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## **IV-G. RESPONSE BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SLAVIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES TO THE EIGHT-YEAR REVIEW**

We are gratified by the praise for the Department's stature and the accomplishments of both the graduate and undergraduate programs, but we have also taken the harsh criticisms to heart. In a series of four faculty meetings in late September and early October and a number of less formal gatherings of the Department's literature and linguistics caucuses we passed approximately twenty motions designed to address each of the recommendations made by the internal review team and the external review team and to redress the offenses they set forth. To a large extent the motions arose from a careful perusal of all materials relevant to the report. These include the questionnaire distributed by the Department to graduate students in the spring of 1999 in connection with the preparation of the departmental self-review, notes on the discussion at the meeting, the students' written responses following the meeting, the self-review, the external report, the draft of internal report, the Chair's response to the draft, the report itself, the response of the internal committee chair to the Chair's response, the response of the external committee to the report of the internal committee, and student comments solicited by the graduate student representative Marilyn Gray, who also took active part in the faculty meetings. Equally important, however, were the suggestions for dealing with the issues garnered by the Chair during the summer from one-on-one meetings with faculty members and a number of students and with Interim University Ombudsperson Nancy Barbee, Dean of Humanities Pauline Yu, Dean of the Graduate Division Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, and Associate Vice Chancellor for Administration Allen Solomon.

Let us begin by treating the issue the internal report revolves around, that is, what it terms the unhealthy environment among the graduate students and its relation to faculty conduct. Although we understand that an unhealthy environment cannot be legislated out of existence, we feel we have taken the necessary decisive actions to restore that environment to health. First and foremost, we have undertaken to provide graduate students with a handbook that will go a long way to lifting what they have perceived as the veil of secrecy surrounding a number of departmental procedures. It will contain detailed explanations of all current policies, including the ones recently passed in connection with the review. Of the new policies the one most directly relevant to the issue of faculty conduct is the establishment of a formal grievance procedure in

cases involving a potential violation of the Faculty Code of Conduct. Given its central importance let us cite it in toto: Students believing they have a grievance involving a faculty member are advised to attempt to resolve the matter with the faculty member in question. If the grievance remains unresolved or if students feel hesitant about approaching the faculty member, they may bring the matter to the attention of the chair and request the chair's mediation. At any point students may avail themselves of the campus Ombuds Office. Other courts of resort include the Graduate Division and the Office of the Dean of the Humanities. In cases of grievances involving a potential violation of the Faculty Code of Conduct (see UCLA Faculty Handbook [[www.apo.ucla.edu/apoweblfacultyhandbook19.htm49c](http://www.apo.ucla.edu/apoweblfacultyhandbook19.htm49c)]) students may consult with a member of the Academic Senate Grievance and Discipline Procedures Committee (3125 Murphy Hall, 310-825.3891) for help in deciding on an appropriate course of action. For further details see UCLA General Catalogue, Appendix A, Charges of Violation. We are also undertaking a number of initiatives to foster student-faculty collegiality: a) introduction of a new system of advising that allows students to choose a mentor/adviser after the first year, b) establishment of a pro-seminar team-taught by faculty members, c) stipulation of norms for dissertation feed-back, d) modification and clarification of norms for MA and PhD examinations, and e) development of informal faculty-student seminars.

Now let us go through the recommendations made by the review committees point by point. The first three recommendations of the internal committee concern future FTE's: 1) to "raise the current search for a nineteenth century [literature] specialist to open rank", 2) to "seek a joint appointment to fill the twentieth-century position," and 3) to "seek a joint appointment to provide a permanent South Slavist." We have obtained permission from the Dean for 1) and are actively lobbying for 2) and 3). In response to 4) - engaging the linguistics faculty in undergraduate teaching - we have established a requirement for all faculty members to teach at least one undergraduate course a year and have come up with several new possibilities for undergraduate linguistics courses

(one of which, Russian 40M [Language and Gender] is scheduled for the spring). We have gone beyond the recommendation in 5) - to increase admissions selectivity so as to reduce attrition - by agreeing not only to restrict admission to a group of two to four exceptional students but also to follow the lead of many UCLA departments and offer those students four-year packages. We have also gone beyond the recommendation in 6) - to make the criteria for funding decisions available to students in writing (which we have to in fact done for years) and made the support process more "student-friendly" by a) soliciting a yearly self-assessment of progress and information on circumstances adversely affecting progress, and b) making public each spring the kinds and amount of student funding the Department has for distribution and each fall the number of students supported from each category. The latter also addresses the final recommendation, 7), namely, to lift the veil of secrecy, which, as we have mentioned above, is also the goal of the student handbook. The specific issue named in 7) - admitting the MSO to faculty meetings - has

been acted upon: the MSO (as well as the Student Affairs Officer) attended the faculty meetings referred to above and will continue to attend them.

