



The University of Vermont  
FACULTY SENATE

**Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate  
Minutes**

Thursday, October 4, 2018, 4:15 – 6:15 pm

Present: Professors Almstead, Dale, Dickinson, Emery, Everse, Goodwin, Hazelrigg, Kervick, Monsen, Nichols, Rosebush, Rowe, Seidl, Sisk, Strickler, Ultsch, Wojewoda, GSS Representative Camille Marcotte

Absent: Professor Erickson, Garrison, Ivakhiv, Kasser, Marshall, Tomas, SGA Representative Caitlin McHugh

Guests: Brian Reed, Cindy Forehand, Beth Taylor-Nolan

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Chair Almstead called the meeting to order at 4:20 pm in 427A Waterman.

I. **Approval of the Minutes.** Megan Emery moved to approve the minutes of the September 6, 2018 meeting. The motion was seconded and carried.

II. **Chairperson's Welcome & Remarks**

- Chair Laura Almstead provided an update on the Behavioral Change Health Studies Minor 2-year review. Brian Reed and J. Dickinson met with Jim Hudziak and other faculty teaching in the BCHS minor to request more information on the assessment plan. Steps are being taken to draft an assessment plan. Alex Yin and the OIR are working with the BCHS faculty on how to track progression of students through the minor. Laura Almstead requested that a report on the assessment plan be submitted by October 22<sup>nd</sup> in order to be on the Agenda for the November CAC meeting.

III. **Reports: None at this time.**

IV. **APR Reports**

- A. **Sociology.** Ellen Rowe and Sharon Ultsch acted as the review subcommittee, and recommend that the CAC accept the external reviewer's report. The subcommittee's report is attached to these minutes. The Department of Sociology offers one degree, the B.A. in Sociology, minors in sociology and in gerontology, and offers key components of UVM's Law and Society minor as well as its Health and Society major and minor. The Sociology Department has a strong vision for the future outlined in their Academic Plan 2017-2022. The External Reviewers identified the plan as "a careful and well-thought through plan, but it is in jeopardy given the current hiring freeze in CAS." The Department has a plan in place and concrete suggestions provided in the report of the

external reviewers. Should they be successful in garnering the resources to support the needed faculty, they seem poised for a strong future. Dale Jaffe, Professor and Chair, responded to the draft subcommittee report with an update on the size of the sociology faculty. “The department is staring at a near future with potentially six full-time tenure-track professors, down 10 from the 16 in 2003. A bright future is in serious jeopardy without authorization to reverse this trend.” (September 20, 2018)

**Motion:** Laura Almstead called a vote to accept the subcommittee’s report on the APR of the Sociology Department.

**Vote:** 18 Approve, 0 Oppose, 0 Abstain

- B. Psychological Science.** Ann Hazelrigg and Joan Rosebush acted as the review subcommittee and recommend approval of the Department of Psychological Science’s APR process. The subcommittee report is attached to these minutes. The department is divided into 4 major programs or clusters based on faculty background and research areas: clinical, developmental, social and biobehavioral. The reviewers felt the department was doing excellent work under challenging conditions. Both reviewers were very impressed with the collegial atmosphere and the faculty are deeply committed and engaged with students and productive scholarship. The Departmental leadership is sound and the faculty are innovative and willing to invest in program development, though they noted struggles with historical vestiges of department organization and function (fate of the GE track, name of Biobehavioral program, future of the social cluster, etc.). The reviewers recommend the department engage in proactive decision making so available limited resources can be dedicated towards a vision of what the department envisions in 5-10 years. The reviewers hoped their report would assist UVM, CAS and the Department to work together to maintain the department’s strong positive trajectory.

**Motion:** Laura Almstead called a vote to accept the subcommittee’s report on the APR of the Psychological Science Department.

**Vote:** 18 Approve, 0 Oppose, 0 Abstain

- C. German & Russian.** Erik Monsen and Colby Kervick acted as the review subcommittee and strongly recommend a positive assessment of the APR process. The process was followed with integrity and the Department of German & Russian should be commended for a thorough and generative APR. The external reviewers note that the Department of German and Russian reflects the best practices in the field, and its positive reputation among students inside the program, colleagues across campus, and the wider profession. They call for more University support in stabilizing and respecting the program, in particular through 2 additional faculty lines; the Department should develop more objective measures of learning outcomes; and the Programs should continue to modernize the curriculum and learning materials, as well a better promote study abroad. None of the recommendations made by the external reviewers appear to be inappropriate and the department appears to agree with their assessment.

**Motion:** Laura Almstead called a vote to accept the subcommittee’s report on the APR of the German & Russian Department.

