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## II. Contextualization of the Problem

In order to understand the problems that were associated with the UCLA Slavic Department and the issues connected to the Eight-Year Review of this department that was conducted in 2000, one must understand the various contexts within which these problems and these issues have arisen. This section will concentrate on the role of tenured faculty and how these faculty relate to the academic administration that is supposedly located just above them on the academic hierarchy. This role and this relationship will be examined first from the point of view of academia as a whole, and then as they were seen within both UCLA as an institution and the Slavic Department as an entity within that institution.

### **A. Within the History of Academia**

Like the unions that exist for the technical, custodial, administrative, and maintenance staffs, the professors have a *de facto* union in what is usually termed an Academic Senate. (At UCLA, the Academic Senate is comprised of all the tenured members of the faculty.) Unlike these other unions, however, the Academic Senate has a disproportionately large amount of power. In many of the major colleges and universities throughout the country, the tenured professoriate, through organizations like the Academic Senate, often play a dual role: on the one hand, the Academic Senate at UCLA sets University policy (including policy on matters of professional conduct, and, in effect, many of the rules for running the University), while on the other hand, it serves to represent the interests of the tenured faculty. While it is true that individual campuses, at least at UC, are subordinated to the Board of Regents, these regents in reality rarely concern themselves with day-to-day proceedings, and even more rarely, except in the most egregious cases, with matters of discipline involving tenured faculty.

Thus, the end effect is a "union-like" entity that also sets (or has a disproportionately large influence on) university policy. Imagine if the custodial union for the university also ran the university. The conflict of interest would be obvious. And yet, this is the situation as it exists now for tenured professors at most institutions of higher learning, and certainly for those at UCLA and the other UC campuses.

The result of this situation is an academic administration which, at its highest levels, is comprised solely of tenured professors. Does this have an effect on the enforcement of rules and

regulations that govern and define standards of conduct and professional behavior for University employees? There is nothing to suggest that this is so with regard to non-tenured employees, most of whom are subject to the same behavioral and disciplinary sanctions, including termination, as is seen in government or other large workforces.

The same cannot be said, however, of those members of the university who have tenure. The institution of tenure, cherished and fiercely defended by the faculty, also plays a major role in the university's stance toward disciplining and dismissing faculty members. As originally conceived, tenure was meant to protect professors from political pressure with regard to the content of their teaching and their publications, within obvious limits. (For example a professor of Russian cannot walk into a class and start teaching chemistry). What tenure was never intended to do, however, was to provide *carte blanche* to faculty so that they might engage in abuse or unprofessional behavior with impunity. And yet, even the staunchest defenders of tenure will admit that this does indeed happen. In fact, it happens with varying degrees of frequency, in some departments much more so than in others.

Even if one were to leave aside the issue of tenure, however, one is still confronted with the fact that, of all the employee groups at the university, only the tenured professoriate is in a position to, in effect, police itself when it comes to issues of abuse and unprofessional behavior. It is true that there exists a level in the university hierarchy which is nominally above that of the tenured faculty (for example, in the University of California system there is a president for the entire UC system as well as a Board of Regents, which is above both the University President and the individual Academic Senates on the individual campuses) but this level is rarely, if ever, called upon to deal with issues of faculty abuse and unprofessional behavior. It is the individual campus administrations and the Academic Senates of the individual campuses that serve as the *de facto* final arbiter in matters such as this.

The results of this situation, one in which the faculty finds itself serving as its own supervisor and as the director of its own oversight and review procedures, are predictable. It has long been known throughout academia that tenured academics have always tended to tread lightly when it comes to meting out discipline to their tenured colleagues. There are a number of reasons for this:

1. There exists within academia, as is the case within many of the professional vocations, a strong sense of professional courtesy. Just as it is often difficult to find a physician who would be willing to testify against a fellow physician, so too are tenured academics loath to speak out openly against their fellow academics.

2. The hesitancy that many academics feel when assigned to what they feel to be the distasteful task of disciplining one of their own is augmented by the knowledge that, whatever

their findings, there are very real limits to the disciplinary action that can be meted out to tenured faculty, regardless of how harsh the recommendations made against them. A common attitude can be summed up as follows: what's the point of doing an extensive investigation into the alleged misdeeds of a colleague when there is very little chance that he/she will be subjected to any real punishment, much less be subject to dismissal? All this does is stir up bad feelings that will have to be circumvented in any future action with that particular colleague or colleagues.

3. What might be the strongest deterrent to strict enforcement of disciplinary and professional ethics codes by academics with regard to their fellow academics is the fact that, in the eyes of many tenured professors, to discipline one member of their collective for abuse or unprofessional behavior could lead to others of their class also being challenged and reprimanded/dismissed for such behavior. Even those members of the tenured professoriate who are not abusive towards their students and who do maintain a high standard of professionalism with regard to their conduct and demeanor--and let there be no doubt, there are many in academia who do fit this description--but even they can be at times hesitant in insisting that their colleagues who have crossed the line be disciplined or dismissed. Many of these academics who honor their pledge to maintain this high standard of professionalism nevertheless often have to work with colleagues who fail to honor this pledge. Sometimes this contact is at a moderate level, for example simply being in the same department, sometimes it is at a higher level, such as working on the same committee, and at times it is extremely intimate, including working together on the same projects, the same research, and the same publications. Given the nature of these contacts, and given the fact that, because of tenure, there is next to no chance that an offending colleague will ever be dismissed, regardless of how heinous the behavior, it is understandable--lamentable, but understandable--that many of the academics who do maintain high standards of professionalism feel that there is little point in pressuring their colleagues to do the same.

Reinforcing this feeling are faculty codes of conduct and codified "standards of professionalism" which, while on the surface dedicated to upholding these principles, actually end up discouraging investigations in instances where such codes and standards are violated. For example, these codes will often specify that if there is misconduct, then the "professional" way to address such conduct, especially conduct on the part of one's tenured colleagues, is to be found *exclusively* in whatever system the academic administration has set up to handle instances such as this. In other words, at no time are a department's problems ever to be aired publicly. To do so would be considered an egregious violation of collegial trust and, by extension, of "professionalism", selectively defined.

In this respect, what happens at the higher levels of academia is little different than what happens at the higher levels of business or government. Those who occupy the higher levels in these and many other bureaucratic structures tend to make rules--and, more importantly, to interpret rules--in such a way as to allow greater flexibility for themselves than is allowed for

those at lower levels. A significant part of this process of "rule interpretation" can be seen in what are commonly known as "rules of professional conduct", rules which, ostensibly, are there for the protection of all, but which in fact often serve to bring academics in line and to make sure that, whatever they do, they are not to put fellow academics in difficult situations, nor are they to point out or highlight the flaws and/or misdeeds of individual members of the tenured professoriate. If there are problems, then these problems are to be addressed internally and are to be brought to resolution in as unobtrusive and private a manner as is possible. The emphasis is always to be on gentle correction, and only in the most severe of cases is the question of punishment or dismissal even considered, much less imposed. In other words, the sort of disciplinary options available and *regularly imposed* at other levels of the academic employee hierarchy, that is to say among the technical, custodial, administrative, and maintenance staffs, are only nominally available, and only in the rarest of instances imposed, for the tenured faculty.

The tenured professoriate will, of course, deny that the above description is an accurate representation of the disciplinary constraints under which they operate. They will take pains to point out the various and sundry disciplinary options available to the university administration and their own abhorrence of unprofessional and abusive behavior. They will further point out that, for tenured professors, and especially for the sort of respected academics who represent high powered research institutions such as UCLA and the other UC campuses, the fact of being singled out, the very fact of being upbraided, however secretly, by their fellow faculty members is, in a way, the worst punishment to which they could be subjected, far more severe than simply being demoted or losing their job altogether.

While there may in fact be some truth to this latter assertion, it is more likely the case that the tenured professoriate trots out this sort of explanation ("Look, why even bother demoting this person, or firing him? Clearly he has suffered enough.") with the hope of deflecting the public's demand (assuming, of course, that news of the academic's misdeeds would even reach the public) that the academic or academics in question be held accountable for his/their actions. The fact is, statistics do not in the least bear out the claim that tenured professors are disciplined at the same rate or with the same level of severity as is seen with other groups of university employees. In the entire history of the University of California system (not just UCLA, but the entire ten-member campus) only a handful tenured professors have ever been fired. How many have had to suffer the "shame" of being privately upbraided by their colleagues, one cannot say (more about this later), but however excruciating this shame, the fact that those who have been forced to undergo it did so while being paid their full salaries, and without worry that their jobs would be at risk, no doubt helped to soften the blow.

## **B. Within the Slavic Department at UCLA**

While every university and university system is different, for those which have academic tenure--which would include almost all public institutions and a great majority of the private ones--the above-mentioned scenarios are fairly typical. They may differ in specifics, but in general, the sacrosanct status of professors, and the abhorrence with which tenured academics look upon the task of disciplining their tenured brethren is common to most such institutions. This abhorrence notwithstanding, UCLA, as a public institution financially supported by and nominally beholden to the public at large, is obliged to have in place some sort of system by which it evaluates the performance of its tenured faculty and through which, in theory anyway, it can bring about the dismissal of tenured professors who abuse their authority or who fail to conduct themselves in accordance with university regulations (or, in extreme cases, in accordance with state and federal law).

At UCLA this system is essentially two pronged: at the individual level, all tenured faculty undergo peer-review for promotion from associate professor to full professor, and for so called "step increases" within the associate professor and full professor levels. At the program level, the normal review process runs in eight-year cycles. The eight-year review process begins with a departmental self-evaluation, with graduate students encouraged to fill out what are supposed to be confidential and anonymous questionnaires that cover various aspects of the department being reviewed.

