

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Senate Committee on University Priorities

Memorandum

TO: Senate

FROM: John Waterhouse
Chair, SCUP
Vice President Academic

RE: Department of Philosophy
External Review

DATE: August 22, 2002

The Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP) has reviewed the External Review Report on the Department of Philosophy together with the response from the Department and comments from the Dean of Arts.

Motion:

That Senate concurs with the recommendations from the Senate Committee on University Priorities concerning advice to the Department of Philosophy on priority items resulting from the external review as outlined in S.02-63

The report of the External Review Committee for the Department of Philosophy was submitted on February 27, 2002 following the review site visit January 16 – 18, 2002. The response of the Department Chair was received on April 29, 2002 followed by that of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts on June 13, 2002.

SCUP recommends to Senate that the Department of Philosophy and the Dean of Arts be advised to pursue the following as priority items:

1. Faculty

The external review process yielded useful dialogue and clarification around issues of faculty workload. In particular, greater clarity emerged on the issues of administration, program delivery and the challenges of rationalizing limited teaching resources. The Department and the Dean are urged to continue to keep the lines of communication open with respect to these areas of concern. With respect to the issue of high workload for the large service courses, opportunities should be explored to hire another lecturer and to redirect and to improve teaching assistant resources and training.

2. Undergraduate Programs

The Department is commended for its commitment to service teaching and its programs, and its willingness to consider and move forward on matters of curricular reform and revision. With respect to the workload issues that have arisen around the program major and the honours program and the differences in perspective on what is

entailed in each, the Department needs to ensure that the expectations for these programs are congruent with the current realities of available resources.

3. Graduate Programs

Subsequent to the external review process, the Department began to adopt and to implement several positive measures to address some of the concerns expressed around course availability, student support (both fiscal and personal) and morale, and teaching resources. The effect of these initiatives should be monitored. Within the next few years there should be a review of the Graduate programs and their role and priority within the Department as a whole. In the more immediate future, steps should be taken to increase external funding and other support to assist graduate students.

4. Cognitive Science

Given the recent recommendations that have come forward with respect to the Cognitive Science Program, the Department is urged to actively participate in and contribute to any initiatives that will expand and enhance this program as it undergoes its revisions.

5. Department Culture

Continued efforts at making communication within the Department and with other institutions effective should be considered a priority.

encl.

c: R. Blackman, Acting Dean of Arts
P. Hanson, Chair, Department of Philosophy

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts
MEMORANDUM

JUN 13 2002

To: John Waterhouse
VP Academic

From: John T. Pierce
Dean of Arts

Subject: Philosophy External Review

Date: June 11, 2002

This review characterizes the Philosophy department as small but of high quality, and clearly places a high value on its productivity and contribution to the curriculum and overall culture of the university. The report was well appreciated by the department and has led them to act on some of the recommendations already, as indicated in their response to the review report. I will focus my remarks on areas which represent more general issues that may require attention over the longer term.

Faculty Complement

The reviewers were highly complimentary about the department's faculty, and observed that recent hires have been of very high calibre. The department's faculty are productive in research, and have developed a strong curriculum that is taught at a high standard. The review does raise the issue of the size of the complement, making several observations about the linkage between faculty resources and student FTEs. They note that the complement was now smaller than at the previous review, and that student FTEs had increased substantially. It is important to put this observation in context. Since 1996, there has been a decrease in the number of course sections in the lower division PHIL courses, while upper division sections have remained roughly constant in number. Class size has correspondingly increased at the lower division, going from an average size of 82 in 96/7 to 135 in 00/01, and remaining constant at the upper division. There has likewise been a decrease in the percentage of course offerings taught by CFL faculty, from 84% on 96/97 to 71% in 00/01. This increase in enrollment has thus not necessarily come at the cost of increased course loads for permanent faculty, since some of it can be attributed to larger classes at the lower division and greater use of sessionals. Finally, annualized FTE counts in Philosophy are disproportionately weighted toward the lower division. In 1994/5, annualized LD FTEs were 260 out of a total of 296. In 2000/01 they were 320 of 376.

This latter point relates to the issue of service teaching. This aspect of the department's program is an important function of their curriculum, and it would be counterproductive to see it decline in order to meet particular goals such as workload targets. Our experience across the faculty is that service teaching has an important recruiting effect for major programs in addition to providing an important dimension to the university's overall curriculum. The review committee seemed to have some concern about the relationship of student FTEs to

resources, based in part on the issue of service teaching. This relates in turn to department concerns detected by the committee over the general revision of the curriculum university-wide, and any potential increase in Philosophy's service teaching as a consequence of the recommendations coming forward. The department response indicates that these concerns have been addressed to the department's satisfaction through a meeting with the Krebs committee. Indeed it is the position of the Faculty of Arts that any such increase in service teaching would have to be accompanied by appropriate increases in resources from central sources.

Over the long term, there are a number of adjustments that can be made to ameliorate the load imposed by large service courses. The department should consider hiring another lecturer at their next opportunity to teach in this portion of the department's program, and develop a plan to use more and better trained teaching assistants in larger courses. In the case of proposed writing-intensive courses, for example, TAs would have to be trained to handle the special demands of such courses. This latter initiative could have a positive impact on the graduate program, by enhancing the professional training of students in the program.

Graduate Program

The department finds itself in a state of transition after the implementation of a joint Ph. D. program with UBC, and has begun to work on the evolution of their graduate program management as urged in the external review report. Steps have been taken to improve communication with graduate students, and course management has improved with the temporary measures worked out with the Dean's office at the suggestion of the review committee.

Over the longer term, the department will have to consider where the graduate program fits into the overall priorities of the department. The department is well positioned to continue to have a small but high-quality graduate program, especially because of the recent appointments. As these young scholars become more active in graduate supervision, the program will gain traction and stabilize at a productive level. The addition of a CRC Tier I position in Cognitive Science will have spin-off benefits for the Philosophy graduate program -- since Cognitive Science is not a graduate discipline it might be expected that this senior scholar would attract graduate students to Philosophy.

The issue with regard to teaching resources devoted to the graduate program is one faced by all of our smaller departments that have M. A. and Ph. D. programs. In this connection, the department will have to consider the trade-offs between the intensive teaching done in their Honours program and the graduate program. Both require similar types of teaching and supervision activities and the department may have to streamline their Honours teaching structure to benefit the graduate program.