**Vote:** 18 Approve, 0 Oppose, 0 Abstain

V. **Other Business**

- **Prefix request for the major and minor in Health and Society (HSOC).** Laura Almstead brought one item of new business for vote. Last year, the CAC and Faculty Senate approved the major and minor in Health and Society. This interdisciplinary academic program, housed in the College of Arts & Sciences is now requesting the creation of a HSOC prefix. The Registrar has advised that the HSOC prefix is available for use. **Motion:** Ann Hazelrigg moved to approve the HSOC prefix for the Health and Society major and minor. The motion was seconded and carried.

VI. **New Business:**

A. Review Subcommittee needed:

- New BA in Dance (CAS) – Rosemary Dale and Rosi Rosebush
- New Certificate in Community Music: Organ (CAS) – Stephen Everse and Amy Seidl

VII. **Adjournment.** Ellen Rowe moved to adjourn at 5:09 p.m. The motion was seconded and carried.

**Faculty Senate Curricular Affairs Committee  
Academic Program Review Subcommittee Report  
Department of Sociology**

**Academic Program Review Subcommittee:** Ellen Rowe and Sharon Ultsch  
**External Reviewers:** Catherine Berheide, Ph.D., Skidmore College and John F. Zipp, Ph.D., University of Akron

The external review team visited the University of Vermont's Department of Sociology for a two-day review on April 5-6, 2018 as part of the Department's Academic Program Review (APR). This report summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of the program identified through the review process, provides a synopsis of the external reviewers' recommendations, and offers the APR internal review subcommittee's conclusions.

**Overview of Sociology Department:**

- Degrees offered: Although the Department of Sociology offers minors in sociology and in gerontology, while also offering key components of UVM's Law and Society minor as well as its Health and Society major and minor, the Department offers only one degree: The B.A. in sociology.
- Number of faculty and ranks: Appendix A1 of the Self Study Report presents the evolution of the composition of the faculty since the last review in 2003. At that time, the department had 16 tenure-track faculty. Since then, there have been seven additions and eleven subtractions, resulting in a net loss of four (from 16 to 12) in 2017. Currently there are twelve tenure-track faculty, eight have reached the level of full professor and four are at the associate level. In addition, there are two non-tenure-track faculty, both of whom have formal affiliations and teaching responsibilities in non-departmentalized programs. Though this has been relatively stable over about seven years, the stability is now compromised and will continue to be so with projected retirements from FY17-FY20. The Department is supported by a 1.0 FTE administrative support staff.
- Number of majors/minors as appropriate and how number have trended over time: Currently, Sociology has 116 majors, 113 minors, 21 with crime and criminal justice concentrations and 6 with gerontology ones. Recent data suggest that their most recent high is 224 majors in 2006 and the low is 108 in 2016. College data show that a 36% decline in sociology majors was similar to the losses experienced during this period by other social sciences – political science, geography, psychological science, and anthropology. Only economics showed a healthy increase during that period.
- Other services or notable features of the program (e.g. service teaching; outreach): We bring attention to just two services/notable features of the program.

1. Sociology provides a considerable number of “support” courses for other units at UVM: D1 requirement in Race and Racism; D2 requirement in the Diversity of Human Experience; Critical Race and Ethnic Studies (CRES); Gender, Sexualities, and Women’s Studies (GSWS); and Global and Regional Studies (GRS). From the external reviewers’ perspective, “it appears that UVM touts these requirements as key aspects of its distinctiveness and Sociology may be the most central department on campus in providing these courses.” It cannot continue to provide this support without enough faculty to deliver them. This year’s retirement, for example, involves a faculty member who for decades has taught a very popular D2 course on women. Without replacing her, no one is available to teach that course.
2. Criminologist Kathy Fox, who currently holds a position of associate dean in the college, has established the Liberal Arts in Prison Program (LAPP) and successfully affiliated UVM with the Consortium for Liberal Arts in Prison based at Bard College. In a recent semester, students enrolled in a sociology seminar on corrections along with prisoners at a local correctional institution and described it as one of the most transformative experiences they’ve had at college.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses:**

The quality of the program critically depends on the quality of its faculty. Based on the review of faculty vitas, it is evident that UVM has an outstanding sociology faculty. External Reviewers noted that collectively the research productivity and national reputation exceeds expectations of a BA only department. This is a strong teaching faculty with many using high impact pedagogies, including service learning and undergraduate research. The Reviewers noted several key indicators of faculty quality such as: Four Fulbright Awards in the last six years; award winning books published at major university presses; and multiple faculty with awards for outstanding teaching or nominated for teaching awards.

