of one individual will not by themselves succeed in mending the frayed fabric and getting this academically superb department again on sound footing. Nor will additional resources in and of themselves. For this mending process to take place, other colleagues will have to participate. They will have to be willing to compromise on some issues (the shape of the curriculum, the set of requirements, the length of the program of study, etc.) but not on others (what constitutes "Professional" behavior).

Which brings us at last to the thorny issue of (for lack of any other general word) collegiality. We, the external reviewers, heard numerous descriptions from the students and staff of how some Slavic faculty behaved in a manner that can only be called unprofessional. We mention these incidents now neither to denounce specific individuals nor to establish the allegations as true-we were not given the time or the mandate to determine the veracity of these reports or to adjudicate in these matters- but simply to let the department know that there is a significant problem of aggrieved *perception* (and quite possibly fact) with regard to student-faculty and staff-faculty relations. We live in a litigious society and, issues of normal civility aside, the power differential between a tenured faculty member and a graduate student is too great not to take seriously the potential for abuse. To repeat, the issue is not whether any of this, or even a small part of it, happened (although this much smoke suggests there must be some fire). Rather, the issue is that the "air needs to be cleared," the students and staff need to feel that they have been heard, and a statement needs to be made that nothing like this will occur again and that the department is making a fresh start.

We make no official recommendations here other than to say that the department must find a way to reunite around Michael Heim's and others' leadership. How they accomplish that, either with the help of professionals or on their own, is best left up to the department and to the administration. But at the end of the (hopefully short and efficacious) day, *something must be done*.

*7. Conclusion.* The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at UCLA has been, one of the premier programs in the country for three decades, especially in linguistics, where it arguably has the strongest research faculty in America. Its students are being placed. The research and editorial activity of its faculty are visible and respected by colleagues in the field. But like any program it has evolved to the point where it faces a series of challenges, some external, some of its own making. To respond to those challenges we recommend the following:

#### UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM:

- 1) that undergraduate teaching assignments be shared equally by linguistics and literature faculty through the development of a more balanced curriculum;
- 2) that the department continue to seek ways to include General Education, writing-intensive, and other courses appealing to a campus-wide audience in their curriculum;
- 3) that the beginning sections of Russian not be filled to 26, but be allowed to be smaller (app. 15);

#### GRADUATE PROGRAM:

- 4) that the number of new students being admitted to the graduate program be reduced and that the goal be to give financial support to all grad students in the program;
- 5) that other forms of financial aid for graduate students on campus be investigated (TA-ing in ESL courses, language courses outside of Slavic, etc.);
- 6) that reasonable and coherent reading lists be established for the Ph.D. (and if still necessary, M.A.) programs in linguistics and literature;
- 7) that an exam, format be regularized for both linguistics and literature exams, M.A. and Ph.D. levels, and that the expectations for student performance be made explicit;
- 8) that the graduate program, be simplified and the time-to-Ph.D. be reduced by a variety of changes, possibly including: eliminating the M.A. exam. (except for specific circumstances), offering the choice of French or German, establishing a non-departmental minor while reducing other requirements, replacing the "qualifying paper" with a "dissertation proposal" (to be discussed at the qualifying exam. oral), etc;

#### FACULTY:

- 9) that a Golden Age prose specialist, at open rank, be appointed as soon as possible;
- 10) that a junior specialist on contemporary literature be appointed as soon as the Golden Age specialist has been fixed in place;
- 11) that a well-rounded South Slavicist, with possible background in linguistics but with the ability to teach various courses in the language(s), literature(s), and culture(s) of the former Yugoslavia, be appointed as a "mortgage" for one of the senior linguist positions;
- 12) that the department work together to address issues of collegiality that have damaged relations with graduate students, staff, and the administration.

(signed)

David M. Bethea  
Vilas Professor  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

(signed)

Alan Timberlake  
Professor  
University of California at Berkeley  
Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures

#### Appendix II:

##### Site Visit Schedule

Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures  
Site Visit Schedule



February 24-25, 2000

\*All meetings will take place in 374 Kinsey unless noted otherwise

Wednesday, February 23, 2000

7:00 p.m.: Dinner meeting for review team members only. Tanino's Restaurant, 1043 Westwood Blvd. (between Kinross and Weyburn, (310) 208-0444.

Thursday, February 24, 2000

8:00: Breakfast discussion with Chair Michael Heim

9:00: Meeting with Dean Pauline Yu

10:00- 10:40: Linguistics Faculty (Henning Andersen, Andrew Corin, Vyacheslav Ivanov, Emily Klenin, Olga Yokoyama)

10:40 - 11:20: Literature Faculty (Michael Heim, Vyacheslav Ivanov, Joachim Klein, Emily Klenin, Roman Koropecykj, Alexander Ospovat, Rob Romanchuk)

11:20 - 12:00: Language Faculty (Nelya Dubrovich, Georgiana Galateneau, Michael Heim, Olga Kagan, Roman Koropecykj, Susan Kresin, Judith Simon, Mel Strom)

12:00: Lunch

1:15: Meeting with Undergraduate Students

2:00: Meeting with Graduate Students

2:45: Review of TA Training Program - Olga Kagan , Susan Kresin and Julia Morozova

3:15: Review of Advising - Henning Andersen, Inna Gergel, Roman Koropecykj, Alexander Ospovat

4:00: Closed Session for Review Team only

5:00: Dinner at Michael Heim's home

Friday, February 25, 2000

8:30: Breakfast for Review Team

9:00: Conference call with Ron Vroon

9:15: Conference call with Gail Lenhoff

9:30: Marilyn Gray, graduate student

9:45:

10:00: Minhee Kim, undergraduate student

10:15: Olga Yokoyama, Professor

10:30: Cori Weiner, graduate student

10:45: Susie Bauckus, graduate student

11:00: Julia Verkholtantsev, graduate student

11:15 :

11:30: John Narins, graduate student

11:45

12:00: Lunch

1:00: Meeting with Slavic Staff (Mila August, Inna Gergel, Carol Grese, Jami Jesek, Sasha Mosley and Carolyn Walthour)

2:00: Final review team with Michael Heim

3:00: Closed Session

4:00: Exit Meeting (2121 Murphy): Review Team; Chair Heim; EVC Hume; Assoc. Dean Hune; Dean Yu; Provost Copenhaver; GC Chair Lindsey; Ugc Vice Chair Bjork; FEC rep K. Baker.

Contact Person for the Site Visit:

Inna Gergel  
Phone #: X53856  
Fax #: 65263  
115F Kinsey

Appendix III: •Factual Errors Statement from Department Chair, M. Heim  
•Response to Statement from H. Martinson

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Crespo, Luisa

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From: MICHAEL HEIM [heim@HUMnet.UCLA.EDU]  
Sent: Thursday, June 08, 2000 1:54 PM  
To: crespo@senate.ucla.edu  
Subject: response to academic senate review

8 June 2000

Professor Duncan Lindsey  
Professor Orville Chapman  
Academic Senate Executive Office  
3125 Murphy Hall  
140801

Dear Professors Lindsey and Chapman:

Please distribute the following to the members of the Graduate and Undergraduate Councils. It is my response to the drafts of the internal and external reviewers' report of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. I will address both errors of fact and errors of omission.