Since some of the recommendations of the external committee (1, 4, 9, 10, 11, and 12) coincide with those of the internal committee, we will treat only the ones that differ. We have again gone beyond the recommendation in 2) - to continue seeking ways to appeal to a campus-wide audience - by offering yet another writing-intensive literature course this quarter (Russian 25W [The Russian Novel]), a new upper-division literature course in the winter (Russian 126 [Russian Drama]), a new lower-division writing course (Slavic 90), a new lower-division linguistics course (the Russian 40M course alluded to above, which is a General Education course crosslisted with East Asian Languages and Cultures and Communication Studies) in the spring, and by proposing a freshman honors seminar. The issue in 3) - a section of First-Year Russian with twenty-six students - has not recurred. We have gone beyond the suggestions in 5) - to investigate ESL and foreign language departments as sources for TAs: we are investigating Writing Programs and Comparative Literature as well and have made the search for extramural funding a priority issue. As requested by 6), literature students now have an updated MA and PhD reading list; linguistics students have an updated MA reading list, and PhD lists will be compiled for each student on an individual basis. As requested by 7), we have regularized the format and content for MA and PhD examinations, the MA examination testing a broad, comprehensive knowledge of the field, the PhD examination testing a number of specific topics in depth and including a dissertation proposal. Reaction to 8) - methods for streamlining the program and reducing the time-to-degree - was varied: the overwhelming majority of students and faculty opposed the elimination of the MA examination, and we therefore retained it. There was more controversy about whether the currently required reading knowledge of French and German should be changed to French or German, but in the end we decided to retain both and test only one, while requiring the use of both in doctoral-level classes and examinations and in the dissertation. We have instituted the suggested sub-specialty at the PhD level, but made it optional so as not to encumber students who feel it would impede their progress. We have not converted the "second Slavic language" requirements to electives (conceivably as a PhD sub-specialty option) even though, as the external committee pointed out, it might reduce the time-to-degree, because the overwhelming majority of students and faculty opposed the measure as incommensurate with the Department's profile and commitment to excellence. Finally, we have implemented the suggestion of abolishing the qualifying paper and made a dissertation proposal an integral part of the doctoral examinations.

We believe we have acted forcefully and in good faith to resolve the central but intangible concern voiced by the internal report, that of the unhealthy environment. (At the student-faculty welcome meeting this fall the Chair said, "The internal report speaks of kinds of behavior that are damaging not only to the learning environment but also to one's sense of self and mutual respect. I want to assure you that as chair I will exercise the full power of my office to discourage them

and ensure that anyone who engages in them will be held accountable."); we also believe we have addressed every other concern raised in both reports, all of which are more tangible and more readily repairable by repairing rules, regulations, and policy. We therefore request that the Graduate Council reinstate the Department's right to admit graduate students into its program, effective immediately. It may seem questionable whether changes made over the eight months that have passed since the site visit can resolve problems that developed over a period of eight years. Should the Graduate Council have any doubts about the current ability of the Department to create an atmosphere productive of intellectual stimulation and growth, we invite you to ask the opinions of our students, including those interviewed during and after the site visit. We request that you do so by your meeting of 17 November, however, because we still hope to attract a cohort of fine new students for the coming academic year and thus continue our mission without a wrenching and potentially harmful hiatus. Our field is small and tightly knit; word travels fast. Normalizing the situation is particularly important at a time when Dean Yu. has authorized us to make an open-rank search for the first new ladder faculty member in literature in nearly a decade: a program in abeyance will hardly attract stellar applicants.

Please let the Chair know if you have any questions. He will be happy to answer them in writing prior to the meeting or in person at the meeting.

18 October 2000

### Motions Passed

1. The Department shall issue a Graduate Student Handbook reflecting present and/or revised policies.
2. First year students shall receive advising from a troika consisting of the Student Affairs Office (SAO), the Russian language coordinator, and the chair. The SAO apprises students of general requirements, funding possibilities, etc.; the Russian language coordinator assesses students' proficiency in Russian; the chair reviews students' undergraduate records for strength and deficiencies (French, German, background in general linguistics and literary theory). From the second year on, students choose their own adviser. Should they desire, they may change advisers in the fall of any year. Students must apprise the SAO of the adviser selected.
3. Students believing they have a grievance involving a faculty member are advised to attempt to resolve the matter with the faculty member in question. If the grievance remains unresolved or if students feel hesitant about confronting the faculty member, they may bring the matter to the attention of the chair and request the chair's mediation. At any point, however, students may avail themselves of the campus Ombuds Office. Other courts of resort include the Graduate Division and the Office of the Dean of Humanities. In cases of grievances involving a potential violation of the Faculty Code of Conduct (see UCLA Faculty Handbook [[www.apo.ucla.edu/apoweb/](http://www.apo.ucla.edu/apoweb/)]

[facultyhandbook/9.htin#9c](#)]) students may consult with a member of the Academic Senate Grievance and Discipline Procedures Committee (3125 Murphy Hall, 310-825-3891) for help in deciding on an appropriate course of action. For further details see UCLA General Catalogue, Appendix A, Charges of Violation.