The departmental self-evaluation and the graduate student questionnaires are then forwarded higher up along the chain to an internal review committee consisting of two to three (sometimes more) UCLA professors and one UCLA graduate student (none of whom are from the department being reviewed) and usually at least two external reviewers from comparable academic institutions throughout the country. An important point to note, especially when seen in the light of the 1999-2000 Eight-Year Review of the UCLA Slavic Department, is that *it is the department being reviewed* which provides the university the initial list of academics from which the final two external reviewers will be chosen. Thus, the department under review has enormous influence on the selection of the outside (non-UCLA) reviewers who will be investigating the department itself.

The on-site investigation itself usually involves meetings with the faculty, with associated staff, with various deans and other members of the UCLA academic hierarchy. In addition, there is an opportunity for graduate students to sign up for individual 15-minute sessions with the investigating committee as a whole. One should note that while these sessions are indeed private, there is no anonymity guaranteed to the students participating in these sessions. They are attended by the investigating committee, whose members, in theory anyway, are dedicated to maintaining the confidentiality of the discussion, but the fact that this or that student actually took the initiative to go in and speak with the investigating committee is on the record for all to see.

In the case of review of the UCLA Slavic Department, this set-up was extremely problematic, for at least five reasons:

1. It was unclear from the outset whether or not the questionnaires that graduate students filled out, which also included a section for them to address individual problems not covered by the questionnaire, would be accessible by the Slavic Department faculty. In a department as small as the Slavic Department, it would not be difficult to determine who had written what, especially if specific issues were involved.
2. None of the students who had substantial complaints dared to go in and make these complaints directly to the committee for fear of being identified as having gone in and "aired the Department's dirty laundry", so to speak. Those who did go in spoke in generalities and stuck to issues that were, for the most part, far from the main issues of abuse that were rocking the Department at that time. Given the fact that no one was sure if the questionnaires afforded confidentiality, the ability to communicate directly with the committee took on that much more importance.
3. The bulk of the problems concerning abuse of graduate students was concentrated on the linguistics side of the Department, although it often affected students in the literature side as well. Of the two outside members brought in to be a part of the investigating committee, one was a former member of the UCLA Slavic Department, a linguist who had close ties to members of the Department. When students in the Slavic Department found this out, they immediately raised concerns with the UCLA Administration. Although this individual had, at this stage of the investigation anyway, done nothing to cause students to question his impartiality, the gravity of the situation and the knowledge of the backlash that would be unleashed against those who were suspected of having spoken against the Department made many of the students feel that speaking confidentially to this particular investigator would be a less than judicious choice.
4. The 15-minute blocks that were allotted to each graduate student would not have been nearly enough time to address the problems that were facing graduate students in this department.
5. These 15-minute interviews were held in a room located squarely in the main Slavic Department office. While one is not always able to hear through the door what is being said, sometimes when discussions become heated conversation does escape this room, even when the door is securely closed.

In response to these concerns raised by the graduate students, they were given the option of meeting with individual members of the investigating committee (as opposed to having to meet with every member) at a secure location outside of the Slavic Department.

This, then, was the system that UCLA had in place to investigate its Slavic Department. The longer one looks at the system, the clearer the picture that emerges, and that is a picture of a university that wants to have some sort of system in place that can be pointed to as an example of oversight, and which may in fact deal with superficial abuses of power, but which is also designed to keep such oversight as superficial as possible. Keep in mind that these reviews of any given department only occur once every eight years. Thus, the investigative committee is asked to gauge a department's performance for this period based on the results of a graduate student survey and a week's worth of investigation. Perhaps this would be sufficient were the department in question a perfect department, but it is woefully, woefully inadequate for a department that has even a moderate degree of problems, much less problems of the scope seen in the UCLA Slavic Department. The only way a system such as this one could even come close to shedding light on such departmental abuse would be if the students themselves not only cooperated, but actually pushed the system, demanding that it live up to what it claimed to be, a true review process. Given the potential repercussions to any students imprudent enough to do so, only rarely do they make this demand of a lax oversight system such as this one.

In light of UCLA's lackadaisical attitude toward the review process, it should come as no surprise that individual departments at UCLA would adopt a similarly indifferent view towards it, for clearly this sort of attitude is in their interest in that it provides the departments a maximum amount of autonomy. While such autonomy is a good and welcomed thing with regard to their scholarship (again, within reasons: mathematics professors should not be devoting all their publishing time to Victorian Literature), it is very questionable whether or not it is a good thing with regard to how UCLA oversees and, when needed, disciplines its own faculty. One would think that the fact that these departmental reviews occur only once every eight years, and that they are, in large part, so very superficial, *and* that these reviews are, to a large degree, guided by the department itself, would provide enough assurance for the department under review, specifically for that department's tenured faculty, that they would not have to be overly worried about any single review.

This, however, was not the case with the UCLA Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. The Slavic Department, more so than a great many other departments at UCLA, has always fiercely guarded its independence and has never been shy in raising the battle cry of academic freedom should any of its perceived freedoms and rights come under threat. The very idea that the Department should be reviewed at all, given its past standing in the field of Slavic, strikes many of its faculty as slightly insulting. The notion of "academic freedom" is flexibly interpreted by these same faculty, such that it encompasses not just what they publish and what they teach, but almost every conceivable aspect of how the Department itself is run, certainly to include the manner and tone with which the faculty interacts with its graduate students. The idea

that outsiders (and by that is meant anyone outside the UCLA Slavic Department, including UCLA faculty from other departments and other UCLA administrators) should have any say whatsoever in how the Department acts in matters such as these is not a popular one among many of the faculty in the UCLA Slavic Department. And yet, the Eight-Year Review is mandated, it is a part of the above-mentioned system of oversight that public universities must have in place, if for no other reason than to be able to claim that they do indeed exercise some degree of control over what goes on within individual departments, and to be able to refute the claim that faculty are "free agents" unfettered by any rules of conduct or professionalism.

The UCLA Slavic Department, however, was not in the least anxious to undergo the Eight-Year Review scheduled for 1999-2000. The reasons for this were not restricted solely to the feeling of indignation, mentioned above, that they should be subject to any sort of oversight at all. The situation in the Slavic Department had been, for a number of reasons, growing increasingly tense throughout the decade of the 90's. The eventual report itself details a small yet illuminating fraction of some of these reasons, so they will not be highlighted here. Suffice it to say that when the time had rolled around for the 1999-2000 Eight-Year Review, there was reason enough for the faculty to worry what the response would be from a graduate student body that was, in many respects, highly disaffected and disillusioned, a graduate student body that saw students suffering both from fear and from extreme anger at the causes of that fear. So concerned were some of the faculty with the potential ramifications of any such review that they attempted to put it off, calling on a little known and rarely used codicil in the review procedure which allows, under only the most exceptional of circumstances, the review to be put off for a couple of years. At some point in the discussion someone must have suggested polling the graduate students to see what they thought of this idea.

This is not quite as innocuous or as simple as it may sound. While those in attendance at a graduate student meeting called to discuss this issue almost to a person felt that there was a need to alert the University to the abuse that was happening within the Slavic Department, there was also fear of the consequences of voting not to postpone the Eight-Year Review, and fear of what would happen as a result of the Eight-Year Review. A graduate student, when he/she finally finishes, depends greatly on the reputation of the department from which he/she has graduated for initial job offers. While in other departments it might have been possible to address the issues of abuse in a constructive way, most of the graduate students in the UCLA Slavic Department knew very well that there was every chance that this would not be the case here, with the result being a possible loss in prestige for the Slavic Department and a subsequent lessening of their chances to obtain a position. In spite of this fact, the vote among graduate students was overwhelming, with approximately 90% voting not to postpone the Eight-Year Review, the faculty's clear desire that it be postponed notwithstanding. (The exact record of the vote, if there was one, was not available for the preparation of this work, but it might even have been the case that the vote was 100%, or perhaps 90+ % in favor, with no dissenting votes, just one or two abstentions.)

In retrospect, this vote might have had no practical effect, since postponing eight-year reviews is done only in very exceptional circumstances, but from the point of view of seeing where graduate students were at this particular time and how they were thinking, this vote was instructive. It was particularly impressive to see the literature students acting in support of the linguistic students. While the abuses that went on within the UCLA Slavic Department emanated primarily from the linguistic faculty, the effects also spilled over onto the literature section, and there was in fact a history of literature students leaving the programs because of abuses by linguistic faculty, so it is not as if the literature students were not incurring considerable risk by taking a stand in solidarity with their fellow graduate students in linguistics. As it turned out, the attempt by the faculty to put off the review was probably doomed from the outset anyway, but the vote and the solidarity shown by literature students toward their fellow students in linguistics was and is instructive as to the depth of feeling that permeated that department's body of graduate students.

If this fear seems somehow exaggerated to people on the outside, it is important to remember the context in which this whole review was taking place. Not only was the faculty for the most part against this review (or, if not a majority against it, certainly quite apprehensive as to what would result from it), but the instructions that graduate students received regarding the filling out of the initial forms and questionnaires that signify the beginning of this process were also unclear and at some points contradictory. In order to ensure that students would speak up and be candid in their description of their experiences within the UCLA Slavic Department, there needed to be a promise of both absolute confidentiality and absolute opaqueness regarding the instances of individual participation, i.e. no one should be able to look at the final report or at descriptions of the Eight-Year Review process and be able to deduce who had said what to whom. From the outset, however, there were flaws in the system.

