

**Academic Program Review:
Department of Linguistics, University of Victoria**

June 30, 2010

The Review Committee consisted of Henry Davis (Department of Linguistics, University of British Columbia), Alison Preece (Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Victoria), and Gary Libben (Department of Linguistics and AVP (Research), University of Calgary, Committee Chair).

On March 1 & 2, 2010 the Committee undertook a site visit of the Department of Linguistics at the University of Victoria. The Committee had the opportunity to examine the physical resources of the Department of Linguistics and to conduct interviews with faculty, students, and support personnel, as well as administrators at the university, faculty, and department levels. The committee reviewed its findings over the course of the two days, met for three hours at the end of the site visit, and continued to interact over email in the preparation of this report. The committee met with the following persons /groups.

University and Faculty Administration

Howard Brunt, Vice-President, Research
Jamie Cassels, Vice-President, Academic
Catherine Mateer, Associate Vice-President, Academic Planning
Aaron Devor, Dean of Graduate Studies
Andrew Rippin, Dean of Humanities
Aliko Marinakis, Aboriginal Education Office, Curriculum & Instruction
Brenda Weatherston, Cultural Management Programs, Continuing Studies
Avril Taylor, Co-Director, English Language Centre

Department Administration and support

John Esling, Department Chair
Gretchen McCulloch, Department Secretary
Maureen Kirby, Graduate Secretary
Chris Coey, Computer Programmer
Emily Story, Applied Linguistics Assistant Faculty
Ewa Czaykowska-Higgins, Associate Professor
Hua Lin, Associate Professor & Chair, Graduate Studies Committee
Hossein Nassaji, Associate Professor & Chair, Applied Linguistics Committee

Leslie Saxon, Associate Professor

Suzanne Urbanczyk, Associate Professor & Chair, Curriculum Committee

Lorna Williams, Assistant Professor & CRC in Indigenous Knowledge & Learning

Sonya Bird, Assistant Professor

Alexandra D'Arcy, Assistant Professor

Li-Shih Huang, Assistant Professor

Continuing Sessional Lecturers

Sandra Kirkham, Continuing Sessional Lecturer

David McKercher, Continuing Sessional Lecturer

Judy Nylvek, Continuing Sessional Lecturer

SUMMARY OF DEPARTMENT STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

The Department of Linguistics has proven excellence across many domains

The materials that the review committee received and the information that it gathered at a two-day site visit in March 2010 all point to the conclusion that the Department of Linguistics at the University of Victoria is a very successful unit that has shown achievement and innovation in both teaching and research. It offers a great variety of academic programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels as well as high impact and innovative postgraduate diploma and certificate programs.

A research intensive department in a research intensive university

Over the past decade, the University of Victoria has emerged as one of Canada's research-intensive universities. This brings with it challenges for units which have developed excellent programs of instruction, particularly at the undergraduate level, and now must find ways to expand at the graduate level and in the domain of research activity. We see the Department of Linguistics at a key juncture. It has an established track record of success. It has the atmosphere of collegiality and forward momentum that will be a great advantage in its further development as a research-intensive department in a research- intensive university.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

The department is seeking to expand its graduate enrolment. In the section, we note that the department has been very successful in the graduate domain.

Description of Current State

The Department of linguistics offers a PhD in linguistics and an MA in both linguistics and applied linguistics. The department offers one of the three PhDs in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Victoria, and has been granting PhDs in linguistics since 1975. Currently, there are about 30 full time graduate students in the department and the department's goal is to increase this number to 35. Roughly half the current graduate students are pursuing PhDs, one quarter are pursuing an MA in linguistics and one quarter are pursuing an MA in Applied Linguistics.

Analysis

Our analysis of theses and dissertations currently underway suggests a good balance between PhD and MA activities as well as a balance between the MA programs.

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

In this section, we discuss the B.A. program in linguistics, the B.A. in Applied Linguistics, and the B.Sc. in Linguistics with emphasis both on the quality of the programs and the demands that they make on departmental teaching resources

Description of Current State

The Department of Linguistics offers a BA in Linguistics, a BA in Applied Linguistics, and a BSc in Linguistics. The BA in Linguistics program provides students with mainstream education in the field of Linguistics that is situated within the humanities and a liberal arts approach to the study of

language and formal linguistics. The BA in Applied Linguistics specifically focuses on training in English as a Second Language and in applied linguistics. The BSc program emphasizes a basic scientific education relevant to the study of language and a strong concentration in linguistics as a science, with a particular emphasis on early career training for clinical work in the Speech Sciences (University of Victoria is one of only two BC universities that offer such a program).

We would like to emphasize our view that each of the undergraduate programs is very well designed and executed. The B.A. in Linguistics offers students a mainstream approach whose calendar offerings compare favorably to any offered within Canadian universities. Students receive broad training in formal aspects of language up to the 300 level. From that point onward they must choose 15 units from among senior linguistics courses. At least one of these courses must be chosen from among the listed senior courses in formal linguistics.

The BA in applied linguistics is also very well designed. Like the mainstream bachelor's program in the discipline it offers students a broad introduction to the field and familiarity with language structure. Other courses in the program are clearly designed to provide students with the background that would be of great assistance in the teaching of languages both in Canada and abroad.

Finally, the BSc in linguistics is a most impressive attempt to provide the background needed at the undergraduate level to pursue language study within the domain of science and technology.

Clearly, a great deal of work has gone into the development of these programs and we were particularly pleased to note the availability of an honors stream within each. There is, however, a clear challenge that the department faces: That is, you cannot have a large undergraduate program offered by a small department in which most of the teaching is done by tenured and tenure-track professors who themselves show evidence of needing a re-weighting of their time away from teaching and service and toward research in order to fulfill the long term goals of the university and the department.