Let me begin by saying that I have no bones whatever to pick with the external report: it is not only factually accurate but conveys the spirit of the Department. I cannot say the same about the internal report or, rather, about the section of the internal report entitled "Graduate Program" (pp. 2-5). It contains a number of inaccurate statements, fails to make certain important points, and - most important - draws a picture of the Department I do not recognize.

Before I try to set right the general impression, however, I will set right some details. The specific case history on p. 3 opens by stating that the student in question entered the program with "excellent credentials." In fact, her Russian was so poor that she had to take not the usual remedial course we recommend in such circumstances - that is, the fourth-year undergraduate course - but the third-year course.

When she came to me, I did express sympathy, I did say there were problems with some of the faculty, and I did say we would have to work around them. I also promised to talk to the instructor: I needed to hear both sides of the story to find a way to handle the situation. I talked to the instructor for several hours and was ready to talk to the student, but although I phoned and e-mailed her repeatedly she never responded. I was of course sorry that we lost her and I do not condone the conduct of my colleague, but I am certain we could have solved the problem had she come back to see me.

The section entitled "Attrition" on p. 4 includes a statement to the effect that "mistreatment of students is not the only reason for attrition!" In fact, the student in question was the only student we have lost as a direct result of a conflict with a faculty member. The following statement - that several students who have left the program were "under-qualified from the start" is correct; what is incorrect is the conclusion that the department's treatment of students "does not result in cultivation of "the best and the brightest, but in the survival of the toughest and most resilient." In fact, three out of the seven students who have received degrees in the past five years were only marginally acceptable at the time they applied; all of them are now teaching at institutions of higher learning. It was a pleasure to teach them and watch them develop. What the report's discussion of attrition omits are points like the following: because the country has fewer Slavic Departments than most other language departments the pool of applicants is smaller and we have to gamble a bit more; the loss of interest in our field during the nineties restricted the pool even further; the only group of applicants that grew was that of international students, but their qualifications were harder to judge, especially until we had gained some experience. In the early nineties, when fellowships were easier to come by, we could admit more students and let them prove themselves, and as I have indicated a healthy selection did take place.

Now that funds are tight, the situation has changed. Consequently, last year and this year we admitted only two students instead of the cohorts of six to eight students we used to aim for. But all the students we admitted we gave a fine education; never did we discard students "as damaged goods."

In the "Graduate Requirements" section the issues of exam format and reading lists come up several times. Neither is in fact an issue for literature students: the exam format is standard, and the reading list, though currently under revision, is perfectly functional - reasonable and coherent - as it stands. The linguists have not yet agreed on a reading list, but are working on one and have put together a data base as a first step. The section also mentions dissertation committee problems. These have occurred - again only among the linguists - but I mediated one such problem this year, and the student has recently defended the dissertation successfully. The section calls upon the faculty to "find some way to make collective decisions." We have recently agreed to institute a new experimental MA track in Russian Language and Culture and an optional outside concentration at the PhD level, two major decisions. It took many meetings to arrive at a consensus - two linguists opposed the programs - but we have done so.

By now a pattern should be emerging. The students' complaints refer primarily if not exclusively to two members of the faculty, both of whom are in the linguistics program. Until the section entitled "Action" on p. 5 the text reads as if all faculty members were equally guilty. Under "Funding" on p. 4, for example, it states, "So vengeful are the faculty, we were told, that many students believe that they are merely pawns among these colliding ambitions." Some (though not all) of the linguistics students may believe this, but I am certain that none of the literature students (who comprise approximately half the graduate population) do. Even after the "Action" section on p. 5 does allow that only two members of the faculty are involved, it continues to refer to "students," as if all students had experienced the problems equally.

The department I read about in this report is a dysfunctional one (the report in fact speaks of "graduate program dysfunction" on p. 3), a department where no learning can take place because graduate students and faculty are constantly at loggerheads. The department I experience is one where office doors are open and graduate students and faculty are constantly discussing scholarly issues, that is, one in which first-rate training is the order of the day. I do not deny that the regretful aberrations described by the students occurred, but they are aberrations. They make it more difficult for the students involved (who, I repeat, are mostly, if not entirely, students in linguistics, but who do not include all linguistics students), but the record shows that they do not in the end stymie the educational process. This year, for instance, two literature students and one linguistics student passed their MA exams, one linguistics student passed her PhD exams, and one student (the one I referred to above) defended a dissertation in linguistics, another in literature. The latter begins a tenure-track position at the University of Florida in the fall.

What I miss first and foremost in the report, in other words, what I consider the greatest sin of omission, is any indication that the faculty members in question have been given the opportunity to give their side of the story. The Preface to the report states that "the internal review team conducted additional interviews, as necessary, to clarify issues raised during the site visit," but it never asked to see me again. True, the chair of the internal committee got in touch with me twice after the site visit - once by e-mail to request a list of the institutions at which our recent PhD's were teaching and once by phone for details about one student's account (the report as it stands mentions neither) - but why was I not interviewed about the student who left the program after the run-in with her professor? She was interviewed for her side of the story, but I had no chance to tell mine. I have filled in a few details here, but I could say a good deal more about the case. Why was I not asked about admissions and reading lists and dissertation committees? As chair I have been actively involved in all of them. And most important, why was I not asked about what I regard as the most damning accusation, which occurs in the first sentence of the "Action" section: "... the greatest anger of the students was often reserved for the majority of the faculty who take no interest in, and no responsibility for, their plight." Who are "the students" here? What does "often" mean? Who is included and who is excluded from "the majority of the faculty"? How do the students know that I or any of my colleagues take no interest in, and no responsibility for their plight"? I can understand that the internal reviewers were outraged by the student complaints listed on pp. 3-4, but I cannot understand why they assumed there was no other side to hear. The students do not know, for example, about the hours I spend every week mediating between them and the two difficult faculty members; they do not know because it would be unprofessional of me to tell them. But neither do the internal reviewers know, because they have taken everything the students say at face value. I am by no means implying that the students are not telling the truth; they are telling the truth as they see it, but there are many things they do not see. I am not surprised that the reviewers found "no example of any significant discrepancy"(p. 2) among student accounts: their accounts come from the same point of view; I am surprised that the reviewers did not see fit to solicit other points of view, that of the chair, for instance.