Three particular strengths of the UVM sociology curriculum identified by the External Reviewers are its breadth and depth in research methods, its focus on inequality/difference as a central aspect of the curriculum, and its emphasis on service and experiential learning. The reviewers referred to the American Sociological Association’s 2017 report on best practices for the undergraduate sociology major, *The Sociology Major in the Changing Landscape of Higher Education: Curriculum, Careers and Online Education*, when crafting their evaluation of the curriculum.

The Department suffers from an ongoing depletion of faculty resources, and they need the three additional tenure-track faculty lines, one of which had been approved for a search next year, before the latest hiring freeze went into effect. Overcoming this obstacle is of critical importance to the Department’s continued success. With fewer faculty, the result is to sacrifice the comprehensive curriculum that the discipline deems “best practices” for the undergraduate major.

**External Reviewers' Recommendations:**

First and foremost, the Reviewer's recommend hiring three new faculty. A retirement this academic year and possibly 3-4 in the next few years would decimate an academically strong department. There is an excellent hiring plan in place attached to areas of growth in the department. An infusion of new resources for new hires from central administration is needed to prevent what the Reviewers describe as a problem of demography not productivity.

The Department should identify a common core of sociological concepts or of sociological skills for all its introductory sociology courses. Common core concepts and shared student learning outcomes are needed for all introductory courses taught by multiple faculty as the department moves to a model of multiple pathways for future study in the discipline.

Offer the required statistics course in Sociology. Currently sociology majors are required to take a statistics course in the Statistics Department. Based on the Department's indirect measure of assessment (student surveys) and conversations the External Reviewer's held with students indicate that the current statistics course option is not meeting the needs of sociology majors.

Require a capstone experience for sociology majors, one that emphasizes integration of the discipline and provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the discipline. The American Sociological Association recommends a required capstone course in its recently updated report (2017) on the best practices for the ungraduated sociology major. However, given current staffing, this capstone course is not possible without the addition of one full-time tenure-track position.

Revise the assessment plan. The department's learning goals should be translated into more concrete outcomes that could lend themselves to systematic assessment.

**Summary and Conclusion:**

The collection of excellent faculty is led by skillful leaders crafting a strong vision for the future. Evidence of their success is The Department of Sociology Academic Plan 2017-2022 which approaches the model of a strategic plan with its integrative focus and multi-year horizon. The External Reviewers identified the plan as "a careful and well-thought through plan, but it is in jeopardy given the current hiring freeze in CAS." The Department has a plan in place and concrete suggestions provided in the report of the external reviewers. Should they be successful in garnering the resources to support the needed faculty, they seem poised for a strong future.

We offered the program the opportunity to respond to the draft subcommittee report. Dale Jaffe, Professor and Chair provided the following update on the size of the sociology faculty.

"The self-study reported that since 2003, there have been seven additions and eleven subtractions resulting in the reduction of the tenure-track faculty from 16 to 12. When we begin the 2019 academic year, I can confirm that

there will be two additional subtractions. This will bring the number of tenure-track faculty down to 10. Three of those 10 faculty are at or beyond the age of full retirement benefits (66 yrs) and one has a full-time appointment as associate dean in our college. The department is staring at a near future with potentially six full-time tenure-track professors, down 10 from the 16 in 2003. A bright future is in serious jeopardy without authorization to reverse this trend." (September 20, 2018)

In conclusion, the APR process has been carried out as specified by the Provost's Office and the subcommittee recommends that we accept the external reviewer's report.

**Faculty Senate Curricular Affairs Committee  
Academic Program Review Subcommittee Report  
Department of Psychological Science, College of Arts and Sciences**

**September 2, 2018**

**Academic Program Review Subcommittee:** Joan Rosebush, Ann Hazelrigg, Chair

**External Reviewers:** Terrence Deak, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, Binghamton University-SUNY, David A. F. Haaga, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, American University

The external review team visited the University of Vermont's Department of Psychological Science for a two-day review on March 26-27, 2018 as part of the department's Academic Program Review (APR). This report summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of the department identified through the review process, provides a synopsis of the external reviewers' recommendations, and offers the APR internal review subcommittee's conclusions.

**Comment from John Green, Department Chair of Psychological Science regarding correction in the reviewers' report.** "The only factual error to correct is that Rex Forehand is not retiring (top of p. 8) -- I think the confusion arose because he is moving into a new position (director of the Vermont Genetics Network) and will have a somewhat reduced role in the department because of that."

**Overview of the Department of Psychological Science:**

The Department is divided into 4 major programs or clusters based on faculty background and research areas: clinical, developmental, social and biobehavioral.