As was described above, the section on the questionnaire that allowed students to add additional comments in long hand was a source of concern for a number of reasons. Handwriting, obviously, gives people away, but so do descriptions that reveal specific instances of abuse, especially in a department as small as the UCLA Slavic Department. Thus, going beyond answering a simple multiple-choice questionnaire to writing out specific examples could have very real consequences were these examples ever to be seen by the UCLA Slavic Department faculty. Given the attitude of fear and mistrust that already permeated the UCLA Slavic Department, the fact that there was at the very outset of the Eight-Year Review process already ambiguity with regard to the crucial question of whether faculty would be able to read graduate student written responses that were part of the original questionnaire only served to make students that much more wary about committing to a system which in the past had not only failed to uncover abuse, but had in fact served to cover it up.

#### **IV. How the Slavic Dept. Review Was Actually Conducted**

It was immediately brought to the attention of the investigating committee that students had fears about talking with the committee, both because they didn't want to be seen in the middle of the Slavic Department office going in to talk to the committee, and because of the presence of a former UCLA Slavic Department faculty member (a linguist, no less) on the committee. From this point on, there were in essence two reviews going on: the sort of formal review that happens regularly every eight years, with regularly scheduled meetings with faculty, deans, etc., and a second review, with students meeting with the investigating committee at a site far removed from the physical environs of the Slavic Department.

The review process thus took on a schizophrenic character, with the formal review process looking outwardly much like the previous Eight-Year Review process and much like the usual review processes that are conducted at UCLA, while in point of fact, much of the real investigation was taking place away from the Slavic Department, with students, at their request, meeting members of the internal committee at an unannounced location. As was discussed above, many of the students, especially the linguists, refused to meet with the external committee because of the presence on it of the former UCLA Slavic Department faculty member, who was himself a linguist. It became clear as the process proceeded that the faculty itself soon became aware of the severity of the situation. Some of the more candid faculty members made mention, in guarded terms, that they were aware that the UCLA Slavic Department was under a harsh microscope.

This was a justifiable fear on the part of the faculty. The fact that the students were so afraid of retaliation that they had asked for a neutral meeting site was not the only indication that something in the UCLA Slavic Department was very much amiss. In order to gain a broader picture of what had been happening in this department, the internal committee, at the urging of the active graduate students, began to contact former graduate students in the UCLA Slavic Department. The nature of the charges being leveled against the faculty in this department was such that independent corroboration was deemed essential.

### **Factual Errors Statement**

When the investigation of the UCLA Slavic Department was for all intents and purposes completed, two separate reports were issued: one by the internal committee, the committee consisting entirely of UCLA faculty and one UCLA graduate student, and one by the external committee, consisting of just two people, the two outside reviewers, one of whom was the linguist who was a former faculty member in the UCLA Slavic Department. A rough draft of both of these reports was then sent to the Chair of the Department for what is termed a "Factual Errors Statement". The purpose of a "Factual Errors Statement" was just exactly what it sounds

like, to go over the report for accuracy of basic facts (number of faculty, fields of expertise of the faculty, things of that sort). In other words, it is purely there to allow simple mistakes to be corrected. It is not intended to be a forum through which the conclusions drawn by the internal and external committees can be discussed and disputed.

It appears as though Michael Heim, the then-Chair of the UCLA Slavic Department, misunderstood the nature of the "Factual Errors Statement" section on two points: first, he apparently believed it to be a low-level communication between himself and the Academic Senate, when in fact it was destined to become a part of the official report. Secondly, he either did not realize that the sole purpose of the "Factual Errors Statement" is merely to ensure that the basic facts listed in the report are correct (and not to dispute the conclusions of the report itself), or else he realized this, but thought that he could use it as a forum to rebut some of the very harsh conclusions reached in the reports themselves. Because the Chair was, apparently, unaware that his comments would become part of the public record, he was unusually candid in his assessment of the problems facing the UCLA Slavic Department and in his assessment of some of the problem faculty involved.

When the Chair first learned that his response would in fact become part of the report, a report that is itself a part of the public record, he was quite distressed. He was heard to have said time and time again that he simply could not believe that they would actually put his candid comments on public record, thus enabling the colleagues about whom he spoke to see what exactly it was that he had said about them. It was one of those rarest of moments in which the façade of the UCLA Slavic Department fell, if but briefly, exposing not only the reality of what was going on in the Department, but also the thoughts of the faculty themselves, both as regards their colleagues in the Department and the Department's graduate students.

Essentially what the Chair attempted to do in this "Factual Errors Statement" was not correct small statements of fact, but to rebut the very harsh report of the internal committee (the review committee made up of faculty only from UCLA, along with one UCLA graduate student). In this attempted rebuttal, the Chair continued with the same patterns of denial and evasion that had characterized his participation (or lack thereof) in the initial investigations. So egregious was this continued pattern of prevarication and sophistry that the internal committee felt compelled to answer in a point-by-point response, detailing some of the instances in which the Chair's response deviated from the truth, a response which confirmed *officially* and *on the record* the fact that the Chair had been less than honest in his interaction with the internal committee, and had in fact attempted to cover up and deny the systematic abuse that permeated the UCLA Slavic Department. The Chair's initial "Factual Errors Statement", the internal committee's response to this statement, and student commentary on this statement, are available in this report. The content of these documents speaks for itself, so it will not be belabored here.

## Initial Reaction of UCLA Slavic Department Faculty

When the report finally came out, the reaction of the UCLA Slavic Department faculty was mixed. The Chair and those who had perpetrated this fraud--or at least who had *attempted* to do so--were understandably upset. The Chair had at least had some forewarning of what lay ahead, while many of the other faculty members were still in a state of denial. For so long this faculty had done what it wanted when it wanted, and had been unchallenged in its treatment of its graduate students, that it was at first almost impossible for the reality of the situation to sink in. The next step in the response cycle varied by individual faculty member. Some of the younger faculty, especially the non-tenure track faculty, felt that the Department had been warned, had but failed to take advantage of the opportunity to come clean, admit the abuse, and right the ship, however painful and embarrassing that admission of wrongdoing would have been. Another set of faculty simply were not in town at that point. A third group, representing the traditional core of the faculty, soon got over its shock and moved quickly to fury and anger. One emeritus came storming in and accused one student of trying to destroy the Department that this emeritus had worked so hard to build. Others of this group began questioning students about the Eight-Year Review.

The problem with this is self-evident. These students were promised protection by the UCLA Administration for their frank and candid participation in the process. Examples of that encouragement are as follows:

[From an administrator in Graduate Information Services] "I am very concerned about your reluctance to comment on your program. I strongly suggest that you make every effort to convey your perceptions to the review teams during the programmatic review next year. If you do (*sic*-should read: "do not") make any effort to do this, people cannot fairly evaluate your program."

Before the process even began, some students had gone to the Dean of the Humanities to complain about what was happening in the UCLA Slavic Department and were encouraged to be as open as possible, and were again promised protection from reaction to the report by the UCLA Slavic Department faculty. The following is culled from a message sent to a Slavic Department graduate student concerning fears about participating in the review:

"I have been assured [by the Chair of the Slavic Department and the Associate Dean of Graduate Division] that input from graduate students will be solicited and reviewed in a manner that protects the confidentiality of those who provide it...I can't emphasize enough the importance of offering your frank assessment of the program, and of encouraging your fellow students to do so. Former students should be urged to contribute as well. As I mentioned when we met, this input has been taken very seriously in reviews of other departments. Those students, too, were no doubt concerned about repercussions, but to my knowledge that has not occurred."

The report itself emphasized the need for such protection, and (as it turns out, ineffectually)

threatened faculty with dire consequences for trying to retaliate or threaten students for their participation in the review process. Thus, there were multiple instances of the UCLA Administration, in its various incarnations, encouraging student participation and promising protection from harassment and retaliation.

To have the Chair and other faculty asking graduate students about this review was problematic for any number of reasons. In a department as small as the UCLA Slavic Department anonymity can be quickly lost simply by the process of elimination. For example, out of a graduate student body of twenty five to thirty, if five or ten students, when cornered by faculty, deny involvement in the review process (and given the level of fear and intimidation that existed in the UCLA Slavic Department, this is not in the least beyond the realm of the possible, or even the probable), this then further narrows the field of possible "culprits", i.e. of students who might have talked to the investigating committee.

In addition, those students who choose not to participate in discussions with faculty also then run the risk of coming under a cloud of suspicion as students who refused to abide by the understood code of silence regarding discussions of the UCLA Slavic Department's dirty laundry with those perceived as "outsiders". Students could, in effect, be damned if they did and damned if they didn't. And those who did acquiesce to faculty requests to discuss the review would also experience what is termed a "Captive Audience" situation, one in which a subordinate finds himself or herself face to face with a faculty member who determines grades, who writes recommendations, who sits on committees, and who approves--or disapproves--dissertations. The potential for intimidation in such a situation is enormous, and again, especially so in the atmosphere of fear and intimidation that defined the UCLA Slavic Department.

### **Attempts to Keep Faculty from Interrogating Graduate Students**

When the original report came out, it contained strong wording concerning the possibility that faculty in the UCLA Slavic Department might attempt to retaliate against the graduate students in the report who agreed to speak with the internal committee. The wording is as follows:

"It goes without saying that the willingness of numerous students to speak with the review team (but not to be quoted) was critical in arriving at the decision to take the above actions. Let it, therefore, be clearly understood that the slightest indication of retaliation by faculty against students will be aggressively investigated by the Graduate Council to determine whether charges should be filed with the appropriate Senate Committee for violations of the Faculty Code of Conduct, not only for recent but also for any past offences."

Given the fact that the internal committee felt so strongly about this issue, and that the internal committee had made it clear to graduate students that this was their feeling, graduate students

were of the opinion that they could appeal to the internal committee if they felt threatened. And this is precisely what some of the students did, appealing to both the faculty head of the internal committee, and also to the graduate student representative on the internal committee.