There is another point of view missing: as far as I can tell from the report, the reviewers have not interviewed either of the difficult faculty members. Interviewing them would have served several purposes. First, it would have furthered the cause of justice. Is it not normal for both sides of a story to be heard? Second, it would have given the

reviewers first-hand knowledge of what the rest of us (students, colleagues, and staff) are up against. Third, it would have made the two faculty members aware of the accusations that have been leveled against them and of the enormous issue their behavior has become. And fourth, it would have helped the internal reviewers to come up with advice about how to deal with them. Both the faculty and the students looked forward to the review because we hoped it would bring us useful insights. We have in fact received a number of such insights from the external reviewers, but the two recommendations made by the internal reviewers I find not only less than useful; I find them harmful.

The first, "to suspend admissions to the graduate program of the department of Slavic Languages and Literatures until such time as conditions for graduate students in the department improve" (p. 5), will harm both the department and the students. Our field is small and tightly knit. Word travels fast. Once it becomes known that a punitive action like this has been taken against us, we will lose the reputation that has allowed us, for example, to place all our students in tenure-track positions in the last five years. Moreover, for years after the ban is lifted, we will have trouble attracting students. As I pointed out above, we have recently voted in a new MA track and an optional outside concentration on the PhD-level. Just as we are making the first move in the nearly thirty years I have taught in the Department to develop the graduate program in new directions and broaden the applicant pool, we are told to suspend graduate admissions. Furthermore, we are about to make our first new appointment in Russian literature in ten years. We began the search last year and, although for technical reasons we had to suspend it, formed a short list of three candidates. We were the first choice for all three. What will happen this year if we have to tell our candidates that we have been forbidden to accept graduate students? What decent candidate will come to such a department? What will be the effect on the Department and the University of missing the opportunity to hire the best candidate? The internal reviewers do not tell us how the move will help us to solve our problems, only that it will remain in force until the problems are solved. But I can easily imagine that the havoc the move will play with the Department will exacerbate our problems rather than solve them.

The second recommendation is to place the department in receivership, in other words, to deprive it of the right to govern itself. As I have said, both the students and the faculty had hoped that the review would help us to solve our own problems. The fact that we have put into practice some of the suggestions of the external reviewers before their official report even reached us (the institution of the outside PhD concentration, for example) indicates we are perfectly capable of dealing with things on our own. I might also add that within a week of the site visit, following a suggestion that was made then but does not figure in either the external or the internal report, I consulted a member of the Ombuds Office about the difficult faculty members and have adopted a new approach to them, which has begun to yield results. Whether or not the "help of professionals" referred to on p. 8 of the external report is necessary remains to be seen.

Graduate students in our Department have suffered, and there is no excuse for that suffering. But the report blows their suffering out of proportion. It projects the injustices done to a number of linguistics students onto the student body as a whole; it makes it seem as if only suffering and no learning were going on. At the same time it projects the excesses of a minority onto the faculty as a whole. I reject its conclusion on p. 5 that "the entire faculty, collectively and individually, is culpable"; I reject the claims of "inaction" and "complacency." They run counter to the external report and, more important, to my daily interaction with the students and with my colleagues.

If I did not request to talk to the internal reviewers after the site visit, it is because I had no idea they would come to conclusions I can only call one-sided. I have voiced only a fraction of the objections I have to the report because I think we can come to an agreement about how best to remedy the situation only if we talk the issues through in person. I therefore request a meeting with the internal reviewers. I also request that before our meeting takes place they have separate interviews with each of the two difficult faculty members.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Heim  
Professor and Chair

Response to Slavic Chair's "Errors of Fact" statement

The review team has the highest personal respect for the Chair of the Slavic department. Nevertheless, there appear to be irreconcilable differences in our respective points of view.

1. The Chair objects to characterizing student "XX" as having "excellent credentials".

- The review team stands by this characterization-XX came in with an undergraduate GPA of 3.97 from UC Riverside, and had a 4.0 at UCLA until her run-in with the faculty member in question.

2. The Chair states that XX is the only student that has been lost as a direct result of conflict with a faculty member.

- This is not true.

3. The Chair repeatedly objects to the failure to identify clearly the specific faculty members and students who are referred to in the report.

- As explained in the report "to preserve anonymity [we presented] most information only in general terms." Also, as stated, it was not our purpose to establish the "guilt or innocence of particular individuals." Some wording in the report will be modified to counter the impression that all students experienced problems equally.

4. The Chair strenuously objects to the failure of the review team to confront specific faculty members with specific complaints so that they could present their point of view.

- As explained in the report, no student would talk without an absolute guarantee of confidentiality. Obviously this precludes going back to the faculty with any specifics. We had already learned that addressing these problems in general terms is fruitless (see below).

5. The Chair feels that he was not adequately consulted in the preparation of the internal report.

- We have explained why checking details with the faculty was not possible, but it was certainly the desire of the review team to work with the Chair of the department. For this reason the chair of the review team brought up, very directly but in general terms, the issue of student dissatisfaction at a presite visit meeting with the Chair of the department. When the Chair of the department said that, aside from funding problems, there was no student dissatisfaction to speak of, the chair of the review team asked the question again to be sure he had heard correctly. Similar questions were asked of the Chair and of other faculty during the site visit. Especially in the beginning, the response was a disavowal of any such problems. At one point an external reviewer was moved to exclaim to a faculty member, "...you are in denial!" The pattern that emerged was consistent denial or minimization of the problem-until confronted with overwhelming evidence. Thus, there was no recourse but to unearth sufficient detail from the students themselves in order to determine whether the initial impressions reflected a situation serious enough to warrant decisive action. Once this bridge was crossed (and precluded from discussing details) there was little to be gained by rehashing generalities with the Chair of the department.

6. The Chair claims to have "had no idea" the review team would come to the conclusions it did.

•During the site visit, the chair of the review team (believing that the Chair of the department did not appreciate the seriousness of the situation) made it very explicit that suspension of graduate admissions was being considered. When, later, the Chair of the department still did not appear to grasp the gravity of the discussion, one of the external reviewers pointedly reminded him of the review team chair's comment. Later, after the exit meeting, both Graduate Council members of the review team reminded the Chair that his department's graduate program was considered "dysfunctional".

7. Many additional issues regarding procedure and interpretation are raised by the Chair.

•These are matters on which we will simply have to agree to disagree. For example:

-- Issues of long standing (more than a decade) that the review team considers to be of fundamental importance, the Chair characterizes as "aberrations".

-- For a festering problem involving abuse of power that the review team believes requires immediate and decisive action, the Chair believes "hours [of mediation] every week" and "a new approach.....which has begun to yield results" is a sufficient response.

--While the review team has been told of years of student abuse which the department has had no will to correct, the Chair offers a recent revision in the graduate program as evidence of the ability of the department to manage its own affairs.

These differences in perception do not give the review team confidence that the problems of student welfare will be dealt with swiftly and effectively (and with no retaliation towards students) without drastic measures. This issue is now a matter for discussion between the Chair and the Administration.