- **Undergraduate Degrees offered:** BA degree, a BS degree and a minor. Psychological Science is currently the largest major on campus, with ~ 550 majors
- **Master's Degree offered:** Master of Arts degree in Psychological Science (non-terminal)
- **Doctoral Degrees offered:** The Department offers PhD degree in Psychological Science with three concentrations (Clinical Psychology; General/Experimental Psychology and Clinical/Developmental Psychology, a hybrid, multi-disciplinary track).
- **Number of faculty and ranks:** 18 tenured/tenure-track faculty members, 1 clinical professor and 4 full-time lecturers, each with a doctorate degree.
- **Number of majors/minors as appropriate and how numbers have trended over time:** Psychological Science is currently the largest major at UVM with over 500 majors and over 150 minors. See Table 2 from the Department's Self Study Assessment for comparison of the UVM Psychological Science undergraduate program compared with area universities:

**Table 2. Bachelor's Degrees Awarded in Psychology at UVM and Comparison Universities.**

Institution Name	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
SUNY at Binghamton	274	311	313	383	278	363
University of Maine	108	126	122	111	101	85
University of New Hampshire-Main Campus	196	197	213	215	208	219
University of Rhode Island	178	193	226	233	203	216
University of Vermont	176	169	159	159	132	147

**Number of PhD students:** There are currently 22 Clinical Psychology PhD students (not including those on internship) and 15 General/Experimental Psychology PhD students. The Clinical Psychology PhD Program receives approximately 150-300 applications/year, the most of any PhD program at UVM. The General/Experimental PhD Program receives approximately 45-80 applications/year, comparable to the larger PhD programs at UVM, such as Neuroscience. In the two PhD programs, 6-12 PhDs have been awarded/year since 2009. These numbers place the Department ahead of some similar-sized New England state universities (University of Maine, 3-8 Psychology PhDs/year; University of New Hampshire, 3-7 Psychology PhDs/year) and slightly behind other comparable universities (Binghamton University, 7-15 Psychology PhDs/year; University of Rhode Island, 7-17 Psychology PhDs/year).

**Other services or notable features of the program (e.g. service teaching; outreach):** The department contributes to the undergraduate Neuroscience major and shares directorship of this major with the Department of Biology. Psychological Science faculty teach a number of required and elective courses within the Neuroscience major and mentor Neuroscience undergraduate students in their laboratories. At the undergraduate level, the Department has developed courses that involve application of knowledge to societal issues outside the classroom: a mentored clinical internship service-learning course (PSYS 190) which involves an on-site supervised work experience combined with a structured academic learning plan and a set of linked service-learning courses on the impacts of voluntary exercise on children's mental health and behavior. Students spend one hour/week in the UVM classroom with remaining time spent implementing physical activity in educational settings.

The Department's PhD programs have close affiliations with the Department of Psychiatry in the College of Medicine and several PhD students have a faculty member in the Department of Psychiatry as their primary mentor. The Psychological Science PhD programs are linked to each other through a hybrid Clinical/Developmental Psychology PhD in the department that integrates the training in the Developmental Psychology cluster of the General/Experimental Psychology PhD Program with the training of the Clinical Psychology PhD Program. The Biobehavioral Psychology cluster of the General/Experimental Psychology PhD program has a close affiliation with the Neuroscience PhD program and faculty from this cluster serve as primary mentors for several Neuroscience PhD students. Faculty members in both of the PhD programs have strong research collaborations with faculty in the College of Medicine (e.g., Neurological Sciences; Pharmacology; Psychiatry), the College of Education and Social Services (e.g., Education), the College of Nursing and Health Sciences (e.g., Rehabilitation and Exercise Science), the UVM Medical Center, and at other institutions.

**Strengths and Weaknesses and reviewer recommendations (Main recommendations are underlined):**

**DEPARTMENT/FACULTY**

**Strengths:**

- A significant strength of the department is its interpersonal atmosphere. The reviewers were impressed by “a clear sense that the faculty respect, like, and support one another.”
- The quality of departmental leadership is exceptionally high. Dr. John Green as Department Chair was respected and appreciated by all faculty members the committee met with.
- A well-functioning budget and personnel committee consisting of Dr. Green and the program directors is in place and is successful.
- There is a commitment of faculty to the teaching, research and service aspects of their positions. All faculty appear to be deeply vested in the mission of the department and to the students they serve and there is a palpable sense of energy toward teaching, research and scholarship activities
- Many award-winning faculty members: five University Scholar Awards, three Chaired Professorships, one Kidder Outstanding Faculty Award, one Kroepsch-Maurice Excellence in Teaching Award and one appointment as University Distinguished Scholar.