Workload

Many of the issues raised in the review have to do with faculty workloads, both in terms of course loads and class sizes. In truth, the course load profile of the Philosophy department is similar to that of comparable departments in the Faculty. Honours, directed readings, and some graduate teaching are often done above load. The report makes much of the '8 credit hour' rule, which is a legacy formulation from workload policies in effect years ago. The department is not required to follow that standard at all. The department should strive to hold as close to the four-course standard load as possible, recognizing there are parts of faculty teaching activity that are difficult for a small department to quantify in those terms. The department should also develop a plan to improve teaching assistant support in large courses; the Dean's office is prepared to consider proposals in this direction.

Cognitive Science

Philosophy is a key player in this interdisciplinary undergraduate program, and should remain so. The review committee seems to have gained a wrong impression both of the incremental teaching and administrative load imposed by this program. They seem to have gained the impression that the original motivation for the four departments involved entering into the program was the acquisition of additional faculty resources. This was not the case, as the program is made up almost entirely of regular courses in the four departments, and there is very little dedicated Cognitive Science teaching. As indicated in the departmental response, the assignment of a CRC Tier I position to Cognitive Science will go a long way to enhancing the position of this rapidly growing program and satisfying the perceived needs of the participants in it. At the same time additional resources will be made available should the University support the recommendations from the external review to expand the overall size of the program.

Conclusion

This review shows that the Philosophy Department is a strong, high-quality department undergoing renewal and transition. The Dean's office will work with the department to manage the changes it is now undergoing to assure that the quality of its programs are maintained and enhanced, and to address the issues surrounding enrollments, workloads, evolution of curriculum, and future faculty levels that always arise in such periods of transition.



John T. Pierce
JTP/rt

Cc: T. Perry, Associate Dean, Arts
P. Hanson, Chair, Philosophy

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
MEMORANDUM

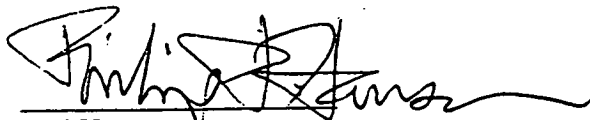
To: Laurie Summers, Director
Academic Planning

From: Phil Hanson, Chair
Department of Philosophy

Re: Response to External Review Report

Date: April 29, 2002

Please find attached a copy of the Philosophy Department's response to the report of its external reviewers.



Phil Hanson

c: J. Waterhouse, V.P. Academic
W. Krane, Associate V.P., Academic
J. Pierce, Dean of Arts



PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT RESPONSE TO THE EXTERNAL REVIEWERS' REPORT

The Philosophy Department is naturally pleased with the external reviewers' very positive assessment of its strengths in the areas of research, undergraduate programs, and undergraduate service teaching. It is also grateful for their constructive recommendations for improvements to its graduate programs; for their sensitive perception of workload issues in such areas as day-to-day administration, program delivery and graduate student mentorship; for their input to the ongoing complex task of rationalizing its limited teaching resources both to current demands and to possible future demands; and has taken under advisement their perspective on the Department's prospects for growth.

This response outlines the Department's actions to date (as of the end of April 2002), and its progress on some other fronts in response to the report. Following the main body of the response, an Appendix variously corrects or expands on some points made in the report. The reviewers' main sources of information were the Department's Self-Study Document, the 'Terms of Reference' document, and the recent External Review Report of the Cognitive Science Program (included with the Department's Self-Study Document); interviews with every faculty and staff member in the Department; meetings with undergraduate and graduate students; meetings with the Dean of Arts, the Dean of Graduate Studies, the VPA, and other administrators from those offices; a meeting with the Head of Philosophy at UBC; and input from the 'internal' member of the external review team. As outsiders, it was a lot to absorb and evaluate, so it is remarkable just how insightful their observations and recommendations managed to be.

What We Have Done To Date

1. The Department invited and received input on the review report from both its undergraduate and its graduate students. The undergraduates reported being happy with the report. The results of a graduate student meeting about the report were presented by the Graduate Student Representative at a recent Department meeting. Briefly, graduate students support all of the recommendations of the external reviewers that pertain to their program. A discussion was also initiated about the difficulties they experience when they are TAs and must mark to end-of-term deadlines that coincide with their own work deadlines. In response, it was proposed that the Department cooperate by supporting appropriately staggered paper deadlines for graduate TAs.
2. Wanting to improve the quality of our graduate program, the Department sought and obtained the approval of the Dean of Arts Office for two key recommendations made by the reviewers about the delivery of graduate courses. The recommendations were, first, that, in cooperation with UBC's Philosophy Department, at least one graduate course with limited undergraduate enrollment be offered each major semester at the downtown campus, one course each to be contributed by the two institutions – or, when occasion arises, courses co-taught by faculty from both institutions. Second, in order to promote this initiative and

give it a chance to take hold, that, for the next seven years (i.e., the next review period), teaching course credit be given for these courses even if fewer than the 5 normally required graduate students are enrolled.

3. Having obtained Faculty of Arts support for proceeding with both of these recommendations, the Department has gone ahead with planning for next year's downtown graduate offerings with UBC, commencing with a graduate seminar in Metaethics, in 02-3, to be taught by our own Evan Tiffany. We anticipate 3-4 graduate students from each institution, and we are limiting undergraduate enrollment to a maximum of 4 philosophy honors students from each institution. We hope that these restrictions will help to address the "submersion problem" alluded to in the review report. The initiative will also increase by one course per year our graduate offerings; that is, our plan is to continue to offer 2 grad/400-level courses per major term on the Burnaby Mountain campus.
4. Responding to another recommendation, the Department has instituted regular monthly meetings between the Graduate Program Chair and its graduate students, in a bid to improve communication.
5. The Department has formally adopted the reviewers' recommendation that it substantially slow down its process of undergraduate curriculum revision.