#### Appendix IV: Self Review Report

## **First Page Missing**

**(The first page of the Department's self-evaluation was not released to students. This section begins with page two of this self-evaluation.)**

(Henning Andersen, Vyacheslav Ivanov, Emily Klenin, and Olga Yokoyama) and four in literature (Michael Heim, Gail Lenhoff, Aleksandr Ospovat, and Ronald Vroon) one associate professor in literature (Roman Koropecjy), and two lecturers for Russian-language instruction (Olga Kagan and Susan Kresin, the former with security of employment); part-time faculty includes one adjunct associate professor in linguistics (Andrew Corin) and lecturers in Romanian (Georgiana Galateanu) and Hungarian (Judith Simon). When ladder faculty members go on sabbatical leave, they are typically replaced by visiting professors who are leading lights in their fields (Leonid Kasatkin, Roza Kasatkina, Roman Timenchik, Elena Zemskaia). We also receive an average of two and a half FTEs yearly for

teaching assistants. We have approximately thirty-five undergraduate students majors and minors and thirty graduate students on the current rolls.

Until approximately a decade ago the Department had the reputation of being stronger in linguistics than literature - the traditional components of Slavic departments since they started appearing on the American academic landscape after the Second World War. Research in our Department has concentrated on comparative cultural, literary, and linguistic studies in a number of fields: early Russian literature (hagiography), major authors of the eighteenth century (Sumarokov, for example), the classical poets of the nineteenth century (Pushkin, Tiutchev, Fet), Russian and Polish Romanticism (especially Mickiewicz) and the post-Symbolist avant-garde of the twentieth century (especially Khlebnikov) - all of which incorporate recently discovered archival materials and pay special attention to the historical context; Slavic historical linguistics in a broad Balto-Slavic and Indo-European context with emphasis on the ethnolinguistic issues connected with defining the Slavic homeland and tracing migration patterns, the analysis of newly surfaced materials (Novgorodian birch-bark letters, Old Believer literature of the seventeenth century, dialectal data including Los Angeles Molokane speech), colloquial Russian and its manifestations in recent written texts, the pragmatic aspects of contemporary Russian, and literary translation and translation studies. Currently we are perceived as being equally strong in literature and linguistics, but we will continue to be perceived as such only if we can compensate for certain recent losses.

Let us take literature first. At the end of the previous review period we acquired a specialist in nineteenth-century Russian poetry, Aleksandr Ospovat, at the beginning of the current period - a specialist in Polish and Ukrainian literature, Roman Koropeckyj. They have been instrumental in improving both the breadth and depth of our offerings.. Although we can still boast scholars publishing in nearly every period of Russian literature, prose and poetry, including the typically less well represented medieval period and the eighteenth century, last year we lost our two specialists in nineteenth century and twentieth-century prose, the core of the undergraduate curriculum and central to graduate studies as well. Dean Yu has authorized a search at the assistant-professor level for one of these positions. We have maintained strength in other Slavic literatures - Czech, Polish, South Slavic, and Ukrainian - in terms of both teaching and research. Only a handful of universities - Berkeley, Chicago, Harvard, Indiana, Michigan, North Carolina, Wisconsin - can begin to match us here, though none has more than two or three "second" Slavic literatures to our four, and the ability to teach these literatures is emerging as a particularly desirable qualification for new literature PhDs entering the job market.

In linguistics, which has suffered more than literature at most other institutions, the UCLA-Slavic Department has been able to maintain a full panoply of courses - in East, West, and South Slavic (the latter filled at present on a regular basis by an adjunct associate professor), Old Church Slavic, and the phonology, morphology, and syntax of Contemporary Standard Russian. A new appointment at the beginning of the period under review, that of the internationally known Slavic and Indo-European linguist and semiotician Vyacheslav Ivanov, has helped cushion the loss of three linguists to early retirement (Aleksandar Albijanic 1992 and Henrik Birnbaum and Dean Worth in 1994), though Professor Ivanov teaches literature as well as linguistics and contractually devotes one third of his time to Indo-European Studies. The linguistics program has likewise been bolstered by the appointment of Olga Yokoyama, who came to us from Harvard several years later and works in the fields of discourse analysis and gender linguistics using data from the Slavic spectrum. Many of the departments once strong in linguistics - Harvard, Yale, Stanford - have reduced the number of linguists, their primary function being to provide service courses to literature students. As a result, they are less likely to produce new doctorates in Slavic linguistics. (Of the eight doctoral dissertations in Slavic linguistics for 1997 [Slavic Review, Winter 1998, 959-60], two come from UCLA; of the other six, several come from universities with recently reduced linguistics faculty. UCLA is the only university represented by more than one dissertation.)

The Department considers the crossover between literature and linguistics central to the mission of its graduate



program. This is reflected in the MA requirements (students must take a number of courses in both), in approaches applied in PhD courses (structural analysis of literary texts, discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, semiotics, translation studies, the interface between literature and history and literature and anthropology) and, naturally, in the faculty's research. A recent development - and one that is becoming increasingly common - is the joint publication of articles by faculty members and graduate students. Graduate students also regularly give papers at national conferences: eight will participate at the annual meeting of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages this December in Chicago. They note with satisfaction that the Department is helping to prepare them for the job market by rehearsing them before their talks and staging mock interviews, but would like to see general advising and mentoring strengthened as well.

The Department provides more regular, required Russian-language instruction on the graduate level than comparable programs and has a native speaker available for conversation and consultation on a drop-in basis for twenty hours a week, a feature no other department in the country offers. It also requires a working knowledge of one or two other Slavic languages. Practical language preparation has proven an important factor in the competitiveness of our graduate students on the job market, and some graduate students would like to see more emphasis on perfecting their command of Russian and the other Slavic languages. The Department prides itself on training its TA's in the latest in language-teaching methodology. Not surprisingly, then, the Department plays a leading role in formulating language-teaching policy on the UCLA campus. And not surprisingly, Professor Kagan was recently named the first chair of a newly instituted campus-wide Foreign Language Resource Committee. The Department also houses Romanian for the Romanian studies Program and has recently elected to take over Hungarian from the Department of Germanic Languages.

The Department is committed to undergraduate education. We offer two or three general education courses a quarter: The Russian Novel, Russian civilization, Russian Civilization in the Twentieth Century, Slavic Civilization. We offer three majors (Russian Language and Literature, Russian Studies, and Slavic Languages and Literatures, the latter unique in the country in requiring the study of Russian and an additional Slavic language) and three minors (Russian Language, Russian Literature, and Russian Studies, all of which require Russian language study). In the past few years we have made a highly successful effort to attract heritage speakers of Russian by creating language and literature courses with their interests in mind. The Russian club provides undergraduates with a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The number of courses required to sustain this breadth tended to tax our faculty even before we lost two of our faculty members most involved in the undergraduate program, but we feel confident of being able to carry on once they are replaced. If we can make such a claim, it is largely because, while maintaining their reputation for scholarly excellence, members of the ladder faculty regularly teach five courses a year (and many have in fact taught six or seven on an overload basis) and earn consistently high evaluation ratings from both undergraduates and graduates.

