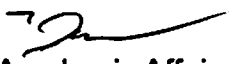




May 8, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: Robert Bley-Vroman
Dean, Languages, Linguistics, and Literature

FROM: Reed Dasenbrock 
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Your Response to the 2013 Review of LLL

Thank you for the LLL Response to the Program Review. I appreciate the care and detail of the response and agree that your five major headings capture key aspects of the review that will require attention by the college and you as dean over the next few years. Please consider these comments as you move forward on addressing the major issues and the department-specific recommendations in the Report.

The issues surrounding workload are complex, and I would urge you to work through these carefully with an eye to unintended consequences. I am aware that both English and EALL consider the difference in their 'default teaching load' compared to those of Linguistics and SLS (3-2 vs. 2-2) to be unfair, but any proposal to reduce 'default' teaching loads needs to take into consideration the college's financial situation and not take away teaching power that would end up either costing the college money or reducing our offerings to students. As you know, I have reservations about the whole approach in terms of a 'default load,' preferring an approach that matches workload and instructional responsibilities to key and defined metrics around scholarly productivity. If we can move towards such a model that is cost- and class offering- neutral, then this should be the basis for addressing these issues equitably.

I strongly endorse the imperative to build bridges across organizational units, both inside individual departments as well as across the College as a whole. You are right to identify the 'silozation' of EALL as a particular challenge: I don't understand viewing language and linguistics as one thing, literature as another, and of course the literature of Korea and Japan is as incomprehensible without the context of the Chinese language and its literature as English literature is without Italian, Latin and Greek. EALL has the potential to be the strongest department of its kind in the United States, potentially in the world, and it will only gain strength as it understands and realizes the potential synergies of its terrain.

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The physical facilities available to LLL range from adequate to completely unacceptable, and the report describes the issues fairly. I do believe that this needs to be a higher priority for you as dean than it has been, but this will take our combined collaboration and energies.

Let me turn to some of the more specific recommendations. I would welcome a proposal for an undergraduate degree in Linguistics: the experience of SLS certainly should tell us that there is student interest in this general area, and I think strong graduate programs should consider developing undergraduate programs to complement those programs. In the present context, a new graduate degree in English will frankly be a much tougher sell.

The review recommends a university-wide teaching evaluation system. This is in fact being worked on, but nothing prevents the college at the present time from standardizing its use of teaching evaluations in ways that address this recommendation. E-café can be mandated for all courses, and e-café results can go directly to chairs as well as faculty. There are also many other ways to evaluate teaching, and I encourage you to encourage departments to develop a 'multi-modal' approach in their promotion and tenure documents.

The system is re-starting the PELP program (President's Emerging Leadership Program), and you should certainly recommend people for it. In addition, the OVCAA has been running a program for training new chairs. LLL should take advantage of both.

There are concerns expressed about enrollments in the undergraduate program in Chinese and the doctoral programs in Chinese and Korean. The recently approved policy involving low enrollment programs will also prompt a look at these programs, so I strongly second the concern expressed here.

You express concern about the low enrollments in many of the languages taught in IPLL. I share this concern also, and strongly encourage a focus on increasing enrollments in virtually all the languages taught in IPLL.

These are some of the department-specific recommendations that I think need particular attention. As you know, the process involves a follow-up report from you in a year as well as a subsequent report mid-cycle in which you comment on the progress that has been made on the issues arising from the review. I would ask that this report be submitted by April 30, 2015.

c: April Goodwin