The Department recognizes the 'remedial' and 'probationary' nature of the Graduate Program initiatives listed above, and the eventual need for a full discussion by the Department of the place of its Graduate Programs, especially its fledgling Ph.D. program, in its priorities. Whatever may ultimately be decided about the Ph.D. program (and our reviewers wisely suggested deferring that discussion for a while), maintaining our graduate enrollments at roughly current levels remains essential to ensure the ready availability of TAs for the delivery of our large lower division service courses. In terms of graduate support currently available in the form of TAs in these courses, there is room for bringing our M.A. enrollments back up to historical levels, and the Dean of Graduate Studies is encouraging us to do that.

The Cognitive Science Program

When Professor Jeffrey Pelletier's external review report on the Cognitive Science Program was submitted last year, the Philosophy Department strongly endorsed it. Professor Pelletier distinguished two strikingly different possible futures for the program: on one, it reverted back to an 'elitist' program for a small number of good undergraduates; on the other it continued to build on recent enrollment increases, but this was not sustainable without a further commitment of resources by the Administration. Subsequently, the Department unanimously supported Cognitive Science's Tier I CRC application, but apart from that it mostly adopted a wait-and-see posture; that is, wait and see how the Administration responds to Professor Pelletier's recommendations. The recent move by the Faculty of Arts to pursue Professor Pelletier himself as a candidate for the CRC appointment is being taken as a hopeful sign. As for increased participation

in the Cognitive Science Program by interested members of the Philosophy Department (e.g., teaching secondments), that will need further discussion in the Department, and much depends on whether, if his appointment goes through, Professor Pelletier and the Administration will have been able to negotiate conditions for his appointment that move the Cognitive Science Program towards a more secure, better supported footing. The Department also recently voted to invite Professor Pelletier (who has graduate degrees in Philosophy, Linguistics, and Computing Science) to make Philosophy his home Department, should he come. His presence in the Department would have the benefits of adding further weight to its research profile, providing opportunities for faculty research collaboration, and increasing its attractiveness as a place to do graduate work.

University Curriculum

The Senate Ad Hoc Curriculum Committee, chaired by Prof. Dennis Krebs, has been studying various options for curricular reform at the university level, and will be submitting its recommendations soon. The Department had previously indicated to this committee its general support for the idea of a university core curriculum, one of the options for reform under consideration. We recently invited Prof. Krebs to the Department to discuss with us the resource implications of the Department's active involvement in the delivery of its curricular recommendations, should they be approved. What we heard was largely reassuring. We learned that what is currently being contemplated as a recommendation, while something less than a core curriculum, would involve the introduction of university-wide writing, quantitative, and breadth requirements, with necessary support to be provided by the Administration. It became clear to all at this meeting that, should the committee's recommendations, as currently conceived, be approved in principle by Senate, there will be opportunities for the Philosophy Department to make important and distinctive course contributions to this initiative, perhaps in all three areas. It also became clear that the crucial implementation process for these recommendations, should they be approved, will be long, complex, and phased, initially involving task forces that would essentially further articulate the requirements, and in some cases work with departments to plan the delivery of specially designed courses. In light of this, the Philosophy Department hopes to play an active participatory role in the task force phase of the implementation.

Concluding Remarks

There remain issues around workload, resource allocation and prioritizing, enrollments, and hiring, that it may prove useful to discuss with the Dean of Arts, as was also recommended by the reviewers. But the Department would want that to take place only when more of us are around for the discussion, and after our own internal discussions have progressed further. In any event, the Philosophy Department will continue to stand for intellectual rigor and excellence. It will continue to contribute to SFU's research profile and to be creative in providing undergraduate courses that are in demand both by its own students and by the undergraduate community generally. It will seek to continue its service contributions to the university and to the profession, and it will continue exploring opportunities for collaboration and for improving its performance.

APPENDIX: CORRECTIONS AND ELABORATIONS

In their preamble, the reviewers report our faculty complement to have been reduced during the review period by 1.5. The correct figure is 2: a reduction from 13.5 to 11.5.

At the bottom of their first page the reviewers report that in September of 2002 the number of faculty actually available to teach "is expected to be 7.5, of whom 2.5 are tenured". The numbers of tenured faculty is significant, of course, not for teaching per se but for the availability of relative senior faculty for major administrative duties within the Department during that term. Here are the correct figures, as they now stand, for 02-1, 02-3, and 03-1. Faculty members who, for reasons of administrative relief, course release, teaching buyouts, etc., are slated to teach only one course during one of their teaching terms are counted as $\frac{1}{2}$. Our senior lecturer will be counted as $1\frac{1}{2}$. Faculty members on their regular research term or full teaching buyouts but who will be in town will be counted as available for major administrative duties, provided they are so available for the consecutive terms required for such duties.

02-1 Available for teaching: 5.5; tenured and available for major admin:2

02-3 Available for teaching: 8.5; tenured and available for major admin:4

03-1 Available for teaching 6.5; tenured and available for major admin: 4

Our graduate students were concerned to correct the claim that the review committee had met with "almost all" of them. They were the ones who had organized that meeting, and they have informed us that the committee met with exactly 6 (or about $\frac{1}{2}$) of them, of whom only 1 was a Ph.D. student. TAing and teaching obligations limited those available for meeting with the committee at the appointed time.

Finally, at several junctures the reviewers reported being given the impression that the Department is exceeding a teaching norm of 4 courses per year. But the standing norm for teaching workload that the Department has been following for many years (pre-dating this review period) is not simply the 4 courses per year mentioned in the university regulations, as but also the long established benchmark in the Faculty of Arts of averaging 8 contact hours per teaching term, even if this means sometimes teaching more than 4 courses per year.

When the reviewers recommend that the Department "retain a 4 course load as the norm," they might reasonably be interpreted as merely commenting narrowly and negatively on the 'radical suggestion,' floated in our Self-Study Document, of banning the teaching of lower levels tutorials by faculty, and at the same time assigning 400 level courses (which faculty prize) only as 5th courses for the year.

But the reviewers also report having been told that teaching a 5th course is "no longer occasional." This is vague and anecdotal, so we compiled the data for 1994-2001. Here, then, are Department averages and medians both for courses per faculty per teaching term and for teaching hours per faculty per teaching term. We excluded our senior lecturer

from this tally for obvious reasons, and took into account whether or not faculty were full time for the term. We were also careful not to double-count single courses offered under different numbers, and to include in the hours any tutorial teaching that a faculty member may have done. We then made our calculations under varying assumptions, about whether honors tutorials and directed studies courses count as courses, and about how contact hours are assigned to these latter; and in this connection the most generous assignment we considered was simply the recognized one of crediting an instructor with half the credit hours of a course taken as an honours tutorial or directed studies course. The following displays the resulting values on the most generous assumptions (with the *range* of values under varying assumptions indicated parenthetically).