The faculty head of the internal committee was initially reluctant to ask the Dean of the Humanities to intervene in this matter, i.e. to prohibit the faculty from discussing the results of the Eight-Year Review with the graduate students, at least until he had the opportunity to investigate further. Upon such further investigation, however, the faculty head of the internal review committee did in fact agree with students that faculty should not be communicating with students directly about the Eight-Year Review, for all the reasons listed above. The graduate student representative for the Slavic Department students offered in lieu of such direct communication to serve as a medium for those students who wanted to communicate with the faculty, but who did not want to be identified, and also for faculty who wanted to convey their thoughts to the Slavic Department graduate students.

In response to this request by the internal review committee that the faculty be kept from discussing the results of the Eight-Year Review with the graduate students, the Dean of the Humanities came up with a partial solution, one which stated that only the Chair of the UCLA Slavic Department should be in contact with students about the results of the Eight-Year Review, and that other faculty should refrain from engaging students on this topic. Although the Dean of the Humanities might have thought she was proposing a reasoned compromise, in fact that was not the opinion of the graduate students in question. Even if the Chair of the UCLA Slavic Department had been honest and aboveboard throughout the review process, the fact is that he is a colleague of faculty members who for years had abused graduate students and who had instituted and for years nurtured an atmosphere of fear and intimidation among graduate students. Even if this chair had acted honorably during the Eight-Year Review process, it would still have been inappropriate for him to interact directly with graduate students concerning the Eight-Year Review, for these reasons and all the reasons listed above. There is no information that he wanted to have or disperse that could not have been done through the graduate student representative for the Slavic Department.

As the facts clearly show, however, the Chair of the Slavic Department was not honest and aboveboard during the review, and he did not act honorably during this process. Far from it. The internal review committee found numerous instances of the Chair failing to be honest and aboveboard. The following excerpt from the report makes clear the lack of forthrightness with which Michael Heim approached his duty to work with, and be honest with, the review committee:

**"It was certainly the desire of the review team to work with the Chair of the department. For this reason the chair of the review team brought up, very directly but in general terms,**

**the issue of student dissatisfaction at a presite visit meeting with the Chair of the department. When the Chair of the department said that, aside from funding problems, there was no student dissatisfaction to speak of, the chair of the review team asked the question again to be sure he had heard correctly. Similar questions were asked of the Chair and of other faculty during the site visit. Especially in the beginning, the response was a disavowal of any such problems. At one point an external reviewer was moved to exclaim to a faculty member, "...you are in denial!" *The pattern that emerged was consistent denial or minimization of the problem-until confronted with overwhelming evidence.*"**

The Dean of the Humanities knew at this point the extent to which the Chair had failed to be honest and aboveboard with the investigating committee. If the internal committee, which had the power to recommend sanctions against the Slavic Department, found that it could not trust the Chair of the Slavic Department, then why would the Dean of the Humanities think that this individual would warrant the trust of graduate students who had, under promises of protection from the UCLA Administration, spoken openly and at length about abuse within the UCLA Slavic Department? The "compromise" offered by the Dean of the Humanities was unacceptable and ominous: if the Chair's behavior was going to be overlooked even as the investigation is reaching a crucial point, the question had to be asked, what was the Dean of the Humanities' commitment to seeing that the process was conducted fairly and in a way designed to protect those graduate students who had responded to the UCLA Administration's request that they participate fully in this inquiry?

Graduate students immediately pointed this out to the faculty head of the internal committee. The graduate student representative in the UCLA Slavic Department again repeated her willingness to act as a medium between faculty and staff. The graduate student representative on the internal committee also voiced his concern. The response from the faculty head of the internal committee was one of concern, but also a feeling that the Dean of the Humanities should not be pressured on this point, at least not at this time. This was one of the few moments where some graduate students failed to see eye to eye with the faculty head of the internal committee, who did make the assurance, however, that if circumstances were to change, i.e. if it appeared as there might be problems with the Chair regarding this issue, he would immediately appeal this decision by the Dean of the Humanities to the "highest levels" of the University, understood by graduate students to mean the Chancellor's Office.

Two things immediately made clear the need for the internal committee to do just exactly that. The first was the reaction of the other faculty in the UCLA Slavic Department to the prohibition on speaking with graduate students about the specifics of the Eight-Year Review. Graduate students were informed that not only were some of the faculty not amenable to such a prohibition, they were furious that it had been imposed upon them from above. There was an immediate

threat by these faculty to challenge this prohibition legally as an infringement upon their First Amendment rights of free speech and as a violation of their academic freedom.

### **Heim's "Response to the Response" to the Factual Error's Statement**

The second thing was a mass email sent out by the Chair of the UCLA Slavic Department to all the graduate students. Apparently frustrated that his attempt to defend the Department via the "Factual Errors Statement" was trumped, point-by-point, by the internal committee, the Chair appears to have wanted to continue this argument privately with the graduate students themselves. At this point, given what was already on paper (and also given what graduate students in this department already knew) one has to wonder whom the Chair thought he was going to convince with this attempt. In any case, the Chair proceeded to again argue his case. The details of what he said and graduate student response to these details are appended in a latter section, so they will not be belabored here. Briefly, however, the Chair continued to defend his conduct and that of the faculty. Shockingly, he continued his attack on the one student (identified only as XX in the report) who had the courage to tell her story in such a way as to make her identifiable to the Department as a whole. In his attempt to smear her and to question her abilities, Michael Heim went so far as to release, without her permission, some of this student's undergraduate grades, thus violating a host of federal and state laws, to say nothing of UC regulations. Throughout this "rebuttal to the rebuttal" of the "Factual Errors Statement", the Chair continued his pattern of false and misleading claims. (Again, the specifics are seen in the annotated version of the report.)

The single most egregious, and disquieting, aspect of this mass email to students was when the Chair attempted to explain the question he posed in response to the internal report, namely "Who are 'the students' here?" In his attempt to characterize this question as one of a number of rhetorical questions, he makes the following statement: "I am not asking which students came forth: I do not need to ask who the offended students are because I know who they are." The effects of such a statement, sent directly to each and every one of the graduate students in a department which is being reviewed, can be nothing less than chilling, especially so for graduate students in the UCLA Slavic Department. Michael Heim is saying that, in effect, he knows very well who was affected, and thus there is no longer any need to maintain a distance between him and the students.

### **Student Response to the Threat of Lawsuit Made by Slavic Department Faculty and to Michael Heim's Refusal to Recuse Himself from Questioning Slavic Department Graduate Students**

Graduate students immediately reacted to this mass email. They pointed out to Internal Committee that, because the Chair had emailed his view of the situation to graduate students,

including those not in the area (i.e. those on vacation or on summer abroad study programs), those graduate students not actually in Los Angeles at that time were in effect getting only one side of the story, while at the same time being asked to comment on the entire situation. In other words, these students were not able to physically go into the UCLA Slavic Department office and look at the report, an option available (in theory, anyway) to graduate students still on campus at that time. The demand was made that *all* graduate students receive a copy of the entire report. If that meant emailing a copy of the report to grad students not currently in the local Los Angeles area, then so be it. This situation put the Academic Senate (which controls the dissemination of the report) in an awkward situation. Normally the Academic Senate prefers to keep a tight rein on the report itself, which is why there is usually only one or two copies available for student perusal, and even at that it is only available by going into the department in question and asking for it. And yet Michael Heim had already sent out his response to this report by email. Fairness demanded that the report itself also be sent out via email to all students, just as Michael Heim's rebuttal of the report was sent out by email, lest those students not on site receive only one side of the issue. And yet this request was ultimately rejected by the Academic Senate, presumably because the university was loath to have an Eight-Year Review report as damning as this one floating about in cyber-space. Instead, paper copies were mailed out to all students who were local with the promise that copies would be Federal Expressed overseas or elsewhere in the country to any UCLA Slavic Department graduate students who wanted a copy. (This, of course, would require the student to identify himself/herself as having this interest, something that did not have to happen in order to receive Michael Heim's response to the report by email.)

This failure by the Academic Senate to be evenhanded in its distribution of the report was disturbing enough, but nowhere near as disturbing as was the content of Michael Heim's mass email and the reaction of some of the UCLA Slavic Department faculty, i.e. their threat to bring suit against the UCLA Administration for violating their First Amendment rights. Earlier, in response to concerns from UCLA Slavic Department graduate students that Michael Heim had not been prohibited by the Dean of the Humanities from discussing the results of the Eight-Year Review, the faculty head of the internal committee was concerned, but also said that if circumstances were to change, i.e. if it appeared as there might be problems with the Chair regarding this issue, he would immediately appeal this decision to the "highest levels" of the university.

When Heim's email arrived, a copy of it was immediately delivered to the faculty head of the internal committee along with a frantic request that he honor his promise to go to the highest levels of the university to keep Heim (and now the other faculty as well) from talking to UCLA Slavic Department graduate students about the Eight-Year Review. In spite of the numerous protests by graduate students involved in the Slavic Department's Eight-Year Review, no conclusion was ever reached in the matter involving Heim and the other faculty. That is to say, the status quo, that being Heim's refusal not to agree to refrain from talking directly to graduate

students about the Eight-Year Review, never changed. Graduate students were told by the Internal Review Team that appeals had been sent to officials from the College of Letters and Science and on up to officials at "the highest levels" of the university, again a euphemism they understood to mean the Chancellor's office. In spite of this, graduate students never heard of an official change in Heim's position, and there was no further directive coming from the university at any level prohibiting Heim from interrogating students about the Eight-Year Review. Likewise, there was never any indication from the University that it would challenge those faculty members who threatened legal action when they were asked not to interact with graduate students in the Slavic Department with regard to the Eight-Year Review. This sent a message that could not have been any clearer: in spite of what the Academic Senate or the College of Letters and Sciences had promised about protecting graduate students who participate in the Eight-Year Review, the university administration was not going to confront these faculty any further, regardless of what effect this had on the graduate students who had been promised protection in return for their cooperation with the investigation.

