

## Program Progress Report

### Institutional Quality Assurance Program (IQAP) Review

#### Classics

**Date of Site Visit: March 2021**

**Progress Report Prepared by: M. Beckmann, Chair**

**Please outline below how recommendations from the initial program review have been addressed.  
[Please fill in one table for each recommendation from the original Final Assessment Report]**

<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>1. The department should work closely with the administration to ensure the maintenance of teaching and supervisory capacity in Ancient History.</p>
<p>Responsibility for Implementation: chair</p>
<p>Anticipated Timeline for Completion:</p> <p>July 2022</p>
<p>Additional Notes/Commentary:</p>
<p>Progress (check one)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Completed</p> <p>X In Progress</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain)</p>
<p>Department's Comments:</p> <p>This issue resulted from a recent retirement. The chair has discussed the possibility of replacing our recently retired tenured faculty with the dean.</p>
<p>Dean's Comments:</p> <p>The dean's office has given permission to the chair to search for a TT, assistant professor, with start date of July 1, 2023. The hope is that a candidate can be found who also supports the Faculty's EDI goals and/or some of the interdisciplinary programming the Faculty is pursuing.</p>

QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):

QAC reviewed this report and had no further comments or concerns.

Recommendation:

2. The reviewers encourage the administration to work closely with the Classics unit to address the implications for the program from the two impending retirements.

Responsibility for Implementation: chair, administration

Anticipated Timeline for Completion: July 2022

Additional Notes/Commentary:

Progress (check one)

☐ Completed

X. In Progress

☐ Other (please explain)

Department's Comments:

The chair has discussed the possibility of replacing our recently retired tenured faculty with the dean. We are monitoring the effects of the recent retirements on our ability to deliver a complete undergraduate and graduate course offering and will continue to do so.

Dean's Comments:

See comment under question 1.

It should also be noted that a new Instructional Assistant position has been created for the sessional instructor who leads the Medical Terminology curriculum. The new position offers the individual more stability and time to develop an online version of the course to complement existing offerings.

QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):

See above



Recommendation:

3. The department should work with the administrative staff to compose a handbook outlining the responsibilities of the position of Administrative Assistant.

Responsibility for Implementation:  
chair

Anticipated Timeline for Completion: September 2021

Additional Notes/Commentary:

Progress (check one)

☐ Completed

X. In Progress

☐ Other (please explain)

Department's Comments:

I understand that the administrative tasks of admin assistants are currently being re-organized, at least in our three-department administrative unit. When this is complete, we can hopefully have an outline of the admin assistant's responsibilities. The dean noted in her response that "it makes sense to have a Faculty-wide template as a first step ". Perhaps when the re-organisation has been completed such a handbook can be prepared.

Dean's Comments:

I agree with Dr. Beckmann's comments. Our Director of Finance and Administration has been working with the department manager in Classics on a new structure/division of labor. Once these new plans have been tested, it would make more sense to compile a guidance document. That said, as Dr. Beckmann also notes, we are making other changes as well – centralizing some tasks in the dean's office for greater efficiency. As this pilot matures, we may be able to draft a Faculty-wide template. I don't believe it makes sense for all eight small departments in the Faculty to reinvent the wheel when it comes to handbooks that are often quickly out of date.

QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):

See above



Recommendation:

4. The department should collect data over the next several years to assess the success of the new Greek and Latin comprehensive exam structure. While the first year of the new structure was highly successful, the small number of students in any one year makes it difficult to judge the success of the change after just one year.

Responsibility for Implementation:

Graduate advisor

Anticipated Timeline for Completion: May 2024

Additional Notes/Commentary:

Progress (check one)

☐ Completed

X In Progress

☐ Other (please explain)

Department's Comments:

This is progressing well, in the past year the new comprehensive exam structure proved 100% effective. We will continue to collect data.

Dean's Comments:

I support the Dept's initiative and have every confidence that they are monitoring the situation.

QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):

See above

Recommendation

5. The department should look into the possibility of installing master copies with site licenses of specialized software programs onto a shared computer to which the graduate students could have evening and weekend access.

Responsibility for Implementation: Graduate Supervisors, Grad Advisor

Anticipated Timeline for Completion: ongoing

Additional Notes/Commentary:

<p>Progress (check one)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Completed</p> <p>X In Progress</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain)</p>
<p>Department's Comments:</p> <p>Supervisors have consulted with individual students as to their computational needs and have assisted them, where required, in filling them. Some software requirements are met by existing university licences, e.g. for ArcGIS, a geographic information system, for which our students (and faculty) have been able to share the licence held by the Faculty of Science. As for a shared computer we have found that most students instal this software on their laptops, which is really the only practical solution for people working in the field. We continue to monitor this situation.</p>
<p>Dean's Comments:</p> <p>I trust my colleague's assessment of the situation. If matters change, I welcome further discussion.</p>
<p>QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):</p> <p>See above</p>

<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>6. If possible, the department should consider setting aside a space dedicated to graduate students.</p>
<p>Responsibility for Implementation: chair, grad advisor</p>
<p>Anticipated Timeline for Completion:</p> <p>ongoing</p>
<p>Additional Notes/Commentary:</p>
<p>Progress (check one)</p> <p>X. Completed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> In Progress</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain)</p>
<p>Department's Comments:</p>



The department provides office space for graduate students and sessional instructors. We have also made the department library available as a shared work and study space for both graduate and undergraduate students.