During the mid-nineties, when the decision was made to consolidate the staff of several departments into a single administrative unit, the Kinsey Humanities Group, we went through a bad patch. Our main office was left unmanned, and many of us spent an inordinate amount of time directing lost students, answering other people's phone calls, and the like. Mercifully, the situation improved dramatically when Marcia Kurtz, our student affairs officer, was returned to us, and now under Mila August's capable leadership - and Marcia's highly capable Russian-speaking replacement, Inna Gergel - things administrative are again on an even keel. We are currently gearing up for the seismic retrofitting and general renovation of Kinsey Hall. In a year's time we will move to Hershey Hall for the two years it will take to gut and completely reconfigure our current quarters. The chair has had numerous and fruitful consultations with the architects and assures the Department that while individual faculty offices will decrease slightly in size there will be a notable increase in public space: a second lounge/seminar room, a student commons room, and a set of dedicated computer work stations.

## The Undergraduate Program

The euphoria that followed the fall of the east-bloc regimes in the late eighties and early nineties, the period covered by the previous eight-year review, quickly evaporated when the transition to democracy proved more arduous than expected. Undergraduate enrollments in our field, especially in Russian-language courses, dropped dramatically country-wide. The Department nonetheless continued to give regular instruction in five Slavic languages (Russian, Czech, Polish, Serbian/Croatian, Ukrainian) and Romanian; it continued to offer instruction at all levels of Russian - including self-paced Russian and First- and Second-Year Russian during Summer Session - every year. (Five of the textbooks used in courses have been or are being developed by members of the Department: V puti [1996, second-year Russian, Olga Kagan], Cestina hrou: Czech for Fun [1998, first-year Czech, Susan Kresin], Readings in Czech (1985, second-year Czech, Michael Heim, Dean Worth), Communicative Romanian [first-year Romanian, Georgiana Galateanu, Michael Heim], Balakajmo!-A Basic Course for English-Speaking Students [first-year Ukrainian, Roman Koropeckyj, Robert Romanchuk.] Our attempts at boosting dwindling enrollments included publicity campaigns (posters, sandwich boards, advertisements in the Daily Bruin), mass e-mailings (lists of our offerings to all eleven thousand undergraduates), regular alphabet-learning sessions, reinvigoration of the Russian Club (with many off-campus activities and integration into the local Russian community), increased frequency of general education courses (the Russian Novel, Russian Civilization, Slavic Civilization) and popular literature-in-translation courses (Tolstoy, Dostoevsky), experimentation with flexible scheduling patterns for language courses, introduction (in addition to the successful self-paced, that is, one-on-one first-year courses) of an intensive Russian course covering the first year in two quarters, and a series of senior seminars taught by advanced graduate students (because of the quality of our students' proposals the Slavic Department, though one of the smallest in the College of Letters and Science, was the only one allotted two such courses by the Office of Instructional Development last year). Professor Heim piloted a new type of General Education course for the College, a writing-intensive course based on Russian 99B (Russian Civilization in the Twentieth Century); Professor Vroon introduced Russian 30 (Russian Literature and World Cinema), which TAs have now taught for University Extension and the Summer School.

Another tack we took was to increase efforts to attract the pool of heritage speakers from the Russian community, which, again contrary to general expectations, has kept replenishing itself. As a result, we were able to make up for our decrease in elementary language enrollments with enrollments of up to sixty students in advanced classes like Professor Ospovat's Russian poetry and prose series (Russian 130 and 140.), classes which, because readings and lectures are entirely in Russian, were traditionally limited to majors and therefore five or, at most, ten students. The Department is also offering a number of new advanced language courses aimed specifically at Russian heritage speakers: Russian 100 (Literacy in Russian), Russian 103 (Russian for Native and Near-Native Speakers: 103A/Russian National Identity, 103B/Literature and Film, 103C/Special Topics). In this connection Professor Kagan is working on the first textbook for heritage speakers, Russian for Russians. The emphasis on heritage speakers is especially important in view of a major outreach project created by Professor Ivanov to study the diverse language communities of greater Los Angeles, a project that began as an undergraduate seminar in the Department.

The Department was the first in the College to create a minor; in fact, it was Professor Heim who during his stint on the Executive Committee in the early nineties proposed that the College as a whole institute minors. The Department now gives students a choice of three, all of which have a language component.

Finally, we have incorporated video components and web-based material into virtually all courses, language and literature, at the undergraduate level. We have offered Fourth-Year Russian to UC Riverside and Russian civilization to UC Irvine via a distance-teaching hook-up. Support for such activities comes from a variety of campus-wide facilities like Humanities Computing, the Office of Instructional Development, the Faculty New Media Center,

and the Instructional Media Laboratory. Graduate research and teaching fellows have designed programs of internet-based instructional materials at various levels. (You may visit our site at [www.humnet.ucla.edu/humnet/slavic](http://www.humnet.ucla.edu/humnet/slavic) and click, for example, on the tutorials for Golosa, the textbook for first-year Russian.) Finally, in conjunction with her second-year textbook of Russian and as a result of a \$30,000 grant from Provost Copenhaver, Professor Kagan is working on a pilot project to supplement classroom instruction with interactive web-based exercises that can serve as a template for other foreign languages.

In other words, we have been careful to pull our weight on the university level even when circumstances have kept enrollments and the number of majors lower than we would have liked. One major problem remains. The loss of Professors Irina Gutkin and Peter Hodgson has cut deeply into the Department's undergraduate program in literature: eight of the ten courses they collectively taught per year belonged to the undergraduate curriculum, that is, together they taught approximately 45% of the undergraduate Russian literature courses in translation. We are currently conducting a search for one of their positions and have requested authorization for the second. Our goal is to maintain at the highest level what we feel to be an intellectually stimulating and viable liberal arts program. One student who took several courses in our department but graduated from another recently told us she regretted not having majored in Slavic, which she called "one of UCLA's undiscovered treasures."

### The Graduate Program

Several years after the nation-wide decline in undergraduate enrollments the Department began to experience a concomitant decline in graduate applications. With Slavic departments failing to replace retiring faculty, reducing FTEs, and facing mergers with other language and literature departments or even abolishment, with ever decreasing funds available for recruiting and retaining graduate students, morale plummeted throughout the field. The funding situation became especially precarious when our Center for European and Russian Studies lost its Department of Education grant three years ago: the grant had included several annual FLAS fellowships that supported our graduate students. (Fortunately, the Graduate Division, the College of Letters and Science, and the International Studies and Overseas Programs have made up the difference each year, and we are confident the Center will regain the grant for the coming three-year period.)