	Average	Median
Courses Taught:	(2.12-)2.84	(2.11-)2.56
Contact Hours:	(7.71-)8.69	(7.6-)8.49

These figures are still a bit misleading, though. One of our senior faculty member loves to teach relatively large numbers of courses, honours tutorials, and directed study courses, because they are closely integrated with his (collaborative) research. If we remove this colleague from the calculation, then we get the following values under the most generous assumptions.

	Average	Median
Courses Taught:	2.62	2.5/2.56
Contact Hours:	8.12	8.2/8.49

Not to minimize this, that still has one colleague averaging 9.29 contact hours per teaching term for the period, another averaging 8.74, another at 8.63, another at 8.49, and so on. The course figures are for a single term, and so should be multiplied by two to represent a year. In any case, while it does not necessarily raise any *general* alarm bells, it does indeed suggest that, on a reasonable interpretation of the data, exceeding the norm of 4 courses per year and exceeding 8 contact hours per teaching term is indeed 'not occasional' for a fair number of Department faculty members.

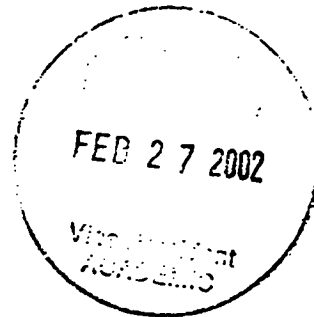


DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

BRENDA M. BAKER
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February 21, 2002

Dr. John Waterhouse
Vice-President, Academic
Simon Fraser University
8888 University Drive
Burnaby, BC
V5A 1S6



Dear Dr. Waterhouse,

Please find attached the Report of the External Review Committee on the Department of Philosophy program at Simon Fraser University. I, and the committee, hope that the report will prove useful to both the Department and the University.

Yours sincerely,

Brenda M. Baker, Chair
External Review Committee

External Review of the SFU Department of Philosophy Program

I. Preamble

Since its last external review in 1994 the SFU Department of Philosophy has been a department in transition, with retirements and new hires representing a kind of generational turnover that is now occurring in most Canadian philosophy departments. As well, it has been a period when the department has experienced frequent changes in internal administration with four different Chairs, and faced important tenure and promotion as well as hiring decisions. These kinds of decisions arouse intense passions and tensions in even the most congenial of academic departments, and the department has experienced the strains on collegiality of such difficult decision-making. These have no doubt been somewhat exacerbated by the fact that the faculty complement of 13 has been reduced to 11.5 over the period, while both the teaching and program responsibilities of the department have increased. Our interactions with the department suggest that it is now assimilating these changes and is poised to move forward. There are several grounds for this optimism. It is agreed by all that the hiring process has resulted in a number of excellent new appointments (Laird, Schulte, Shapiro, Tiffany), and there is genuine excitement about what these junior colleagues have to offer by way of strengthening and diversifying the department. Two of the new hires are women, which significantly improves the gender balance in the department and its teaching face. Also, the new appointees are enthusiastic about the department, finding its environment congenial and welcoming, and they have already established a certain esprit de corps among themselves. The entire department continues to be deeply committed to the quality of its undergraduate program, in a way that is truly exceptional among Canadian departments, and it in turn enjoys an enthusiastic endorsement of its program and teaching from its talented undergraduate students. This provides an unshakeable common ground on which future departmental decision-making can be built. Phil Hanson is a positive and unifying force in his relatively new position as Chair; he has gained the unanimous respect, trust and support of his colleagues, and the department is running smoothly under his guidance. So while there remain a number of challenges ahead for the department, we think it is in a good position to address these challenges constructively and effectively.

II. Who they are: The Faculty

The SFU philosophy faculty as of January 2002 includes 3 full professors, 4 associate professors, 1 tenured assistant professor, 2.5 untenured assistant professors, and a full time senior lecturer. Of these one of the full professors is currently on short term medical disability, one associate is currently working full time in the Dean's office, and one associate has a teaching buyout funded by a research grant. There will shortly be some changes in this complement: a full professor retires in August 2002, and a new assistant professor joins the department in September 2002. The nominal complement at that time will be 11.5 FTE, but with reassignments and research leaves the number actually available to teach is expected to be 7.5, of whom 2.5 are tenured.

The group is small but it packs a punch. We have absolutely no qualms in providing the University with assurance that the quality of faculty research is high and the academic environment is stimulating. In fact given its size the quality of research produced by this faculty is remarkably high. They publish in the right places and are well represented in all the mainline venues of contemporary analytic philosophy. Somewhat less formally, after meeting every

member, we were impressed. Members of the faculty were forthcoming and engaging. Every one of them obviously cares deeply about the discipline, the University, and the department. SFU is lucky to have such individuals on its faculty.

The size of the complement

Various individuals in the offices of the VPA and the Dean informed the Review Committee that the Philosophy complement was about the right size, and that there was no plan to increase it any time in the near future. In particular, it appears that increasing student FTEs will *not* be sufficient to justify a new slot any time soon (see section V ahead). The Review Committee also understood the Dean's office to suggest that the "potential for excellence" and "potential for growth" would provide a better rationale for a hire than would a further tweaking of FTEs.

In any case, given these representations made to us, a premise of much of what follows is that there is no plan currently in place to increase the complement in the near future, and that it is futile to argue for such an increase purely on the basis of FTEs or workload. A better argument for the foreseeable future is the argument from excellence, based on the ability of the department to attract stellar candidates who would be willing and eager to relocate to SFU. The high quality of the recent hires has been noticed elsewhere, for example, and it has redounded to the credit of the department.

III. What they do: by program

A. Undergraduate Programs

1. Service teaching

According to data provided by the office of the VPA, only about 10% of the students taught by members of the department are philosophy students (majors, minors, or graduate students), so it is worth first making a few comments about the other 90%.