Dean's Comments:

I support the approach above.

QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):

See above

Recommendation:

7. The review team suggests that the department consider instituting a series of pro-seminars for the graduate students to provide concrete advice on serving as a TA, teaching, publication, alternative academic or non-academic careers, etc.

Responsibility for Implementation: grad advisor

Anticipated Timeline for Completion:  
ongoing

Additional Notes/Commentary:

Progress (check one)

☐ Completed

X In Progress

☐ Other (please explain)

Department's Comments:

As noted in our earlier response, we already do offer pro-seminars on these topics, although not on every topic every year; perhaps some students making this observation were in their first year of graduate studies. We continued to offer these seminars during the pandemic and will continue to think about ways of expanding our offerings in the future. We recognize especially the increasing need to better prepare PhD students for a non-academic career path, although the question of how to do so within the structure of a program that was not originally designed to do that is a difficult one. Considering that this implies a focus on non-discipline-specific skills, this effort might be more efficiently made at the faculty level.

Dean's Comments:

I agree that a Faculty-wide approach may be more feasible. I have asked the associate dean, graduate studies to try and implement Faculty-wide activities in this area. There has not been a willingness from all graduate programs to support such an initiative. However, now that the pandemic has subsided (somewhat), which made in-person activities difficult, we will renew attempts. I would encourage Dr. Beckmann to have his graduate director raise the issue when the grad directors next meet with AD, Horn. The latter needs the support of the programs to make such a slate of activities successful.

QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):

See above

Recommendation:

8. The department should make an effort to collect data about the post-graduation employment of alumni of the PhD program.

Responsibility for Implementation:

Grad supervisors, Grad Advisor

Anticipated Timeline for Completion:

ongoing

Additional Notes/Commentary:

Progress (check one)

☐ Completed

X In Progress

☐ Other (please explain)

Department's Comments:

We have created a shared MacDrive document to keep track of this information. Supervisors can access the document and keep it up to date for their own students.

Dean's Comments:

I would also encourage the Department to engage with our new Humanities alumni manager, Nina Camallieri. She can support alumni-related activities and help strengthen connections between grads and the department.

QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):

See above

Recommendation:

9. The review team suggests that the university administration support the department in its international initiatives in Italy, as they could potentially be expanded to offer opportunities to the university community beyond the Classics department.

Responsibility for Implementation: "university administration", Chair

Anticipated Timeline for Completion: ongoing

Additional Notes/Commentary:

Progress (check one)

☐ Completed

X In Progress

☐ Other (please explain)

Department's Comments:

Post-pandemic, the department has revived its Italian initiatives in the summer of 2022, with two professors taking McMaster students on field projects. We now advertise the dual-degree program with La Sapienza on our website and have a box on our graduate application forms for students to indicate their desire to participate. A number of students have expressed this desire, and two students have spent shorter amounts of time in Italy, though we have not yet had a student enrolled in the official degree. We recognize that there is a significant financial hurdle here, with students not being able to work as McMaster TAs for the time that they are in Italy, and bearing the costs of living abroad themselves.



Dean's Comments:

I am glad to see that international efforts are picking up again, but there are hurdles as Dr. Beckmann notes. The university has a new VP-International, who happens to be a humanist. It would be good to inform him of the challenges faced.

QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):

See above

Recommendation:

10. The department should consult with the Recruitment Coordinator and the Careers Officer to develop recruitment strategies and the development of careers-oriented professional skills for the undergraduate Classics programs.

Responsibility for Implementation: Chair or designate

Anticipated Timeline for Completion:

ongoing

Additional Notes/Commentary:

Progress (check one)

☐ Completed

X In Progress

☐ Other (please explain)

Department's Comments:

The chair has been in touch with Vanessa Hayward regarding various student career development opportunities over the past two years. Recruitment remains a challenge and we should revisit this issue to formulate new strategies. The chair intends to develop a plan to advertise our undergraduate course offerings more widely in the fall of 2022. One goal will be to advertise our major (and our rebranding as Greek and Roman studies, which in itself may attract more students to the major).

Dean's Comments:

It would be good to connect with Leanna Aref, our student recruiter. Now that schools are opening up a bit, she plans to do more HS visits. There may be opportunities to engage with guidance counselors and Latin classes.



QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):

See above