Hard times have prompted us to re-examine our mission, that is, to ask how we can best ensure the vitality of our traditions, enhance our present strengths, and accommodate the future needs of the university and the profession. While faculty and students alike agree that it should build on those strengths - namely, the commitment to the entire Slavic field rather than Russian alone and to the interplay between linguistics and literature - we also agree that they can be complemented by certain changes. A once required proseminar is no longer taught and has not been replaced with basic training in research techniques, bibliography, style sheets, etc.; it is sorely lacking. Reading lists for the MA and PhD examinations in both literature and linguistics need to be updated.

On a more global level the first area that needs addressing is that of theory. The Slavs have contributed richly to the theoretical background of twentieth-century linguistic and literary studies with Russian Formalism, Czech Structuralism, Lotman's cultural semiotics, and the Bakhtinian approach, and here we are on firm ground. What we need is to cross-fertilize their contributions with current Anglo-American and continental theory. We have expanded the theoretical purview in linguistics by attracting Professor Yokoyama; in literature we are currently conducting a search for a junior position in nineteenth-century prose with proven competence in contemporary Anglo-American and/or continental theory (gender studies, cultural studies, postcolonial theory, neo-Marxism, and the like). We need to help our students better integrate theoretical perspectives into their work starting at the basic, MA level.

Closely related is the issue of the direction the field as a whole is taking. Students have expressed an interest in making the program flexible enough to include a new, third track within the Department, one combining

linguistics and literature. Professors Ivanov, Klenin, and Yokoyama have been publishing scholarship on the cusp of literature and linguistics for years. We intend to explore the possibility of setting up joint degree programs with the Department of Linguistics (where a graduate student in Slavic is currently a TA in an undergraduate course) and the Department of Applied Linguistics (where, for instance, the theory of language pedagogy is taught). Such programs would considerably broaden our students' options on the job market. We were highly gratified by the fact that last year, for example, the three students who applied for positions (two in literature and one in linguistics/language pedagogy) each received two offers, and all three are currently teaching (at Brandeis, Connecticut College, and Grinnell). This is a record matched by no other department in the country. Other institutions at which our students found positions during the period under review include the University of Iowa, Ohio State, Dalhousie, Rice, and the Russian State Pedagogical University, and two received tenure (at Brown and the University of North Carolina).

The Department has lobbied the College of Letters and Science for two FTEs to replace those it lost from retirement during the period under review. One is for a South Slavic specialist, the position currently being filled by Adjunct Associate Professor Corin and one that is essential to the Department's programmatic commitment to Slavic languages and literatures. In the framework of our interest in current theory the South Slavist would ideally represent a prominent school in theoretical linguistics not currently represented in the Department (formal, cognitive, etc.) and be versatile enough to develop and teach, for example, undergraduate courses on the cultures of the Balkan Slavs. The other is for a literary specialist whose principal expertise lies in the Soviet and Russian postmodern periods. Current students - both graduate and undergraduate - and many recent applicants have expressed a strong interest in post-Soviet developments in literature, the arts, and popular culture. By filling the second position with a specialist in this area, which is not yet widely taught anywhere in the country, we would be able to compete more effectively for the best students. Such a specialist would also have much to contribute to the Department of Comparative Literature and the Center for Modern and Contemporary Studies.

A department is as good as its faculty - and its students. We are currently making our web site more applicant-friendly and doing everything we can to attract qualified candidates for graduate study. However, despite our best efforts at recruitment and retention we are unable to compete with the financial incentives offered by a number of other institutions. The problem is compounded by the fact that, given the Department's international reputation, we have had a number of excellent international graduate students, mostly from Asia and (now that they are free to travel) Eastern Europe, but these students strain our resources inordinately because they must pay non-resident tuition in addition to university fees. To support both them and other qualified applicants - and to fill the Department's sorely depleted coffers - we have begun a fundraising campaign among our alumni and the public at large. We have made contact with all our alumni by means of a departmental Newsletter and collected several thousand dollars. This new source of funds together with increased support from the Graduate Division will help us to compete with the multi-year financial-aid packages with which other institutions have wooed promising students away from us in the recent past.

### Comparison to the Previous Review

Let us begin by addressing the recommendations made by the previous review agencies, the Committee on Undergraduate Courses and Curricula (CUCC) and the Graduate Council (GC). Both advised the Department to establish clear and consistent written guidelines for distributing TA assignments and to select TAs in a timely manner. The guidelines have been established and are distributed to graduate students annually together with the guidelines for receiving all types of financial aid. We understand that students wish to learn about TA assignments in the spring preceding the academic year during which they will teach, but since the funding of TAships is inextricably bound with other varieties of funding some of them may simply have to be assigned later. We are careful to keep everyone apprised of the situation as it develops. Nonetheless, a number of students have expressed a desire for a

more collegial and transparent atmosphere.

We immediately followed the GC recommendation that we create a course to provide students with training in methods of language teaching. All students now take Professor Kagan's Teaching Slavic Languages at the College Level (Slavic 495) in preparation for teaching and her Teaching Apprentice Practicum (Slavic 375) while teaching. We also immediately followed the CUCC recommendation that we evaluate and revamp Russian 1. Methods developed in Slavic 495 laid the foundations for the new elementary language course, but other changes - a new textbook, Golosa, more emphasis on video and computer-assisted instruction - occurred as well. We have also begun to take advantage of the TA consultant position funded by the office of Instructional Development to enable experienced TAs to help train their peers.

The CUCC recommendation that we lobby for funds to use TAs to teach sections in the larger literature and civilization courses took longer to address, but within the past few years funds have been forthcoming and we now regularly offer discussion sections in two General Education courses, The Russian Novel (Russian 25) and Russian Civilization in the Twentieth Century (Russian 99B), which, as mentioned above, served as a pilot course for the writing-intensive component of the new General Education program.

There was a concern among the graduate students about the availability of TAships given the ratio of graduate students to available TA FTE's. To address this issue, not raised at the time of the previous report, we have begun to allot TAships at 25% rather than the full 50% level. The argument in favor of breaking up a TAship is that it gives both experience and fee remission to two students rather than one; the argument against it is that it may result in fragmentation in the classroom. Another problem is how to insure that TAs hired at 25% do not work proportionally more than those hired at 50%.

Instead of adopting the recommendation that the graduate adviser be a given course relief, which would have proved difficult in light of our already tight resources, we decided to divide the responsibilities of the office among four faculty members: a linguistics adviser, a literature adviser, and two members of the admissions and support committee. The way in which admissions and support decisions are reached has also changed: the faculty used to submit comments to the committee, which then made the decisions; now every faculty member rates every applicant for admission and every continuing student, and we meet as a body to discuss and vote on the candidates.

### Special Circumstances

We feel we have emerged from a difficult period of transition in our own field (the transformation of East-Central Europe and its very real repercussions in the academy) and in the university (the reduction of public funding and the call for the financial accountability of academic programs) with a sense of where our strengths lie, how best to capitalize on them, and how to adapt to the new situations confronting us. We do not yet have all the answers, of course: we spent a good deal of energy, for example, formulating a new pre-professional MA program in Russian, but the chair postponed discussion until the outcome of our FTE requests is clear. Still, we have come through with our reputation and achievements intact - every faculty member contributes not only to the teaching program but also to the departmental profile of a center of research in a variety of fields - and we look forward to contributing even more to UCLA and to the scholarly community as a whole.