In this arena students can vote with their feet. Gross numbers of enrollees, of FTEs, and so on, hence provide a very positive picture of the teaching competence of this department. The Committee learned that about half of the students who enroll in the Department's 001 course, Critical Thinking, subsequently take a second course in philosophy; and that a similar proportion of the students in the 300 level ethics course are non-philosophy students. The Department has also been very successful in having its courses listed in requirements for majors in other departments such as Computer Science and Criminology, and this would not have happened if the teaching of those courses had been deficient.

The quality of teaching provided to non-philosophy students is reflected in all of the various administrative indices used at SFU. The Philosophy department looks very good by all such measures. In 1994 (semester 1), at the time of the last review, the undergraduate FTE count for the department was 294; in 2000 (01) it was 390. That is an increase of almost 33%. Total enrollments and average section sizes have likewise increased over that interval. Needless to say the budget has not gone up by 33%; in real terms it may not have gone up at all.

If the size of the complement does not change, and the teaching load does not change, then more hours of upper division or graduate courses can be taught only if fewer hours of lower division

courses are taught. As already noted, it appears to the Review Committee that the former option is, at least in the short term, unlikely. Some faculty members have responded to the situation by, in effect, increasing their teaching load. Teaching a fifth course is, we were told [by the undergraduate committee], "no longer occasional". There are thoughts of writing the expectation of a fifth course into the rules by which the department assigns teaching. The Committee urges the department *not* to go down that path. Or at least: *if* one wants to attract or retain colleagues who would like to devote a significant portion of their waking hours to research, *then* a five course load is a bad idea.

We recommend

That the department retain a four course load as the norm.

2. The Major

The Department takes considerable pride in the education it provides for its majors, and in our opinion this pride is fully justified. The students are extremely bright; the courses are quite demanding; the education is quite rigorous. Graduates of the program have been placed, and do well, in some of the best Ph.D. programs in the world. We have no reservations in providing the University with assurance that the quality of the undergraduate teaching program of this Department is high--in fact, very high indeed. There are also measures in place to ensure evaluation and revision of the teaching program.

Pride in the major is universal among the Philosophy faculty, and indeed many of its members would like to increase their efforts on behalf of the philosophy undergraduates. Given the current complement and allocation of assignments it has at times been difficult to offer all the upper division undergraduate courses required in the major. The view was expressed that not enough courses were taught at the 300 or 400 level, and this perceived deficiency motivates some of the efforts to revise the undergraduate curriculum (see below). A number of faculty expressed a desire to increase the size of the major, assuming that increasing enrollments might prompt the Dean to give the department another slot. If that assumption is, as seems likely, false, then one wonders exactly what benefit the department gains by further increase in its enrollments. To make this vivid we cast it as a recommendation:

That the department carefully consider whether there really is a need to increase the size of its major.

3. Honours program

Participation in the Honours program is another source of pride to the Department, and another issue on which the consensus seems to be unanimous. At any given time between five and ten of the philosophy majors are honours majors. Honours students take two tutorials in their last two semesters. These tutorials (or directed reading courses) are very often one-on-one, Oxford style, and demand considerable writing. They therefore also demand considerable grading of writing.

While there is a unanimous consensus that the department shall continue to participate in the Honours program, there are differing opinions on the question: shall it continue to provide each of its students with two individual tutorials? Our sense is that the department would fiercely

resist any major modifications to the system, and some would resist any modification at all. The department has experimented with small group tutorials, and has contemplated the possibility of reducing the requirement from two to one, but has come to no resolution on the question.

Our only concern under this heading is that there seems to be some disconnect between how the Dean's office views the work of the philosophy faculty in the Honours program and how the philosophy faculty view it. The Dean mentioned that the department spends a fair amount of time in honours teaching, acknowledged that such teaching is time-intensive, and said that it was something of a "luxury" for the philosophy department to be able to approach it as they have done. (We understand that the two tutorial requirement is not matched anywhere else in the faculty.) No one in the philosophy faculty seemed to view the honours tutorials as a luxury. If the same work is valued in different offices in such very different ways, it is easy to see that there may be problems down the road--in, for example, the assessment of workloads, or the justification for future hires. This is one of a number of areas in which communication could usefully be improved (see Section VI.)

4. Possible futures

Along with its core undergraduate commitments the Philosophy department is active on a variety of other fronts, and the Review Committee was charged specifically to consider the potential contributions to a University core curriculum and a cognitive science program, and to review the departmental curriculum revision process.

a. University Core Curriculum

From the numbers reviewed above [in Service teaching] it is obvious that the Department is not at all averse to teaching non-philosophy students. More than a few members of the department view it as part of their professional identity that their teaching serves to introduce philosophy to non-philosophers. But the question was raised: what is the attitude of the Department towards instituting a university-wide core curriculum? Apparently this question has yet to be discussed at a department meeting, but among those who had been thinking about the issue the preponderant attitude seemed to be: it's great if it means we can hire more people. This does not necessarily imply "it's not great if we cannot hire more people", but enthusiasm for the idea would wane considerably if it were clearly dissociated from any prospect of additional hires. Several members also expressed the concern that the workload involved in teaching a course that is writing-intensive is far greater than that in some other courses, and that these differentials are not adequately appreciated by the administration. In any case there is a certain amount of understandable wariness in the Department about taking on additional obligations to teach lower division undergraduates, particularly if the courses require a significant amount of writing. Nevertheless there is a core of good will that remains intact in the Department, and there are faculty members who would happily do it, under certain conditions.

We recommend

That, at the appropriate time, the department identify the conditions under which it would participate in the core curriculum, and convey those conditions to the Dean.

b. Cognitive Science

Under this heading the possible futures are burdened by a less than happy past. Various members of the department put an enormous amount of work into developing the cognitive science program at Simon Fraser, under the assumption that if that work were done, at some point a faculty position, or at least half a position, would be forthcoming. When the upshot of all those labours was revealed to be one-half of an FTE in Linguistics, with no support for the administration of the program, no teaching replacement, and so on, several members report feeling "burned". This phenomenology was not confined to the Philosophy department: we were told that Psychology lost interest in the program and canceled various courses when it became apparent that cognitive science would not yield additional hires. Burns take a while to heal.