4. It is department policy to offer admitted students four-year packages contingent upon timely progress. Support will be equivalent in monetary terms to a 50% TAship on the assistant level. The package may consist of fellowships, grants, unrestricted aid, research assistantships, teaching assistantships, or any combination of the above. Most favorable consideration for further funding shall be given to students who maintain normative progress beyond advancement to candidacy.
5. MA reading lists in literature and linguistics shall be provided each academic year to all entering graduate students and be reviewed in a timely manner.
6. 25% TAships for scheduled language courses shall be used only in case of emergency funding needs.
7. Every faculty member shall teach at least one undergraduate course a year.
8. A pro-seminar shall be reinstated as required course for all first-year students.
9. The MSO of the Kinsey Humanities Group shall be present at faculty meetings.
10. Every graduate student and faculty member shall receive keys to the Slavic Reading Room.
11. Students may expect timely responses to the dissertation or individual chapters from their committees, that is, generally within one month of submission.
12. Non-native progress towards advanced degrees shall be defined as follows: six academic quarters from the onset of graduate study to the awarding of the MA degree; six academic quarters from the awarding of the MA degree to advancement to candidacy; six academic quarters from advancement to candidacy to the completion of the dissertation.
13. Each spring the Support Coordinators shall calculate and make public to faculty and students the kinds and amounts of student funding it has or recommends for distribution, and each fall the Support Coordinators shall calculate and make public the number of students supported from each category.
14. Students shall submit a Self Evaluation to the support coordinators by 15 March including 1) a list of all courses taken in graduate school together with the grades received, 2) self-assessment of progress to date and information on circumstances affecting progress, 3) talks given, papers published, etc., 4) prospects for coming year(s).
15. The Department shall appoint two faculty members, one in linguistics and one in literature, as recruitment officers.

## Changes in the Graduate Program

1. The Department shall institute an optional sub-specialty at the PhD level consisting of at least four courses selected by the student and approved by the graduate adviser. The courses will come from graduate offerings in one or more UCLA departments or programs (Anthropology, Applied Linguistics, Art History, Classics, Comparative Literature, English, Film, Folklore and

Mythology, French, Germanic, History, Indo-European Studies, language and literature departments [French, Germanic, etc.], Linguistics, Music, Philosophy, Psychology, Theater, Women's Studies) and including courses from within the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures (students in linguistics choosing from courses in literature and students in literature choosing from courses in linguistics).

2. A pro-seminar, consisting of 2-4 units, shall be reinstated as a required course for the MA.
3. Proficiency in either French or German shall be required for the MA. Proficiency must be demonstrated by passing a departmental translation examination. Although the examination may be deferred until after the MA examinations, the degree will not be awarded until it has been passed. Students are therefore urged to demonstrate proficiency as soon as possible after matriculation.
4. Students shall be given written notice of the results of the MA and PhD examination one hour after the conclusion of the oral portion of the examination and a written evaluation of their performance within one week.
5. Students may request MA or PhD examinations at the beginning of the academic year as well as at the end of each academic quarter.
6. The qualifying paper shall be abolished.
7. Proficiency in both French and German shall be required for the PhD. Proficiency in one of the languages will have been formally tested prior to the awarding of the MA. Proficiency in the second is to be demonstrated by the inclusion of texts in that language on the bibliographies prepared for the PhD examinations and the demonstration of familiarity with said texts in the written and/or oral portions of the PhD examinations.

#### Changes in the Linguistics Program

1. The catalogue text describing the PhD requirements in Slavic linguistics shall be modified as follows: Students in linguistics take two three-hour written examinations. In the first of these **THE STUDENT IS EXAMINED IN THE GENERAL AREA OF THE PROPOSED DISSERTATION RESEARCH**, in the other, in comparative Slavic linguistics, the history of Russian and the history and structure of a second Slavic language.

#### Changes in the Literature Program

1. Russian 215 (Contemporary Russian Literature) shall be renumbered Russian 213B and made an MA requirement.
2. The MA written examination shall consist of three 2-hour examinations, spaced one day apart over the course of a week, the first devoted to medieval and eighteenth-century Russian literature, the second to nineteenth-century Russian literature, and the third to twentieth-century Russian literature.
3. The MA oral examination shall be open to observation by faculty members other than those constituting the examination committee should the examinee so desire.
4. Russian 220A (Structure of Modern Russian: Phonology and Morphology) and Russian 204 (Introduction to the History of Modern Russian) and Russian 219 (Movements and Genres in Russian Literature) shall be eliminated as MA requirements for students specializing in Russian literature; Russian 220A and Russian 204 shall be added to the PhD requirements.
5. The number of seminars required for the PhD shall be reduced from 4 to 3.
6. The PhD written examination shall consist of seven one-hour examinations, spaced over the course of two weeks, devoted to topics distributed as follows:
  - a. the medieval period
  - b. the eighteenth century
  - c. the nineteenth century
  - d. the twentieth century
  - e. literary theory
  - f. a second Slavic literature
  - g. the provisional dissertation topicThe specific topics and the accompanying bibliographies shall be developed by the student in consultation with and the approval of the members of the examination committee.
7. A course will be developed in which students at the dissertation stage are required to give regular reports on the progress of their research. The course may be conflated with regular meetings of the literary faculty devoted to the discussion of ongoing faculty research.

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