.....  
Date: Thu, 13 Jul 2000 18:17:48 -0800 (PST)  
From: MICHAEL HEIM <heim@HUMnet.UCLA.EDU>  
Subject: missing external attachment (apologies)  
To: slavic.department.graduate.students@HUMnet.UCLA.EDU

MIME-version: 1.0

Priority: normal

June 26, 2000

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Dear members of the UCLA community:

Towards the end of last week, we, the two members of the external review committee, received copies of the 1999-2000 Academic Senate Review of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, a document which includes the Draft Report of the Internal Review Team as well as our own report. We recognize that no response to the Draft Report was solicited from us, the external reviewers. Nevertheless, we would ask you to consider our remarks below, regardless of procedures, because of the importance of the matter: the very existence of this academic unit is at stake. We have sent this letter first by e-mail (through the address of Ms. L. Crespo:crespo@senate.ucla.edu) with the hard copy with signatures to follow. We have addressed it to a minimal number of individuals, but we trust it can be made known to the full bodies of the relevant committees.

When we two left Los Angeles, having heard the same evidence as the internal committee and having given a quite detailed and rigorous exit interview, we believed that we shared approximately the same perception as the members of the internal committee of the state of the department, of both its strengths and its difficulties. Accordingly, we were astonished when we read the Draft Report and found that it includes a thoroughly negative evaluation of the department's treatment of its graduate students and, further, that it includes the dual recommendations that the department be obliged to suspend graduate admissions indefinitely and that the department be placed into receivership. The evaluation does not correspond to what we heard during our two-day visit. These recommendations are counter-productive. >>In greater detail: >>1. The Draft Report (p. 2) states that students perceive the program as "capricious and self-serving," and then follows this assertion by the statement that the external reviewers "devoted more space to this issue than to any other single aspect..." as if to suggest that we, the external reviewers, were in agreement with the immediately preceding statement and, by extension, with the whole of the internal report. Not so. In our exit interview and our written report, we identified a problem, and we wrote about it at some length in order to make it clear exactly what our perception of the severity of the problem was--serious but circumscribed--and in order to offer a recommendation on how to deal with it. We do not find the program capricious and self-serving. We do not agree with the language of the Draft Report that characterizes the department as treating students as "chattel" and "damaged goods." This simply does not correspond to our judgment of life in the department, and as external reviewers, we want to distance ourselves as far as possible from this characterization of the department.

2. The dual recommendations to suspend graduate admissions and place the department in receivership punish the whole department for the sins of a few, invoking the logic that all are "culpable." The logic is peculiar, and the recommendations are unfair to the department as a whole. Punishing the collective for the acts of individuals (a scenario with which we are familiar from our study of the Soviet Union) is a strategy of desperation. It represents a refusal to take any responsibility for the practical implementation of change.
3. The judgments about the transgressions of individuals place complete trust in the versions of the students. In all the extensive interviews that went on after we left, there was apparently no attempt to interview any of the faculty members who are tacitly held responsible.
4. Above all, the recommendations are simply ineffectual. They contain no suggestion of a practical mechanism that would improve the behavior of individuals or the ethos of the department. (There is also no exit strategy: how can the department ever prove that they no longer mistreat their graduate students?) The recommendations punish, but they offer no mechanisms for improvement. They offer nothing that can be implemented.

These harsh sanctions have come out of the blue. If the perception within the university was that the department was dysfunctional, the problem should have been addressed in some more productive, positive, problem-solving fashion by the administration prior to this review. There is a fundamental issue of fairness and justice to the academic unit that is at issue here. In fact, we, the external reviewers, while we know full well the nature of the historical tensions within the department, do not find it dysfunctional. The training is excellent. The department has recently placed its graduates with extraordinary success (though we do not have the figures, we expect its placement record in recent years is better than that of any other national language-and-literature program at UCLA). And--especially under its current chair--the department has come to a mature understanding of the nature of its problems as a collective and it has begun to find ways of resolving conflict and functioning effectively as a collective. The historical problems are real, but the resolve to get beyond these problems is no less manifest. The department should be congratulated for its recent efforts to move forward, not punished for the residue of its historical tensions.

As a more efficacious alternative to these precipitous and harsh sanctions, one might consider a concrete two-step strategy that would consist, first, of a meeting between representatives of the university community--possibly Dean Yu and the chair of the internal committee--and the whole of the faculty of the department. Such a meeting could be used to make clear how the Administration and the larger university community perceive the problems of the department and could serve to remind the faculty of the standards for comportment. After such a meeting, once the ground-rules are set, the department can then, as a long-term strategy, articulate and utilize an internal mechanism for conflict resolution, where necessary involving the services of a professional mediator.

We, the members of the external review committee, would take the liberty of reminding you that our external review was an extremely rigorous review. We listened carefully while we there, and discussed with each other quite intensely our ongoing perceptions and incipient recommendations. This was no sweetheart review. It was a review that identified problems and made clear judgments and strong recommendations, some of which, we knew in advance, would not be popular with all of the individual faculty members at UCLA. For this reason, we feel particularly distressed that the language and recommendations of the Draft Report run so thoroughly counter to our perceptions of the program, our perceptions of the sense of the committee during our visit, and our judgment of what is practical and necessary to move this department forward.

As the members of the external review committee--as individuals who were likewise charged with evaluating how well the department fulfills its academic mission, as individuals who observed the same department and heard the same testimony as the internal committee--we would urge you to reconsider the decision to impose harsh sanctions on the department and, instead, to formulate a more measured and more constructive response. These sanctions are unwarranted. These sanctions will destroy overnight a department that has been making extraordinary and earnest efforts to improve its undergraduate curriculum, its already effective graduate program, and its historically imperfect but improving departmental ethos. What is needed instead is a response that will lead to productive change, in the relevant individuals and in the ethos of the department as a whole, rather than to further factionalism and rancor.

Sincerely,

David M. Bethea, Vilas Research Professor, University of Wisconsin  
External Member, 1999-2000 Academic Senate Review of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at UCLA  
Alan Timberlake, Professor, University of California at Berkeley  
External Member, 1999-2000 Academic Senate Review of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at UCLA

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Date: Thu, 13 Jul 2000 16:01:02 -0800 (PST)  
From: MICHAEL HEIM <heim@HUMnet.UCLA.EDU>  
Subject: eight-year review follow-up  
To: slavic.department.graduate.students@HUMnet.UCLA.EDU  
MIME-version: 1.0  
Priority: normal

By now you will have had time to read the Internal and External Departmental Reviews, my "Errors of Fact" statement, and the Internal Review Committee's response to that statement. I am pasting below my point-by-point reaction to the response and sending under separate cover the External Committee's response to the Internal Review. Once you have perused these documents and reviewed the earlier ones, I would like to talk to each of you and hear your suggestions for addressing the Department's problems. I will be out of town from 14 July to 21 July, but will be in town for the rest of the summer. Please drop in or call for an appointment. If you would rather respond with an anonymous letter, please feel free to do so.