### **Single Most Crucial Point in the Review:**

Once the University had promised, explicitly, to protect cooperating graduate students, only to prove itself unable and/or unwilling to prevent faculty members from asking students about the review, the true nature of the power structure at the UCLA became clear to all concerned, and especially to the graduate students who had believed the University's many promises of protection. While the process of investigation into the Slavic Department continued after this point, the credibility of any promise made to graduate students concerning protection evaporated with these incidents (faculty members threatening the university with legal action/Heim's refusal to leave off questioning graduate students about the review.) What also evaporates, as an extension of this, is the ability to question graduate students in an open and candid manner: not only can graduate students never again trust the promises of the university administration with regard to issues such as protection and lack of retaliation at the hands of faculty, but from this point onward, student responses themselves have to be seen as potentially compromised. *Why would any student, in response to an inquiry concerning the department and faculty on which he/she is so dependent, give a frank and detailed response in light of what has happened? To do so would be tantamount to professional suicide.*

### **Next Steps: Evaluating Options**

At this point, the only alternative students were given was to respond to the Eight-Year Review report. The Graduate Council of the Academic Senate had requested a response to the report from Slavic Department graduate students, and since it seemed that the UCLA Administration had either given up or refused to order Heim and other faculty members from talking to graduate

students, the only alternative would be to raise this issue with the Academic Senate itself, via its Graduate Council. This was done both individually and in groups. The response attached here to the Eight-Year Review is of the latter and represents the view of more than one Slavic Department student, but others wrote individual responses.

The recommendation made by the internal committee was two-fold:

1. That the graduate admissions to the Slavic Department be suspended
2. That the Department be put into receivership

The first of these steps could only be authorized by the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate (the body which authorized and oversees all eight-year reviews), while the second, ordering the UCLA Slavic Department into receivership, could only be done by the Dean of the Humanities. The Chair of the Slavic Department, even after he had been exposed as one who misled, covered up, and fed false information to the internal committee, made clear from the beginning his intention to fight against the implementation of these two suggestions. As a part of this campaign he enlisted the assistance of the two members of the external committee, David Bethea of the University of Wisconsin, and Alan Timberlake of UC Berkeley, himself a former member of the UCLA Slavic Department. The Chair persuaded these two members to write an addendum to their original report, one that in effect softened both their own initial external committee report and also countered the findings of the internal committee.

During this time the Chair continued to ask students about the report, and continued to assert his right to do so. It was at this time that the Chair and some of the faculty in the UCLA Slavic Department began a long-term strategy to isolate the offending linguistic faculty and to make a show of change in the Department. Senior faculty members were approached and the idea was floated of closing down the linguistic component of the program altogether. A strategy was begun to differentiate literature from linguistics, presumably on the grounds that, since the offending linguistic faculty members could not be terminated because of their tenured status, the next best thing would be to make clear to the university administration that the real problem lay with the linguistic faculty, and not with the literature faculty. Above all, the "denial-of-the-obvious" strategy, which had blown up so devastatingly in the Department's face during the review itself, was continued.

### **The Bethea/Timberlake Addendum**

The addendum to the original report by the two members of the external committee, David Bethea of Wisconsin and Alan Timberlake of Berkeley, was a part of this "lie and deny" strategy. It too is appended to this report, along with an annotated copy which comments in detail on the accuracy of this addendum. Only a brief overview of this addendum will be given here.

When the scope, detail, and severity of the internal committee's report finally became clear to the Chair of the UCLA Slavic Department, the "lie and deny" strategy kicked into full gear. It may seem counterintuitive to non-academic readers of this tract (i.e. to those not involved in academe at the university level) that the Chair would do this, especially given the fact that his credibility had just been decimated by an investigating committee comprised of his own academic colleagues at UCLA, but one needs to keep in mind the environment at UCLA. The only people really capable of disputing Michael Heim or any of the faculty were graduate students themselves. The relationship that exists between faculty and graduate students in a department such as the UCLA Slavic Department is one in which intimidation and the always-present-if-not-always-subtle threat of retaliation at all time lies ominously just beneath the surface. The resulting fear on the part of the graduate students allows the faculty much leeway in what it reports as the truth: in many instances, only graduate students can refute what is being said, and no graduate student who has any hope at all of graduating (much less of getting the all important mentorship and recommendations after graduation) would dare to contradict faculty. Russian literature tells us of a similar relationship between Russian plantation owners and their serfs, where the most intimate and damning of topics were often discussed in the presence of these serfs, mainly because these serfs had no legal standing in law or society, and that the word of a serf against his master carried no weight in this particular power paradigm. Graduate students are not serfs, but the same principle applies: since it would be dangerous and self-harming to call attention to any faculty member's "flexible" interpretation of the truth, the faculty often become used to the fact that they can take liberties with the truth, so much so that it becomes second nature.

This results in a sort of laxness when it comes to reporting the truth, an understood "built in" margin of error/exaggeration. This may explain the implementation by the UCLA Slavic Department of the "lie and deny" strategy, even in the face of such a massive and embarrassing trumping of this strategy previously. It appears that this same strategy also played prominently in the addendum penned by Bethea/Timberlake. They begin by acknowledging that what prompted their letter was their fear that the continued existence UCLA Slavic Department as an academic department was itself at stake. They then claim the following:

- that they heard the same evidence as the internal committee (not in the least true, since many graduate students, because of the presence of Alan Timberlake, a former UCLA Slavic Department professor--and a linguist no less--, refused to talk to the internal committee);
- they wrote against the internal committee's finding that the UCLA Slavic Department treated graduate students like "chattel" and "damaged goods" (there is no way that the external committee could know one way or the other whether or not this was true, since they didn't have the same broad-based student input that the internal committee had);
- They shamefully try to twist the situation in the UCLA Slavic Department around such that it

is not the UCLA Slavic Department faculty that is guilty of abuse, but rather, just the opposite is said to be true: it is the poor faculty which is being treated unfairly, not unlike those who suffered injustices in the Soviet Union;

— Bethea/Timberlake go on to question the trustworthiness of the internal committee, implying that it accepted the students' version of events sight unseen (this is completely untrue; everything told to by graduate students to the internal committee was repeatedly questioned, and the committee itself did independent verifications of what was said);

— Quite to the contrary, it is Bethea/Timberlake who unquestioningly accept information, but they do it from the faculty: they accept without question the Slavic Department Chair's characterization of XX (the one student who was courageous enough to go public with her story), and then go on to repeat it as if it were fact as they join the Chair in his campaign to smear her further; they also accept as fact the ludicrous figures fed to them by the Chair of the UCLA Slavic Department with regard to the number of the Department's graduate students who obtain tenure track positions;

— Bethea/Timberlake mischaracterize the training received as "excellent" (*some* of it is excellent; some is good, some is mediocre, some is terrible, and *much* of it, especially in linguistics, is simply outdated)

— Bethea/Timberlake mischaracterize their own review as "extremely rigorous". (It may have been that from their point of view, but they did not even come close to the truth of that department, albeit for reasons that are not entirely their fault, since many students refused to talk with them because of Timberlake's presence on the committee.)

— Bethea/Timberlake at times out-and-out repudiate their previous report, taking a department that they once characterized as having "an alarming level of anxiety, bordering on demoralization" and then turning around in this addendum and claiming that they "do not find it dysfunctional". Have they adopted here the "lie and deny" strategy of the UCLA Slavic Department itself? Did they automatically default to that manifestation of "Truth" that is built upon the aforementioned "understood" and "built in" margin of error/exaggeration, a margin which none of the graduate student "serfs" has heretofore pointed out? Or do they simply lack cognitive dissonance?

— Most amazingly, even after having seen the internal report, after having read how Michael Heim went out of his way to *deny* the truth, went out of his way to *cover up* abuse, went out of his way to defend at all costs the reputation of the UCLA Slavic Department, even up to and including smearing the reputation of former students--even after all this, Bethea/Timberlake *still* continue to characterize Michael Heim in the most positive of lights, claiming that "especially under the current chair--the department has come to a mature understand of the nature of its problems as a collective..." etc. etc. If someone who had acted in the way Michael Heim had acted was considered by Bethea/Timberlake to be an optimal person to chair the Department, then one could only ask whom they would consider to be an inappropriate person to chair the Department?

In summary, the Bethea/Timberlake addendum was nothing more than an attempt to downplay the severity of the problems that exist within the UCLA Slavic Department, an attempt in which they were quite willing to ignore inconsistencies, accept unquestioningly what was told to them, accuse the investigators of Stalinist tactics of repression against the faculty of the UCLA Slavic Department, join this faculty in its attempts to smear students who did speak up, and on and on and on. It is a disgraceful and embarrassing example of the solidarity that exists among tenured faculty, and of the extent to which they will go to protect their own regardless of how repugnant or abuse the behavior of these colleagues.