**Weaknesses:**

- Reviewers were surprised to learn that UVM does not return a percentage of indirect costs of grants to faculty or the department and felt it was antithetical to the IBB model. These funds can play an instrumental role in cultivating research productivity and incentivizing grant submissions. Suggestions include: increased discretionary travel/research funds year following a grant submission; indirect cost returns to investigator and, separately, to department for use in supporting grad student travel, pilot research funding seed grants, or other initiatives to try to create “virtuous circles” in which grant activity begets more grant activity.
- Faculty reported they were stretched thin. The reviewers felt the five “course equivalents”/year were on the high side for teaching loads in a PhD-granting department at a university with high standards for faculty research productivity. Faculty members are regularly teaching very large classes even beyond the introductory level, carrying high advising loads, and competing for publication opportunities in top journals and external research funding with scholars from other universities that may in many cases provide more and more effective support for these efforts. Several faculty are heavily involved with a rapidly growing second undergraduate major, Neuroscience, imposing increased demands on the Psychological Science faculty, particularly those within the Biobehavioral program.
- Assessment of learning outcomes needs to be addressed and taken more seriously.
- Department is lagging in development of online and hybrid course offerings to generate revenue and help students decrease length of time to degree.

- Advising of undergraduate majors appears to be creating a substantial time drain for many departmental faculty. Reviewers did not have detailed numbers for all department members but heard figures of 40-50 from some and even 60-80 from one faculty member. Particularly around peak times [e.g., start of registration], the flood of emails and individual appointments to confer about course planning would no doubt detract from faculty focus on teaching and scholarship.

#### Suggestions:

- **UVM and CAS are strongly encouraged to develop mechanisms to grow grant submissions among faculty.**
- **Address advising to lighten burden on faculty so they can devote more time to teaching and research.** Using professional academic advisors to handle the routine questions about requirements and course selection may be beneficial. Many universities have established extensive online advising tools to improve accessibility to advising and reduce repetitive interactions with students that place demands on faculty time. The reviewers recognized the department has taken steps towards professional advising by creating a triage structure in which one of the departmental Lecturers receive teaching release time to take on a large share of advising, directing students to other faculty only as needed for consultation on career direction in their sub-fields.

### **GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

#### General comments:

- The existing programs in Psychology are strong and well-recognized nationally. The reviewers were concerned the graduate programs could be in jeopardy over time due to budget issues in CAS and at UVM. There are no other PhD training programs in professional psychology at the University of Vermont or in the State of Vermont; therefore, this program makes a unique contribution in the University and State.
- The recently initiated doctoral program in Clinical/Developmental Psychology has created an innovative hybrid multi-disciplinary tract that has the potential to be a distinguishing feature of Psychology departments nationwide.

#### Suggestions:

- **The reviewers strongly urged the UVM administration to consider the importance of faculty hiring, space and other resources necessary to support PhD programs as both unique and paramount to the department's future. They felt it would be a mistake to not allocate the extra resources necessary for doctoral programs in favor of undergraduate enrollment needs elsewhere in the college/university.**

#### **General/Experimental (GE) Psychology Graduate Program**

#### Weaknesses:

- The reviewers' biggest concern was about the viability of the GE program. There were no

grad students last year. Possible causes may include a lack of critical mass of faculty in the social cluster; the establishment of the clinical/development PhD and diminished student interest in “biobehavioral” as opposed to the “neuroscience” brand. The single faculty member in the Social cluster is below critical mass (at least 3-4 faculty) for constituting a “cluster.” **The reviewers recommend the Department faculty engage in a proactive strategic planning process to determine the status of the PhD program and either strengthen or disband the program.**

- There was a minor concern that the preliminary/qualifying exams for PhD students are completed in the 4<sup>th</sup> year. Although this change is in the works for the Clinical Program, the reviewers support changing this deadline to the 3<sup>rd</sup> year to allow enough time to complete the dissertation and to allow for application for NRSA fellowships from NIH since these are not allowed until Prelims are completed.
- **The reviewers recommend the Department adopt consistent and contemporary nomenclature to replace the antiquated “Biobehavioral” Psychology term and to use the new program title consistently** since the reviewers noticed several different terms were used in documents, website and conversations.

### Clinical Psychology Graduate Program

#### Strengths:

- The program appears to be well aligned with its own stated goals, is well-led by the Director of Clinical Training, has strong enrollments, time to completion status, internship match rates among other favorable indicators described in the self-study. **The reviewers recommended a comparative analysis of peer programs to assess a recent decline in applicants to be sure it reflects a general trend.**
- The in-house training clinic (Dr. Fondacaro) is an excellent resource for the department and the Clinical program and provides outstanding training and funding opportunities for PhD students, facilitates clinical training and supervision efforts of the program faculty and enables UVM to contribute valuable community service.
- The Clinic provides affordable care to the community and has established outreach programs for prison populations and refugees, an impressive and distinctive contribution.