A good characterization of the current attitude of the department is "wait and see", by which they mean: wait until the University shows that it will commit significant resources to cognitive science before committing any further resources from Philosophy. Of course if this maxim were universalized, no one would budge. In the hopes of avoiding such a stasis we recommend

That the department identify the conditions under which it would increase its participation in the cognitive science program, and convey those conditions to the Dean.

Some of the wariness of the department is a consequence of the view, expressed by several of our interviewees, that the administration underestimates the resources needed to create a successful interdisciplinary program. Simply administering such a program requires that pre-requisites and requirements for the major be coordinated across multiple departments; that all those departments make the appropriate curriculum revisions; that thereafter the teaching schedules of those departments are coordinated, year after year; that students are competently advised about what will doubtless be a rather complex set of requirements; and so on. Even something as simple as eliminating scheduling conflicts among the required courses (or, for that matter, even among departmental colloquia) can be a major headache. Dedicated administrative support is, in short, essential; and a good ballpark figure for the magnitude needed is: as much as would be needed to set up an entirely new Department of Cognitive Science. But that is a bare threshold, beyond which lie the even trickier questions of how to compensate for the teaching lost to home departments when it is devoted to cognitive science, and how to deal with the tangled departmental affiliations in an interdisciplinary program. If a philosopher teaches a cognitive science course, does the department view that teaching as something other than philosophy? Does the philosopher view it as something other than philosophy? (If half one's teaching is in cognitive science, is one therefore only half a philosopher?) If the philosopher happens to be untenured, do such contributions count at all towards the project of getting tenure? Must one in effect get tenure twice, in both philosophy and cognitive science; or are the requirements effectively disjunctive? And so on. These were among the concerns expressed to us, and it would be to the benefit of all involved if they were further articulated, and then conveyed to the Dean.

c. Curriculum revision.

As mentioned earlier [Preamble], the Philosophy department has recently suffered four of the five of the major life stressors found in academic life: hiring, tenure, promotion, change in chair. With astounding fortitude they decided this year to add number five: curriculum revision. For

various reasons the Review Committee suggests that it might be a good idea simply to slow down on stressor number five.

We recommend

That the department should allow curriculum revision to proceed more slowly and incrementally, awaiting input from its new appointees, based on their experience, before proceeding with significant curriculum revision.

As far as we could determine, there is no immediate, pressing *need* to make such revisions right now. The major is not broken; enrollments in it are more than adequate; and it is not clear how increasing its size would benefit the department (see III.A.2 and V). More importantly, the new appointees have barely started teaching at SFU, and one has yet to start. At this stage it is impossible for them to know what they will enjoy teaching, to have a reliable sense of the students, or to understand how the curriculum really works. It would make sense to slow down the revision process until the new appointees have more experience teaching at SFU, and could contribute to the discussion. Similarly, if a university core curriculum were introduced, or the cognitive science program enhanced, there would be significant implications for the philosophy curriculum, and all the questions would need to be revisited again. In curriculum revision we suggest that it is sometimes a good idea to put off until tomorrow what you don't *have* to do today.

III. B. Graduate Programs.

What struck us most about the graduate programs was the apparent poor morale of those enrolled in them. To begin on an upbeat, however, we might point out that they had some favorable things to say about their program, and their willingness to discuss the concerns undermining their morale was a good sign. (We seem to have met with almost all of these students.) The concerns might be summarized under two headings: faculty-student relations (what they called "mentorship") and the value, perceived and real, of their program (what they called "rigour").

With respect to their relations with faculty, students feel that they do not get sufficient guidance on such crucial issues as to whether they should be trying to produce publishable work, or how best to apply for SSHRCC fellowships; there was even uncertainty on what it means to be a qualifying student. These are clearly issues of communication. Another such issue, at the bread-and-butter level, is the TA workload, which is perceived by some of the students as involving up to twenty hours per week. This investment on their part is clearly in violation of the time-use guideline, which calls for only 205 hours per semester, and hurts their own efforts as students. They invest as they do because, although they know they have priority in TA allocations, they feel they are in competition with undergraduates for teaching assistantships, and that the undergraduates put in such hours. Their belief seems to us mistaken on both counts, and their need to be disabused of it is disconcerting.

We therefore recommend

That in an effort to improve communications with faculty, the graduate director meet at least monthly with the graduate students, attending especially to implementation of the terms of the time-use guideline.

As to the value of the graduate programs, while there is broad support for at least the MA, the commitment and interest in this area is not nearly what the undergraduate programs draw. One very good reason for this is that graduate courses do not attract the five students necessary for teaching credit, with the result that either there is no interest in mounting such courses, or mounting them is done on an overload basis, which is obviously not the best motivator. The upshot is that there are no exclusively graduate courses at all. Now, it is possible to run a credible program on this basis. We have grave doubts about this practice at SFU, however, because of what might be called the submersion phenomenon. Graduate students find themselves three or four at most in a sea of some thirty undergraduates. This is not good for their identity as graduates students, or for the identity of their programs. Moreover, for the sizable number of MA students who were SFU undergraduates, availability of courses becomes a problem.

What to do? Efforts might be made, including among the students themselves, to massage interests and needs so that the minimum number of five students is found. Perhaps a core course, which would have other benefits as well, might be required of all students. Relief might be sought from the five-student rule itself, at least for a short period to a maximum number of courses per annum. Also relevant in this regard is cooperation with UBC, which is important for other reasons as well. (See V Workload Management and Resource Allocation below.)

As to support for graduate students, the Department might be doing as well as it can, given circumstances, save in one regard. The cv's of the Department clearly indicate that much more support can be had from SSHRCC than is current. Applications from some members would be shoo-ins, and all would have a chance. The comparative stats from UBC are instructive. It seems that eight or nine out of sixteen faculty there are supporting graduate students with SSHRCC grants; SFU has but one grant in a department of eleven. Quite apart from support for graduate students, this figure should be improved. The department budget alone is insufficient to support proper travel for a research-intensive unit, for example. And just what could be saved from the photocopying budget would be a needed injection into the visiting speakers account. One does not apply solely for these sorts of reasons, but they are nonetheless legitimate considerations.