### **Responding to the Report**

This, then, was the atmosphere that confronted graduate students who had complied with the request of the UCLA Administration to cooperate fully with the investigators of the UCLA Department, and who had been promised anonymity and protection from retaliation on the part of the faculty. They had seen this promise dismissed completely by the UCLA Administration, this after numerous requests from graduate students themselves, from the graduate student representative from the Slavic Department, repeated requests from the graduate student representative on the internal committee, and from the faculty head of the internal committee itself (who would later reverse himself). These same students were now being asked to comment directly to the Academic Senate (more precisely, to the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate) on the report itself. As was noted above when it became clear that the UCLA Administration was going to refuse to take steps to keep Michael Heim and the rest of the UCLA Slavic Department faculty from questioning students about the content of the report, the handwriting was very clearly on the wall: as graduate students in that department at that university, there could be no expectation--none--of protection from avenging faculty or from further interrogation or even of anonymity, since such interrogation could, in a small department such as the UCLA Slavic Department, very quickly narrow the field of who talked and who did not.

And yet, even in spite of this fact, even in spite of the betrayal of these students by the UCLA Administration, many still responded to the report, still offered feedback to the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate. Whether or not they were as open and aboveboard in their commentary as they might have once been, one cannot say. Clearly some were, as can be seen by the documents appended here in this report. Some felt that this was the absolute last chance to convince the UCLA Administration to do something about the UCLA Slavic Department. At the end of the 1999-2000 academic year the Graduate Council had acted immediately upon the suggestion of the internal committee and suspended admissions to this department, but the Dean of the Humanities had yet to act on the suggestion that the Department be put into receivership.

This was new ground for everyone concerned, but very few of the students doubted that the receivership would happen, especially given the extent to which the corruption and abuse and lying in the UCLA Slavic Department had been exposed by the report. The feeling among many UCLA graduate students was that, regardless of broken promises, once all the information got to the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate, once this body of UCLA faculty members were confronted not only with the numerous lies told on behalf of the UCLA Slavic Department both by its chair and by the supposedly objective "outside" reviewers brought in to evaluate it, and once the Graduate Council was informed that this disinformation campaign had even grown to include cover up activity, threats to students' well-being brought about by the abrogation of promises made by the UCLA Administration, the public smearing of an ex-student, and actual illegal activity in the form of releasing to non-authorized persons grades from the undergraduate transcript of that same individual--that at this point, the Graduate Council could not help but step in, continue the ban on the admission of new graduate students, and urge the UCLA Administration to fully implement the suggestions of the internal committee, i.e. receivership.

In order for this to happen, however, the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate had to know the specifics of the incidents that occurred within the UCLA Slavic Department and the incidents that characterized this most unusual of eight-year reviews. It was the belief of some graduate students that without the presentation of overwhelming evidence of wrongdoing on the part of the UCLA Slavic Department, and without overwhelming evidence of how the entire review system is skewed in favor of the faculty, the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate might find a way to wiggle out of its obligations, might find a way to soften the steps suggested by the internal review committee. Past experience both within the UCLA Slavic Department and in this particular Eight-Year Review (e.g. the Bethea/Timberlake addendum) has shown that if given the chance, faculty members investigating fellow faculty members will, to varying degrees, tend to give the benefit of the doubt to their colleagues, usually for the reasons discussed at the beginning of this tract (e.g. professional courtesy, inability/unwillingness of the institution to bring about real punishment, etc.). Because of this, it was decided that in the student response appended here, there could be no wiggle room, no possible way for the UCLA Administration to misinterpret or conveniently overlook the actions of the UCLA Slavic Department faculty. It was for this reason that the response to the Eight-Year Review, and to Michael Heim's emails and to the Bethea/Timberlake addendum, had to be as detailed as possible, almost a point-by-point commentary on what was being claimed. The thinking was that no matter how outlandish and fantastic the protestations of innocence that would be made by the UCLA Slavic Department, the evidence countering those claims would be so overwhelming, and so damning, that the UCLA Administration, in the persons of the Dean of the Humanities and the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate, would have no alternative but to follow through with the suggestions of the internal review committee by putting the UCLA Slavic Department into receivership and by continuing the ban on graduate admissions.

## **Departmental Strategy vis-à-vis the Graduate Council and the Dean of the Humanities**

At the beginning of the Fall Quarter of the 2000-2001 academic year, the Chair of the Slavic Department, Michael Heim, did what he said he was going to do all along, and that was go to the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate and ask that the ban on graduate student admissions be immediately lifted. Graduate students were understandably of two minds on this issue. On the one hand, the handwriting seemed to be very much on the wall. Everything pointed to the fact that the UCLA Administration was going to do everything it could to hush up this horribly embarrassing review and, if possible, effect whatever change was deemed necessary through gradual reform and not confront the UCLA Slavic Department directly. It may well be that the legal challenge that some of the UCLA Slavic Department faculty had threatened might have put the Administration in its place and let it know where ultimate authority resided in the University. Both Heim and the rest of the UCLA Slavic Department faculty had openly and with impunity defied the attempts to keep them from talking to graduate students about the Eight-Year Review. Given this fact, some graduate students asked the question, what's the point of fighting this thing any further? Clearly the UCLA Administration has shown its intention to preserve the UCLA Slavic Department and its faculty at all costs, so why continue this fight? The impulse to give up was also fueled by the knowledge that continuing the fight, while perhaps morally noble, could easily harm the very students who were waging this battle, since any dent to the UCLA Slavic Department's reputation would also have negative residual effects on the graduate students themselves, who depend in part on that reputation to get jobs.

And yet, there was also the feeling that given the egregious and repeated nature of both the abuses within the UCLA Slavic Department and of the attempts to cover up and minimize this abuse, this would be one time where the UCLA Administration simply could not ignore the recommendations of the internal committee. While there was never a poll conducted among graduate students regarding the lifting of the ban on graduate student admissions to the Department as a whole, there were discussions about whether or not the ban should be lifted for just specific sections of the Department, i.e. whether or not the ban should be lifted to allow the admission of just literature graduate students or (much less likely, since the problems in this department stemmed primarily from the linguistic section) or of just linguistic students. Most of the graduate students in literature felt that it might be all right to allow the admission of literature graduate students. This would help to soften the blow to the Department's reputation and it would keep any more young and enthusiastic first year graduate students in Slavic linguistics from being exposed to the linguistic faculty in the UCLA Slavic Department with all that would connote for their graduate student experience. The linguistic graduate students were, understandably, much more divided. On the one hand, they were to a much greater degree the direct recipients of the abuse that had characterized the UCLA Slavic Department's treatment of its graduate students and were thus very much aware of the need to put an end to this treatment.

In addition, there were some among this group that were so incensed at the way the system seemed to conspire in favor of the faculty, so outraged by the fact that outside faculty such as Bethea/Timberlake were willing to jump so readily onto the bandwagon and try to, in effect, disavow some of what they had written in their original external review report, that these students were willing to do whatever it took, including risking their own careers and risking potential legal action against them that they were more than willing to do whatever it took to make sure that the truth was revealed and that this sort of cover up (regardless of at whatever level it was taking place) would succeed. (The fear of having legal action being threatened against students by the UCLA Slavic Department is not, by the way, one that is without foundation or precedent. Such threats have been seen even for smaller incidents, far less important to the reputation of the UCLA Slavic Department than the results of the Eight-Year Review.)

On the other hand, there were linguistic students who felt that, since the UCLA Administration had, at this point, indicated by its failure to bring Michael Heim and the rest of the faculty in line, at least with regard to the issue of not contacting graduate students concerning the results of the Eight-Year Review, that we might as well accept this defeat as a partial victory (at least some of the abuses were brought to light) and go on from here. And some of the graduate students, frankly, were in fact intimidated by what the faculty might do in response to continued pressure from the graduate students to bring to light the abuses within the UCLA Slavic Department. The fact that students now knew that they had no real protection from the faculty, and that the promises of protection from interrogation at the hands of the faculty were in reality empty promises, no doubt contributed to this atmosphere of intimidation and hesitation on the part of some of these graduate students. In the end, when polled by the graduate student representative for the Slavic Department whether or not the Department should be allowed to open admissions to graduate students again in their respective disciplines (on the condition that reforms be undertaken in the Department and that outside supervision be present), about half of the Slavic linguistic graduate students agreed. The others said no, with a small number abstaining. (There was also a small number who were technically graduate students but who were out of residence, i. e. advanced to candidacy and working elsewhere.) It should be noted that literature students voted in favor of allowing the Department to admit new students, but *only* literature students. (In effect, for the purposes of this vote, the students were divided into literature and linguistic sections, with each group voting on whether or not graduate students should be admitted specifically in that subfield, i.e. literature students voting on whether the Department should be allowed to accept graduate students *only* in literature, while linguistics students voted on whether or not linguistics students should be admitted.)

When the time came for Michael Heim to address the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate, he did exactly what he said he was going to do, he asked the Graduate Council to remove the ban on graduate student admissions, claiming there had been "significant reform" of the Slavic Department during the summer. Anyone who knows the UCLA Slavic Department, even if only

superficially, knows that this is nonsense. The very idea of reforming a department like the UCLA Slavic Department, one which for decades existed using threats of abuse and abuse itself, in just a single summer is outright laughable. The fact is that this department, if it was reformable at all, would be so only after years of oversight and probably only after the termination of some of its faculty, an option made almost impossible because of the institution and rules of tenure, at least as this institution and as these rules exist now. This is not to say that the UCLA Slavic Department didn't make pretenses of reform, and in some cases, there really were some small reforms. Apparently Michael Heim's strategy, and that of the UCLA Slavic Department, was to "make show". In other words, to introduce a number of quantitatively impressive "reforms" to which the Slavic Department Chair could point to when making his case for lifting the ban on graduate student admissions and for keeping the UCLA Slavic Department out of receivership.