Chair's Response to the Internal Review Team's Response

1. The Chair objects to characterizing student "XX" as having "excellent credentials."

The student in question had excellent credentials on paper, which is why we accepted her; they turned out to be less than excellent in reality. Given that she had to take our third-year undergraduate Russian course (we normally require four years of undergraduate Russian of incoming students) after receiving A's and A+'s in the Riverside third-year Russian course (the Russian placement examination she took upon arriving at UCLA is in her file), I conclude that grade inflation was at work at UCR. I would also point out that her 4.0 GPA at UCLA consists of an A in the undergraduate third-year course she was retaking and two A's in graduate courses from the faculty member with whom she had the conflict.

2. The Chair states that XX is the only student that has been lost as a direct result of conflict with a faculty member.

The response "This is not true" is not a rebuttal. Do the internal reviewers mean I have not told the truth or do they merely think I am wrong? In either case, I must know which student or students they have in mind before I can defend my name or viewpoint. Retaliation here is beside the point because by definition the student/s involved have left the program.



3. The Chair repeatedly objects to the failure to identify clearly the specific faculty members and students who are referred to in the report.

Not only do I not "repeatedly object to the failure to identify clearly the specific faculty members and students who are referred to in the report"; I never once do so. I can see how one sentence, taken out of context, might be misconstrued to read as a call for identity. But that sentence - "Who are 'the students' here?" - is the first in a series of four clearly rhetorical questions. I am not asking which students came forth: I do not need to ask who the offended students are because I know who they are. Most if not all of the students in question have come to talk to me, or I have proactively gone and talked to them. I also - again proactively - encouraged all students who I knew had had problems to talk to the review committee openly. The report could at least have stated 1) what percentage of the graduate student body as a whole reported problems and 2) what percentage of those who reported problems were in linguistics as opposed to literature. That would have given a clearer and more balanced picture of the issue.

4. The Chair strenuously objects to the failure of the review team to confront specific faculty members with specific complaints so that they could present their point of view.

I still strenuously object to the failure of the review team to confront specific faculty members with specific complaints, but not only "so that they could present their point of view" but also, as I stated in my letter, so that 1) the team could judge the complexity (and abnormality) of the problem and offer advice on how to deal with it and 2) the faculty members themselves would understand how seriously the team took the problem. Then there is the issue of confidentiality. How can anyone - review team, chair, colleague - deal with the issues without citing specific instances? The reason students called for confidentiality was to prevent retaliation, but retaliation has never occurred and I will be glad to outline the measures the Department has taken to ensure that it not occur.

5. The Chair feels that he was not adequately consulted in the preparation of the internal report.

When I expressed my dissatisfaction at not being adequately consulted, I referred specifically to the period following the site visit. From my single post-site conversation with the chair of the team, I knew that he had talked to one student. He told me that he was checking my version of an incident against hers and that her case was linked to several others, but he did not tell me how. I cannot imagine that any student would fear retaliation from me (in fact, on the first day of the site visit the Departmental graduate-student representative asked me to deliver a statement of their grievances to the committee, a statement that was not sealed or even in an envelope), and as chair of the Department I was in a position to give objective information

on any number of cases. The students knew I was aware of the problems: in some cases they had come to me; in others, as I have pointed out, I took the initiative and went to them. I expected to hear about specific cases and was not interested in "rehashing generalities." We held an open meeting with the graduate students before preparing our self-review; we also invited - and received - anonymous statements from them after the meeting. I therefore went into the site visit with my eyes open. I am here quoted as having given the impression that "aside from funding problems there was no student dissatisfaction to speak of." I certainly never felt that that was the case, and I am not aware of having given or wishing to give such an impression. The disaffected students gave their picture of the Department, which I never questioned, but it was not the whole picture. My job as chair was to give a well-rounded picture, which I might add, coincides in both its positive and negative assessments with the external report.

6. The Chair claims to have "had no idea" the review team would come to the conclusions it did.

The statement here is unequivocal: I was told three times during the site visit that "suspension of graduate admissions was being considered." I can only say that I was stunned when I read in the report that the Graduate Council had voted to suspend graduate admissions. Had I known of the possibility during the visit, I would have reacted on the spot with the arguments against it I raise in my letter and perhaps a few more: the waste of resources, the curtailment of the literature program because of problems in the linguistics program, the punitive rather than curative nature of the "solution," its unforeseeable aftermath, etc. As a result, I phoned Professor Timberlake and asked him whether he remembered the suspension issue coming up during the site-visit interviews with me. His response was that he remembered the issue being mentioned only in closed session, that is, when I was not present.

7. Many additional issues regarding procedure and interpretation are raised by the Chair. (Three are listed.)

Let me address each of the three issues separately.

First, the review team objects to my use of the word "aberrations" to refer to "issues of long standing" and "of fundamental importance." By using the word "aberrations," I do not mean or even imply that the issues are not of long standing or of fundamental importance; they are clearly that. What I mean is that they are a "departure from the norm" (the standard definition), that is, they affect a minority of the students and that learning goes on even among that minority. I do not condone the aberrations; I qualify them in my letter as "regretful," but - as I try to show by citing the rate of success in MA and PhD examinations this year and the number of PhD's granted and teaching positions secured in the past five years - aberrations they are.

Second, the review team demands "immediate and decisive action." Besides the suggestion to consult the Ombuds Office, it has given no advice as to what form that action should take. I have however taken action on my own and in conjunction with various colleagues. Immediate results are easy to demand, but - and here we have no argument with the report - the problem is a recalcitrant one and far from easy to repair, especially in a department as small as ours.

In larger departments students have many faculty members to choose from and can move from one to another should problems arise. The linguistics students in our Department work with only three and a half faculty members. I do not intend this as an excuse (the literature students work with only two more and do not experience the linguistics students' problems); I intend it as a partial explanation of why the problem has proved so difficult to solve. Which brings me to the final point.

I resent the review team's insistence that the Department "has had no will to correct" the situation. I say "insistence" because its report made a similar accusation in similar terms. I cannot claim we have been as successful as we might have liked, but we have not ignored the problems by any means. Professor Vroon, who was chair for most of the period under review, tried any number of strategies. I know this from the innumerable conversations we have had on the subject over the years and from the progress, intermittent as it was, that was in fact made.

Let me conclude by reiterating my strong belief that suspending admissions will harm rather than help the graduate program, that it is a punitive rather curative measure. I plan to go before the Graduate Council at its first fall meeting and demonstrate why the efforts towards a permanent resolution of the problems during the months since the site visit warrant a vote to lift the suspension.

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