#### Weaknesses:

- Although the Clinic revenue based on caseloads provides essential funding for students, it may pressure the students to maintain high caseloads. **It is important not to let the need for enhanced revenue cause additional pressure on the Clinic to deliver more revenue.**
- The variety of funding sources makes for inconsistent funding length (9 month vs 12 month appointment) causing concern among students since the 9 month funding is on the low end of competitive/comparable programs nationally, which could potentially make recruitment difficult.

## UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR

### Strengths:

- The name change to Psychological Science (BA or BS) reflects the faculty's scientific approach that challenges students with rigorous coursework and extensive opportunities to gain laboratory/field experiences. The level of student accomplishments outside the classroom impressed the reviewers, especially those of the five recipients of the department's Senior Awards.
- Major strength of the department is the availability of two experiential learning/internship style programs (Drs. Hoza and Christensen). These opportunities should be highlighted on the department's website to lure new excellent students. The department should have/continue discussions on these programs to make sure they are adequately supported and ensure consistency in what is defined as experiential learning. The programs are completely dependent on the faculty who developed them and it would be a significant loss to the department if those faculty did not offer the courses. **The department should consider whether there are ways to root these programs in the department more broadly.** (The reviewers were very impressed with Dr. Shamila Lekka who serves as an academic advisor and thought she may be able to play a role in recruitment and/or management of the experiential learning courses.)

### Weaknesses:

- Although the Department is beginning to perform formalized assessments of learning outcomes, few faculty had working knowledge in the area. **The assessment of learning outcomes needs to be taken a bit more seriously.**
- Department is behind in offering online courses. **The reviewers recommend the Department identify specific courses that would alleviate chokepoints in the curriculum, supplement existing curricular offerings or that lend themselves readily to an online learning approach.**
- **The Dean/Provost should work with the department to establish the return of instructional fees to the department for such offerings and ensure that the appropriate infrastructure are available to faculty.**

## RESOURCES

- Resources are strained in areas of staff support, budget, space and the intangible resource of trust between higher levels of administration and the department.
- Staff support, both within the Department and OSP was routinely described as insufficient.

### Suggestions:

- **Reviewers recommend the budget and personnel committee undertakes a study of goodness of fit among a) who is being asked to do what and b) staff skill sets and c) faculty need for support.**
- **The budget algorithm [IBB process] should be revisited by upper administration.**
- **The space in Dewey Hall is insufficient for the needs of the department and more importantly is in very poor condition.**
- **There is work to be done in rebuilding trust between the department and higher levels of administration (e.g. disadvantageous budget process, promise of space in STEM building, failure of search for a new tenure-line psychologist).**

### **FUTURE PLANS/SUGGESTIONS:**

#### **The department should strive to:**

- look to redirect some of its existing resources/personnel toward meeting strategic objectives
- consider tactics such as name designations and development of research centers/institutes to maximize appeal to students and to compete effectively with other universities
- identify other revenue-generating ways to support scholarship and teaching missions, Inc. cooperative grants, online course offerings, etc.
- target growth to not less than 20 TT faculty members to meet CURRENT student demand.
- when developing a strategic plan, consider the possibility of focusing on thematic areas of research (as opposed to clusters) where possible. Centers and institutes can bring faculty together and provide opportunities (funding, seed grants, travel for grad students, speakers, etc.) **Fostering cross-cluster and inter-departmental approaches could have big benefits to the department.**
- When developing a strategic plan, consider faculty time and energy as a finite resource to avoid the “stretched thin” issue.
- Continue with the terminal Master’s degree (attractive to university administration for income generation) following careful market analysis

### **Summary and Conclusion:**

The reviewers felt the Department was doing excellent work under challenging conditions. Both reviewers were very impressed with the collegial atmosphere and the faculty are deeply committed and engaged with students and productive scholarship. The Departmental leadership is sound and the faculty are innovative and willing to invest in program development, though they noted struggles with historical vestiges of department organization and function (fate of the GE track, name of Biobehavioral program, future of the social cluster, etc). The reviewers recommend the department engage in proactive decision making so available limited resources can be dedicated toward a vision of what the department envisions in 5-10 years. The reviewers hoped their report would assist UVM, CAS and the Department to work together to maintain the Department’s strong positive trajectory.