We recommend

That the department should be encouraged to secure external (especially SSHRCC) funding, drawing on the resources available from the Faculty of Arts to assist in doing this.

A final concern is the apparent decline in graduate enrolment. Active enrolments in the MA program have declined over the past five years from about twelve to about six. The PhD program has admitted but seven students since its inception in 1993. There might well be a catch-22 situation here: enrolments decline because of the problems discussed above, especially the teaching-credit requirement, which degrades the course offerings, thus leading to still lower enrolments. As to the PhD itself, there is nothing like unanimous agreement about its desirability or viability. Our view is that if the problems above are addressed, and the Department has the will to carry through, the program is viable. But the Department needs to decide just how

important the PhD program is to such values as recruitment and retention of good faculty members, their own research, the profile of the Department, service to the profession, etc. It might also consider making it a highly specialized program, carving out a niche for itself in just philosophy of mind, or logic, or ethics, or whatever. This is a discussion that should not be attempted in the immediate future, however. (See VI. Department culture, below.)

IV What They Do: Administration

We can assure the University that the department members participate in the governance of the unit and take an active role in the dissemination of knowledge. However, the small size of the current department, combined with the fact of ongoing retirements, secondments to other units, unavailability of persons to teach due to research/grant commitments/illness, and the fact that there is a cohort of recent junior appointees who merit some protection from administrative and committee duties, mean that over the next few years there are only a small number (three or four) tenured persons to provide ongoing administration in the department.

This has several implications. The first is that there are simply not enough tenured members of the department to chair, and not enough available faculty to fill, the standard departmental committees, such as Graduate, Undergraduate, Library, Recruiting, Tenure, Visiting Speakers, and the like. Over the next year there may be as few as three or four tenured philosophy faculty to oversee these committees. Consequently there is the risk of overburdening junior appointees with committee work, impacting on their time for research and teaching. Secondly, in practice this means that many individual administrative duties that would fall to different individuals in a larger department will now devolve on the Chair. For example, this year the Chair needs to assume a major part of the Graduate Chair's responsibilities because the regular Chair is away for the term, and similarly for the Undergraduate Committee's work. The responsibilities falling on the Chair over the next few years will be extremely onerous. He has the full support of his departmental colleagues, but he will also need the understanding and support of the Dean's office and other higher administrative units in the university if he is to be able to carry out his responsibilities in the best interests of the department and its students. It is important that there be real transparency in the expectations that are placed on the department, as well as frequent communication between these levels, to ensure that there is a shared and mutual understanding of exactly what is required, and what flexibility is available to the department in meeting these requirements.

V. How They Conceptualize What They Do: Workload Management and Resource Allocation

It is clear from our discussions with the Chair and the department members that the Philosophy department takes very seriously what it understands to be the administrative regulations governing teaching workload, and tries scrupulously to satisfy these. It is careful to observe the contact hour rule by assigning Honours tutorials or directed reading courses or other teaching contributions to supplement its 3 hour course teaching assignments, and it has deliberately not only preserved but also increased its FTE numbers substantially, through increases in course

section sizes and numbers of sections, in hopes of preserving and enhancing its chance of increasing its faculty complement in the future.

Our discussions with the Faculty of Arts suggest that the philosophy department's worries about FTE enrolments and their relation to positions may rest on a too restrictive interpretation of the administrative use to which FTE figures are put. Our understanding is that FTE figures are viewed in Arts as a general indication of the numbers of students that a discipline attracts, but the Faculty of Arts does not require any strict correlation between these figures and the complement of positions allocated to a unit. FTE figures may fluctuate without having any implications for position retention. From the Arts perspective, the Philosophy department is to be congratulated for intelligently stabilizing its student enrolment numbers by establishing philosophy courses as required courses in other disciplines in the university. Consequently, its basis for FTE enrolments is comparatively secure, and this is what the Faculty views as important. This view should be clearly communicated to the Philosophy department. This will provide reassurance for them, and relieve them of the need to give constant attention to FTE numbers. It also will give them some greater flexibility in the eventual exercise of curriculum revision, and will remove the false expectation that by raising FTE numbers they will be better placed to secure another position.

The Review Committee is cognizant of the general impact of increasing enrolments and FTEs on workload in philosophy teaching. The fact is that the skills in communication and reasoning that philosophy is especially able to provide can only be provided with a high level of individual one-on-one interaction, through oral and written feedback, prompting careful reflection and reformulation of arguments. Philosophy is a communication-intensive discipline in this respect. If SFU is seeking to incorporate the development of these skills in articulation, reasoning and communication in its students through the use of philosophy courses, then it must also recognize that increases in the numbers of students in whom such skills are being developed necessarily entail an increase in the workloads of those responsible for such instruction. In short, increased FTE numbers have a direct impact on teaching workload in philosophy that they may well not have in many other disciplines. It is important that this be acknowledged by the Faculty in its interactions with, and planning affecting, the Department of Philosophy.

To this end, we recommend

That the Dean of Arts meet with the Department in an effort to promote a common understanding of workload expectations, including the status of the eight-contact hour rule, and the expectations regarding FTEs.

The department also worries that it may not have the resources to be able to provide enough graduate courses for the small numbers in the MA and Ph. D. program, given the Faculty of Arts rule that no course which has less than five students is counted as satisfying a teaching credit. This regulation appears to imply that if a department member offers a thoroughly prepared graduate level seminar to an enrolment of four, or three, graduates, then the offering of this course (even though the work involved in advance preparation and in content quality may exceed the work required for teaching a large class) does not serve to meet one of the four course teaching load requirements expected annually of faculty members. The instructor would then need to teach a third course in that semester/year in order to satisfy his or her teaching load

requirement. This means that offering a fully prepared graduate seminar in a very small graduate program like philosophy's carries a risk of not counting as satisfying a teaching credit. This prospect is a disincentive for anyone to teach such a course, or alternatively is an incentive to skimp on preparation because of the likelihood that the course will not receive teaching credit.