In order to understand the nature of the reforms and the pseudo-reforms that came about as a result of the Eight-Year Review report, one must first understand both exactly what the Eight-Year Review found during its investigation into the UCLA Slavic Department and the nature and scope of the abuses that characterized this department. The Eight-Year Review is attached to this document, both in its original form and in annotated copy, but a summary of those aspects of the report necessary to evaluate the above mentioned reforms and pseudo-reforms will be presented here. In addition, some of the abuses in the UCLA Slavic Department which were not presented in the report itself (for reasons of preserving anonymity, or simply for reasons of keeping the report to manageable dimensions) will also be presented here. It is against the backdrop of these factors that the analysis of these reforms and pseudo-reforms will be made.

### **Excerpts from the Review and Individual Instances of Abuse and Subsequent Cover Up Documented Therein or Connected with the Review Report**

- Setting the tone for the report: "This level of graduate program dysfunction is unprecedented in the collective experience of this review team."
  - *Every* student who spoke feared retribution
  - Physical displays of anger by the faculty
  - Students being intimidated into taking courses they neither wanted nor needed
  - Course evaluation forms which are anonymous in name only

- Fear of retaliation in comprehensive exams or in getting dissertation signatures
- Shouted and barbed insults aimed at students
- Students threatened with a loss of funding
- Students threatened with disciplinary action for disagreeing with faculty
- Systematic disrespect for graduate students
- Spiritual blight in the Department in the eyes of the students
- Overadmitting students and then allowing attrition to select those students who finally get degrees
- Talent being shunted or destroyed altogether
- Incomplete or non-existent reading lists
- The faculty avoids voting on issues that might go against the strongest personalities in the Department
- Excerpt from the review: "Again and again the review team heard of mistreated students who received only soothing words from the Chair and from other members of the faculty. In one instance the Chair actually did approach the faculty member involved to suggest outside mediation. When (predictably) the faculty member objected, the matter was dropped. Thus, a situation with its origins in a small minority has become the responsibility of the entire department because of the inaction and complacency of the faculty (with one exception)."
- The very Chair of the Slavic Department himself claiming not to understand the picture of the UCLA Slavic Department drawn by the internal committee
- The Chair of the Slavic Department was untruthful in his statement that XX was the only student lost as a result of a conflict with a faculty member
- The Chair of the Slavic Department was untruthful in his statement that the UCLA Slavic Department does not discard students as damaged goods

- The Chair of the Slavic Department was untruthful in his statement that the internal committee taking everything that was told to them by the students at face value
- The Chair of the Slavic Department was untruthful in his statement that the UCLA Slavic Department faculty was looking forward to the Eight-Year Review
- The Chair of the Slavic Department was untruthful in his statement that the UCLA Slavic Department could handle its own affairs and thus did not need to be put into receivership
- The Chair of the Slavic Department was untruthful in his statement that he had "no idea" of the Review Team's probable conclusions
- The Chair of the Slavic Department was untruthful in his statement that retaliation had never occurred in the UCLA Slavic Department
- The Chair of the Slavic Department was untruthful in his statement that student suffering had been blown out of proportion
- The Chair of Slavic Department, in seeking to smear the one student who did speak openly with the internal committee (designated "XX" in the report), openly mischaracterized this student's ability in Russian, and misrepresented the nature of the coursework taken by her here at UCLA
- As a part of this smear campaign, the Chair of the Slavic Department violated UC regulations and state and federal law by releasing, via email, grades from XX's undergraduate transcripts to grad students and others

**Instances of Abuse Not Covered Specifically in the Report (*Not a Comprehensive List*)**

- Minimal, and at times non-existent, concern with student welfare
- Violations of ethical and professional codes of conduct by faculty, some of whom are almost certainly psychologically disturbed
- Campaign to keep regulations, requirements, and official obligations as vague and as ill defined as possible in order to allow the faculty the greatest possible interpretation of said rules, regulations and obligations.

- A faculty that rules by canard and by decree as opposed to adhering to the rules and regulations set down by the University, ignoring rules that were not to their liking and establishing new rules on the spot
- A department with no organization, with no firm policies, no coordination of policy, and no will to organize itself
- Irrational and contradictory behavior towards graduate students (and often towards other faculty as well)
- Failure by the rational and semi-rational faculty to check the behavior of the irrational faculty
- Institutionalization of graduate student abuse
- The previous Eight-Year Review process had been a farce:
  1. Graduate students had been coached on what to say and what not to say to the investigating teams
  2. Thus, the investigating teams failed to highlight the abuse going on in the Department

3. Even worse, by failing to highlight the abuse, the eventual report that came out of the review provided a cover of sort for the Department, an inaccurate report of a good department

- Failure to prepare students in the fundamentals of the field, especially in linguistics
- Giving out misleading information to potential students in an attempt to recruit them into the UCLA Slavic Department. Included in this on-going campaign of deception were misrepresentations, half-truths, and out and out falsehoods, especially with regard to the funding that was said to be available to graduate students.
- Students were routinely told that if they made satisfactory progress (the criteria for which were never defined) then sufficient funding would be available for the duration of their on-campus training. This was not true.
- Students had no right to expect funding, but they had every right to expect the truth about the funding situation, a truth that was consistently downplayed or denied outright

during the recruitment process.

- A grading process by the faculty that was at best wildly subjective, at worse deliberately manipulated according to the personal whims of individual professors and not according to objective criteria designed to test the student's mastery of the material presented.
- The at time almost nonexistent relationship between grades earned and success on comprehensive exams.
- Students being forced to take classes they neither wanted nor needed simply to provide students for a class that a particular professor wanted to teach.
- Students being punished for dropping out of classes that they didn't need
- Students who had no idea what to expect on comprehensive exams, no idea of what to focus on, no idea of what the faculty considered important, especially in linguistics
- Uneven and often inconsistent standards for what was expected of students in terms of their ability in Russian
- Different standards and different levels of difficulties for different students on what are supposedly the same level of exams, e.g. one student having a markedly more difficult and challenging M.A. exam than another. While Ph.D. exams are expected to be more individualized, this was not true of M.A. exams, and yet there were wildly different standards of success for different students.
- Exams being used to punish students who failed to toe the line
- Using individual homework assignments to punish students who had fallen out of favor
- The problems of nepotism within the UCLA Slavic Department
- Faculty acting as a carburetor of sorts, regulating the field by discarding graduate students at their whim, as opposed to by the abilities, or lack thereof, of the individual graduate students
- Students not being mentored through the dissertation process, but rather being left to flounder by a faculty so uninformed on recent scholarship in the field that said faculty is incapable of helping students in this situation move on with their work

- Faculty actually threatening unspecified retaliation against other faculty, *even in the presence of graduate students* (note the above-mentioned "serf" phenomenon), for perceived offenses such as breaking the "unity" of the Department, and for watching out for graduate students' best interests, even when those interests are at odds with those of the abusive faculty members
- The faculty's inevitable characterization of any attempt to regulate its behavior from the outside as a "violation of academic freedom" and as an "insult to the dignity of the University" (actual quotes from various faculty members)
- The faculty actually *discouraging* graduate students from publishing and from delivering papers at conferences, other than at the tightly controlled California Colloquium ("You're at conferences in order to *listen* to talks, not to give them.")
- Graduate students being coached on how to respond to inquiries from the Eight-Year Review committee
- Faculty members staying in the classroom while supposedly confidential course evaluation forms are being filled out

These then are *some* of the abuses, which characterized the UCLA Slavic Department's treatment of its graduate students. Once again it must be emphasized that this list is not even remotely comprehensive, and it may not even be representative of some of the worst abuses that occurred. Others will inevitably come to light as investigation of this department proceeds, but what the above lists do provide is the sort of background necessary to understand the nature of the claims made by the UCLA Slavic Department in late summer and early fall of 2000 to have turned itself around and become capable of directing its own future and that of its present and future graduate students.

### **Response of the UCLA Slavic Department Faculty to the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate**

The response to Graduate Council by the faculty of the UCLA Slavic Department was consistent with what one would have expected from a department which had for years denied there were any problems at all. When confronted with the truth time and again by the internal review committee, however, the strategy of the Slavic Department then switched. The decision was made to try to minimize the impact of the report and to make it seem that the abuses reported by the review committee had been blown out of proportion. Central and essential to this effort, however, was

the goal of once again gaining control over its own graduate students, the same students who (in part) had been empowered by the promises of the UCLA Administration, promises of anonymity and of protection from retribution and from being interviewed and questioned by the faculty concerning the Eight-Year Review. Once it became clear that these promises were empty, that the faculty (any of the faculty, not just the Chair, which would have been bad enough) could corner any of these students and ask them about the review, this control over the graduate students began to flow back toward the faculty. Students knew then, if they hadn't known earlier, that indeed, no matter what happened, the UCLA Administration was going to stand squarely in the corner of the faculty of the UCLA Slavic Department.

Once this criterion was met, once control had once again begun to be reestablished, the Slavic Department could begin this process of minimalization. Since the review process is itself so compartmentalized, this attempt might not be as far-fetched as it sounds: the UCLA Administration goes to great lengths to see to it that the reports from the Eight-Year Review are not circulated, this despite the fact that what is reported there is all technically on the public record and thus retrievable through the Freedom of Information Act. Even at this late date, even with all that had been revealed about the abuses that had occurred in the UCLA Slavic Department and the attempts by the faculty in the UCLA Slavic Department to deny and cover-up these abuses, there was still hope among the Slavic Department faculty that the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate could be led to believe that not only was substantive reform possible, but that it had already occurred.