The Internal Review Subcommittee recommends approval of the program.

**Faculty Senate Curricular Affairs Committee**  
**Academic Program Review Subcommittee Report**  
**Department of German and Russian**  
**30 September, 2018**

**Academic Program Review Subcommittee:**

Erik Monsen (Grossman School of Business) and Colby Kervick (CESS)

**External Reviewers:**

Michael Katz, C.V. Starr Professor Emeritus of Russian and East European Studies, Middlebury College

Neil Christian Pages, Associate Professor of German and Comparative Literature; Chair, Department of German and Russian Studies, Binghamton University SUNY

The external review team visited the University of Vermont's Department of German and Russian for a 2-day review on April 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> as part of the Department of German and Russian's Academic Program Review (APR). This report summarizes the strengths and weakness of the program identified through the review process, provides a synopsis of the external reviewers' recommendations and responses from the program, and offers the APR internal review subcommittee's conclusions.

**Overview of Department of German and Russian**

- Degrees offered:
  - B.A. in German, B.A. in Russian, Minor in German, Minor in Russian, Coursework in Hebrew, M.A. in German
- Number of faculty and ranks:
  - 3 Lecturers, 1 Senior Lecturer, 1 Assistant Professor, 1 Associate Professor, 3 Professors
- Number of majors/minors as appropriate and how numbers have trended over time:
  - Course numbers vary over time, but stable long term average.
  - German Courses – 6-year average, 146 per semester (min 115, max 180)
  - Russian Courses – 6-year average: 89 per semester (min 73, max 111)
  - B.A. German – 6-year average 11 (min 7; max 14)
  - B.A. Russian – 6-year average 24 (min 19; max 29)
  - M.A. German – 2 in 2014; otherwise 0 in past 6 years.
  - See additional details in self-study
- Compare enrollments to similar programs at comparable institutions and/or national trends:
  - From Modern Language Association (MLA) [https://apps.mla.org/flsurvey\\_search](https://apps.mla.org/flsurvey_search)
  - In the North Eastern US, German language enrollment has fallen from 17133 (2009), 15,613 (2013) to 15,132 (2016)
  - In the North Eastern US, Russian language enrollment has fallen from 7002 (2009), 5,222 (2013), to 5180 (2016).
  - While numbers in the region are falling, local program numbers stable.

- Other services or notable features of the program (e.g. service teaching; outreach):

Faculty members regularly participate in the TAP program, teach Honors College courses, and offer courses in WLIT that count for the distributive requirement in literature in CAS and other colleges. Some of the WLIT courses offered by G&R faculty are cross-listed with Holocaust Studies and Jewish Studies. A number of Russian courses also fulfill requirements for the Russian and East European Studies program. Hebrew 51/52 counts as an elective for the Jewish minor; and Gideon Bavly, Instructor of Hebrew, has offered courses on Modern Israel in the Jewish Studies Program. The newest member of the Department, Dr. Bridget Swanson, also teaches for the Film and Television Studies Program. GERM 52, a fourth semester intermediate course has been adapted to fulfill the University's sustainability requirement.

The University of Vermont has direct exchange programs with the University of Augsburg, Germany, and the University of Irkutsk, enabling our students to study abroad at relatively low costs. However, many of our German and Russian students study abroad with programs that serve many other American universities. We are in the process of collaborating with the Steuben-Schurz Gesellschaft to increase our students' ability to pursue internships in German-speaking countries.

Moreover, members of the Department are engaged in outreach activities, allowing them to share their knowledge with the larger community. For example, Professor Mieder has presented his vast knowledge of proverbs and their function as persuasive rhetorical tools at such diverse venues as public schools, retirement communities and civic organizations; Professor McKenna has explained Russian culture and politics; and Professor Schreckenberger has presented lectures on the contribution of refugees from Nazi Germany to Vermont, drawing parallels to the current refugee crisis. In addition, Professor McKenna is one of the organizers of the 2018 conference commemorating Solzhenitsyn's hundredth birthday. He will also hold lectures on Solzhenitsyn across the state of Vermont.

## **Strengths and Weaknesses**

### Strengths:

- The two programs in the Department of German and Russian enjoy a well-deserved reputation in the College, University, and in the wider profession for a high level of accomplishment in research, teaching, and service.
- The reviewers note that the Department's profile is marked by characteristics representative of best practices in programs in both German and Russian Studies nationally and internationally. For example, the reviewers highlight that the Department is dedicated to communicative instruction at all levels of the curricula and to thoughtful engagement with the latest trends and developments in research and teaching in German and Russian Studies that inform its approach to pedagogy, didactics and curricular development.
- The reviewers admire the manner in which the Department emphasizes teamwork and cohesion among its faculty members (despite imbalances in staffing), which they believe

translates into a remarkably high level of student engagement in the classroom and beyond.