This regulation, and/or its perceived import, presents a serious obstacle to the successful mounting of a graduate program with small numbers of students (which an SFU Philosophy Ph.D. program will certainly have if admissions are restricted to genuinely excellent prospects for that degree.) The problem has already been mentioned in III. B Graduate Programs above. The teaching credit rule also effectively eliminates the possibility that SFU and UBC cooperate in offering graduate seminars downtown, which graduate students from both universities could attend. We believe that such cooperation will be an essential element in the success of any SFU doctoral program. Offering a joint graduate seminar (one each year per university) would have large academic benefits; it would make available much needed graduate course offerings, permit graduates to move through their programs more expeditiously, give them a larger intellectual community with which to interact, and give them a distinctively graduate learning/teaching experience. We therefore recommend

That in cooperation with UBC at least one graduate course be offered each major semester at a downtown campus.

If the doctoral program is to succeed, then the department should commit itself, in advance, for a number of years, to offering such a course in every other major semester. Our meeting with the Chair of Philosophy at UBC suggests that his department is willing to cooperate in mounting such a course on a regular basis. Care should be taken, however, so that both departments are clear on what the courses will involve in terms of numbers of students, their levels, the curriculum, etc. For example, the UBC Chair mentioned that SFU should offer its course specifically at the graduate level, or at least that the number of undergraduates be capped at a low number. Failure of communication on these matters is an invitation to failure across the board, maybe even irretrievably.

It is quite likely that in the initial years of such an offering by either SFU or UBC, there will be fewer than five SFU graduates who would register in the seminar. Even after such a program is established, the numbers could fall below the total 'teaching credit' minimum enrolment of five graduates. It is unreasonable to expect faculty at SFU, especially untenured faculty, to teach such a course unless they will get teaching credit for doing so. The review committee therefore thinks it is very important, in the context of trying to get a fledgling Ph. D. program established, to relax the teaching credit rule so that teaching credit would be received for teaching such a graduate seminar. To disallow such a course for teaching credit would be shortsighted. It would effectively close down this cooperative effort, and thereby eliminate the possibility that the fledgling could ever grow up.

We recommend that, on a time-limited basis, in certain carefully delimited ways, the teaching credit rule needs to be relaxed or excused, in order to promote much more important academic objectives compatibly with imposing a reasonable workload on a small department. Specifically, we recommend

That for a period of seven years, and perhaps for a maximum number of courses per annum, teaching credit be given for graduate courses with fewer than five students enrolled.

VI. Department culture.

As mandated by the Senate-generated terms of reference, the External Review Committee is charged with assuring that the Department's "environment is conducive to the attainment of [its] objectives." Given that departmental objectives are currently being met, the present environment must in some sense be conducive. But we have also found that there are grounds for optimism that the environment might significantly improve in the future. We have twice mentioned above that because of a recent, highly concentrated period of decisions on hiring, chair-selection, promotions, and tenure, the Department has been under unusual strains. These are the sorts of strains that periodically irritate the existence of every department of philosophy, and it would have been surprising if this department had not felt their effects. (One regrettable casualty has been the departmental colloquia, an important environmental feature of any vibrant unit that the current members are for the moment just too exhausted to attend to.) The basis for our optimism that the Department will survive this period, and in fact has essentially already done so, is the enduring set of commitments that seem shared by its every member. Because this foundation of shared perceptions, goals and values is important to so much of the Department culture, we might begin by articulating some features of it.

Perhaps most remarkable in this regard is the Department's pride, noted above, in its undergraduate teaching, in particular its own majors and honours programs. None of us had ever before seen this degree of commitment, except perhaps at small liberal arts colleges in the States, where there are no other commitments. In addition, the Department is significantly committed to its MA program, and is willing (perhaps too willing) to make unrecognized sacrifices on its behalf. Nor should the willingness of every member of the Department to meet with us in frank discussion be overlooked in this regard. The people who spoke to us care about the Department. On a more abstract level, there is a more or less common perception of the discipline itself. (We should say, too, that the conception of the discipline at SFU is not some narrowly dogmatic one.) While those outside the discipline might wonder how there could fail to be such agreement, its lack in many departments is a constant source of problems. Finally, at a very practical level, we have noted, what the Department itself might not yet be fully aware of, that there is a high level of satisfaction with the performance of the incumbent chair.

In an effort to make the good better, we might draw attention to respects in which the Department's culture might be improved. Many of the confusions, disappointments or disagreements discussed above seem traceable, not to intractable circumstance, but simply to failure of communication. We see this less-than-fluid flow of information, to one degree or other, in both directions, at almost every occasion of exchange: between UBC, the Department and the administration, among individual faculty members, between the faculty and graduate students. (Again, the undergraduate domain stands out as unproblematic.) We often wondered why what we were hearing on a given topic had not been conveyed directly to those concerned. Not only would efficiency be improved, but, along with it, collegiality.

As to an exact explanation of why communication has failed, it is not likely that a team of three-day visitors will have many deep or comprehensive insights. An observation en passant would be that physical geography conspires against department cohesion. In some disciplines, research can be done only on campus, in labs or libraries, and thus faculty members come to campus and see each other on a daily basis. Philosophers can generally work at home and often prefer to do so, and thus the benefits of communal life are foregone. Cabbage to the campus and back to the hotel each day led us to notice the magic mountain phenomenon: a site of breathtaking beauty, but an obstacle to community.

What to do about this and other impediments? Only intramural imagination will remove them, likely with some unusual measures. Meanwhile, here is one. The idea of a departmental retreat is not one that is likely to gather a lot of support; a priori it seems flakey to philosophers. But it does work, and some consideration might be given to it.

Finally, the culture issue to which we attended most carefully in the various aspects of our research was that of gender. Despite all our attention to this issue and the considerable information we gathered on it, and the thought we have given it, we do not have much to say about it. It seems to us that the benefits to be derived from a gender-balanced faculty complement are coming to be realized in the Department, and promise to be for the future. In short, the Department is pointed in the right direction. To be sure, issues remain and need further attention, but they may be such as to transcend the local culture. For example, it was unclear to us why bright, articulate and confident female undergraduates, who had no trouble speaking with us on a variety of issues, nonetheless reported that they hesitate to participate in class to the same extent as their male neighbors. They explicitly denied that overt sexism was a factor, although they could offer no explanation for this phenomenon, which is probably beyond local control. Such problems may arise mainly from a failure of fit between the traditional stance and methods of the discipline on the one hand and gendered acculturation on the other.

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