The APRC determined that the Department of English has a well deserved strong national reputation for its honours and majors undergraduate programs. The curriculum offered covers the field of English Studies in admirable breadth and with a keen sense of both traditional and emergent areas within the discipline. The APRC supports the department’s claim of having “one of the best (honours programs) in the country” and the record of success of their graduates suggest how well the program serves the students.

The Department has long had a successful MA program with an excellent track record of its students who move on to doctoral study at top tier universities, law schools and a variety of other careers. Until recently, the doctoral program has been relatively small and recent expansion in overall graduate numbers has created a number of challenges, particularly at the doctoral level. The APRC recognizes that the Department is already addressing these issues and suggests greater attention to the situation in the near future.

There is an active research culture in the Department and the level of productivity is impressive. Many of the scholars have national and international reputations, and there is every indication of an energetic research environment enjoyed by faculty who value and respect research across the full range of discipline. Both graduate students and faculty have a very healthy success rate with their applications for external funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

While the department has undergone substantial changes in the past five years due to the attrition of many senior faculty members, the APRC observed that the new appointments have brought new energy, ideas and possibilities to the Department. The appointment of an external Chair has clearly been a success and in general there is lively collegiality in support of both research and teaching.

The APRC was impressed with the Department’s Self-Study which outlines its future by clear articulation of priorities for the various components of the Department’s business and notes that many of its goals are interlocked. Therefore, the recommendations of the APRC are designed to support the Department’s existing endeavors.

The Dean is satisfied that the department’s response to the APRC recommendations is quite thorough. The matter of the level of graduate course offerings and review of the first year program were quickly taken up by the department. The department has taken 13 steps to strengthen the English Major and while the number of graduate courses has doubled since the inception of the program, the department is considering further measures. The department fully considered the desired learning outcomes of its graduating students. The Dean encourages the department to further link the outcomes to pedagogical considerations as related to the workload issue. The department’s response to the workload issue was to move to 2/2 by eliminating or reducing course releases for administrative roles in the department so there would be minimal impact on the delivery of the program and the student’s experience.

The APRC recommended a review of the first year writing program and the role of the Department in supervising the English language graduation requirement for the university. With respect to such a review of the first year writing program for non-majors, The Provost welcomed the observations and recommendations of the APRC. The Associate Vice President chairs the English Language Proficiency
Working Group which has broad input from members of the academic community interested in English language and academic writing within the university. The working group has been tasked to coordinate a review of the Department’s writing programs including their goals and format.

The Dean and the Provost are both impressed with review outcome and agree with the APRC that the future looks bright for the Department of English.