- The reviewers noted the high regard both programs enjoy among colleagues on the campus and in the wider profession.
- The reviewers noted that *students* in the program speak of a high level of engagement with the material in the courses offered as well as a commitment to the fields of German and Russian as interdisciplinary areas of inquiry that represent both independent disciplines and that inform work in other academic areas.
- In addition, the reviewers noted that the students in the programs appreciate the manner in which the Department has articulated its strong commitment to diversity and inclusion

#### Weaknesses:

- The reviewers raised concerns about the staffing imbalance, specifically the lack of a cohort of tenure track faculty.
- Further, the reviewers note that this long tradition of accomplishment and commitment to excellence is to some extent under threat due to staffing conditions that are not sustainable if the present level of accomplishment is to be maintained into the future.

### **External Reviewers' Recommendations**

#### The University administration should:

1. Reaffirm the importance and the integrity of the Department.
2. Recognize the distinguished record of high achievement in both programs as well as the long-term stability in enrollments and student engagement in the programs by making possible two tenure-track hires, one in each of the programs so as to continue the tradition of excellent achievement that is the hallmark of both of the programs in the Department.
3. Reaffirm the importance of study abroad for the undergraduate experience at the University of Vermont in the context of the institution's wider commitment to the proper internationalization of its curricula and its profile; and recommend that the University administration work with the Department of German and Russian on measures that would facilitate student participation in education abroad as an integral component of the curriculum.
4. Work to ensure that areas of scholarship and teaching that support the accomplishments of the Department of German and Russian are staffed with high quality faculty.

#### The Department should:

1. Consider the adoption of an objective assessment standard such as OPI (Oral Proficiency Interviews), AP tests, or other mechanisms so as to gather statistical data on student learning outcomes that goes beyond the current subjective evaluations.
2. Consider whether its online presence as indicated by its website, for example, adequately reflects the richness of its programs and its accomplishments.

#### The Russian Program should:

1. Consider reducing the number of courses required for the major as well as its restriction on the number of courses outside the program that may be counted toward the major.

2. Consider replacing the current obsolete and out-of-print textbooks for first and second year Russian language instruction with new materials from a range of available books and resources whose authors emphasize more strongly competency-based curriculum and spoken Russian.

The German Program should:

1. Continue its review and assessment of the curriculum with an eye toward slight adjustments in the direction of a wider understanding of the study of German in interdisciplinary contexts.
2. Consider ways in which it can encourage increased participation in study abroad in Germanophone countries and work with the Administration on assisting students in planning for and in financing education abroad.

The Hebrew Program should:

1. Explore more robustly potential linkages with programs across campus, including Jewish Studies, Russian and East European Studies, Holocaust Studies, as well as with campus organizations such as Chabad, Hillel and J-Street.
2. Pursue the possibility of offering Hebrew classes at more than one time slot each semester.

In general, the reviewers think that a tenure- track hire for each of the programs represents only a modest financial outlay given the significant added value that these programs contribute to the College and the University.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

On the one hand, the external reviewers note that the Department of German and Russian reflects the best practices in the field, and its positive reputation among students inside the program, colleagues across campus, and the wider profession. In particular, the reviewers praised the teamwork and cohesion of the faculty.

On the other hand, the reviewers call for more University support in stabilizing and respecting the program, in particular through 2 additional faculty lines; the Department should develop more objective measures of learning outcomes; and the Programs should continue to modernize the curriculum and learning materials, as well as better promote study abroad.

Following the delivery of the external reviewers' report, the department chair circulated the report in the Department. The department chair and the members of the department were rather happy with the report and will follow most of the suggestions. In addition, they suggested no revisions or corrections to the report.

In the subcommittee's opinion, none of the recommendations made by the external reviewers appear to be inappropriate, and the department appears to be in agreement with their assessment.

Program:

- The chair is working with Associate Dean Kelley Di Dio, Kevin Coburn (CAS Communication Support), and other language department chairs to improve web page. They hired a work study student to manage the Department's twitter and Facebook accounts.
- The department is pursuing the possibility of offering OPI training for all language instructors at the University of Vermont with the support of the Dean's office.
- The Department will host a study abroad informational meeting in November.

Russian:

- The program is in the process of selecting a new textbook for first and second year.

German:

- The program is continuing its transformation of its curriculum.

In closing, the subcommittee strongly recommends a positive assessment of the APR process.

We believe the process was followed with integrity and that the program should be commended for a thorough and generative APR.