The response by the UCLA Slavic Department to the Eight-Year Review is appended below, so what will be seen here will be a brief overview. The attempt at minimalization, at balancing out all of the bad with some of the good, begins with the very first sentence: "We are gratified by the praise for the Department's stature and the accomplishments of both the graduate and undergraduate programs, but we have also taken the harsh criticisms to heart." Apparently the first thing that struck the UCLA Slavic Department about the Eight-Year Review was not the long list of repeated and documented abuse and charges of cover-up associated with that abuse, but rather an enormous sense of gratification at the praise heaped upon the UCLA Slavic Department in the Eight-Year Review for its "stature and accomplishments". The Eight-Year Review is appended here in its entirety (except for once page of the faculty self-review that was not released), so readers can judge for themselves whether this sense of gratification on the part of the UCLA Slavic Department faculty is merited. The more jaded interpretation of this opening line to the Academic Senate's Graduate Council would be something along the following lines: "We as the UCLA Slavic Department have for years done what has been asked of us by the University. We have assembled a world-class faculty, we have published, we have hosted and attended conferences, we have established what was a well-regarded graduate program. We have done all this, and this is not something that should be overlooked by our colleagues on the

Graduate Council. Sure, there has been some unfortunate abuse of students, but that goes along with the system. Who among us hasn't seen this or something like it in our own departments? Keep this in mind, and keep in mind the old saying, "There but for the grace of G-d go I."

The response goes on to detail the division of the Department into so-called "caucuses", one for literature and one for linguistics. In this can be seen the beginnings of the idea that was germinating at the time among literature faculty, the idea to do away with the linguistic side of the program, an idea actually broached by some of the literature faculty to senior linguistic faculty. Also able to be seen is the continuation of the policy of simply refusing to confront those troublesome linguistic faculty identified in the report as "the strongest personalities in the department". Rather than actually confront them, the new idea was simply to isolate them in a linguistic "caucus", and thus insulate the literature faculty from the madness which regularly emanated forth from some of their linguistic colleagues.

In order to continue with this strategy of minimalization, the UCLA Slavic Department was going to have to show something, some evidence that not only had substantial reform been undertaken, but that it had actually been implemented, and had become so well entrenched that this department, a department which for years had abused its graduate students and then routinely lied about such abuse, was now, *in the course of just a few months*, completely turned around. One would think that being able to project a positive image of such a department would be a near impossible task, and in most cases it would be, assuming that those elements of the UCLA Administration which were tasked with overseeing the Slavic Department, namely the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate and the Dean of the Humanities, were not already predisposed in favor the UCLA Slavic Department.

The arguments advanced by the Slavic Department in favor of lifting sanctions can only be seen as unreal and bizarre, as least in so far as they could be seen as a justification for lifting the sanctions. To quote from the second paragraph: "Let us begin by treating the issue the internal report revolves around, that is, what it terms the unhealthy environment among the graduate students and its relation to faculty conduct. Although we understand that an unhealthy environment cannot be legislated out of existence, we feel we have taken the necessary decisive actions to restore that environment to health." How might they have accomplished this Herculean feat in a mere matter of months? To a large extent, through (so goes the claim) the production of a "handbook" for graduate students, one which "will go a long way to lifting what they have perceived as the veil of secrecy surrounding a number of departmental procedures" and "will contain detailed explanations of all current policies, including the ones recently passed in connection with the review." In reality, this "handbook" (seen in [Section IV-H](#) of this report) was nothing more than an attempt to appease the demand for change with a quantitatively impressive but qualitatively vacuous document that, far from "lifting...the veil of secrecy surrounding a

number of departmental procedures", only served to further obscure the real causes for student alienation. The vast majority of this "handbook" merely told students what they already knew: where to sign up for email addresses, calendar of deadlines, important phone numbers, building maintenance, information on the Reading Room and the Russian Room, a list of faculty and staff, housing information, and that type of program information that is typically available in a college catalog, faculty committees, and so forth. Of the 34 pages of the initial "student handbook", only one addresses faculty misconduct, and all it does is to quote official University policy in this regard.

In short, this student handbook does nothing--nothing--to alleviate the deep-rooted problems that have characterized the UCLA Slavic Department for years. The only purpose for a work such as this is to provide a cover of sorts, to provide something to which the UCLA Slavic Department faculty can point in order to claim that they have taken steps to address the many problems that are found in the Department. The handbook is appended below, and can be seen there in its entirety. A quick glance through it makes glaringly clear the intent behind such a handbook, one which simply repackages information easily available elsewhere and which contributes nothing to the resolution of the Department's problems. Given the fact that the intent of this "student handbook" is so transparent, the question then becomes, why would the UCLA Slavic Department offer up such a weak and flimsy document to the university body (Graduate Council of the Academic Senate) and the university official (Dean of the Humanities) who will eventually decide the fate of the Department with regard to the questions of receivership and the lifting of the ban on graduate student admission? The only plausible answer goes back to what was discussed at the beginning of this work, the nature of the relationship between tenured professors, and especially between those tenured professors who are tasked with the unpleasant duty of overseeing their fellow tenured colleagues. The faculty of the UCLA Slavic Department understood very well that they had to offer up something, anything that would, at least superficially, appear to be a step in the direction of clearing up the confusion and darkness that has enveloped the Department for so long. They also understood that the tenured faculty who would be judging their efforts (the Graduate Council and the Dean of the Humanities) would not be pressing them on the flimsy nature of this "student handbook". The important thing was that there be something that could be presented, and something to which could be referred should a worst-case scenario occur and inquiries be made from *outside* of the university system regarding the UCLA Slavic Department.

The claims of the Slavic Department to have turned itself around reach their most surreal, however, when addressing the issue of abuse. Given the fact that abuse of graduate students was the central (although not only) issue of the Eight-Year Review, this section will be excerpted here:

"Of the new policies the one most directly relevant to the issue of faculty conduct is the establishment of a formal grievance procedure in cases involving a potential violation of the

Faculty Code of Conduct. Given its central importance let us cite it in toto: *Students believing they have a grievance involving a faculty member are advised to attempt to resolve the matter with the faculty member in question. If the grievance remains unresolved or if students feel hesitant about approaching the faculty member, they may bring the matter to the attention of the chair and request the chair's mediation. At any point students may avail themselves of the campus Ombuds Office. Other courts of resort include the Graduate Division and the Office of the Dean of the Humanities. In cases of grievances involving a potential violation of the Faculty Code of Conduct (see UCLA Faculty Handbook [www.apo.ucla.edulapoweb/facultyhandbook/9 htm49]) students may consult with a member of the Academic Senate Grievance and Discipline Procedures Committee (3125 Murphy Hall, 310•825.3891) for help in deciding on an appropriate course of action. For further details see UCLA General Catalogue, Appendix A, Charges of Violation"*

Again, on the surface, this looks fine: the establishment of a formal grievance procedure. But what does this "formal grievance procedure" say and do? When we break it down it lists the following options (in the order in which each option is to be exercised) whenever a student feels he/she has been the victim of abuse:

1. *Resolve the matter with the faculty in question.* For the type of abuse that has gone on in this particular department, the very idea of resolving the problem with the faculty member in question flies in the face of reality. The response to such challenges is always instantaneous and scathing. Even assuming--and this would be a great assumption--that the graduate student could continue in the graduate program after challenging the faculty member, what he/she would certainly have to look forward to is increased difficulty in getting funding, and, more importantly, the loss of whatever mentoring and recommendations one could possibly hope to attain from the faculty member whose conduct was challenged. There have been several instances where students simply changed their concentration from linguistics to literature after having made the mistake of challenging a linguistics faculty member. In addition, one would also have to deal with the influence of these faculty after graduation, influence that extends throughout the United States and into foreign countries as well. It is difficult enough to get a job in the field of Slavic, it is that much more so when your home campus faculty not only would not support you, but would let it be known, subtly but clearly, that you should not be hired.

2. *Bring the matter to the chair and request the chair's mediation.* This is sheer lunacy. This department, the UCLA Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, actually expects graduate students to go freely to the Chair with problems concerning faculty abuse? This after the chair at the time of the review, Michael Heim, continually lied and covered up and denied the abuses that were taking place? The same chair who himself admits that he cannot recognize the picture of the UCLA Slavic Department drawn by the review committee? The same chair who tried to smear the one student brave enough to allow her story to be told publicly, and who

encouraged Bethea/Timberlake to join in that smear campaign? The same chair who broke the state and federal law by releasing grades from the undergraduate transcript of this same student? The same chair who said that the report overstated the degree of student suffering, and who said that there were no real problems to speak of, and who said that the UCLA Slavic Department could handle its own affairs, and who claimed that retaliation never occurred in this department, who claimed that the internal review committee took everything that the graduate students said at face value? The same chair who refused urgent and repeated requests from students and administrators alike to cease his questioning of graduate students about the Eight-Year Review?

Is *this* the chair to whom graduate students are supposed to go? It is stunning that this department, or any department that had been so thoroughly exposed as abusive, would have the chutzpah even to think such a thing, much less suggest it formally as a way of countering abuse perpetrated by faculty.

3. Four other potential mediators are mentioned. The problem is, these are not so much mediators as they are facilitators, institutions that simply route people through the complaint process:

a. *the campus Ombuds Office*

The Ombuds Office will contact the various people concerned, but its powers are extremely limited;

b. *the Graduate Division*

The Graduate Division is the institution that conducts the Eight-Year Review. That process has already been tried and shown to be severely deficient;

c. *the Office of the Dean of the Humanities*

A number of students went directly to the Dean of the Humanities prior to the 1999-2000 review of the UCLA Slavic Department. They were told that the best way to handle this problem is through the above-mentioned severely deficient Eight-Year Review process;

d. *Academic Senate Grievance and Discipline Procedures Committee:*

This point is addressed in detail in the response to the Eight-Year Review appended here, but just to touch briefly on this and why it is not much of an option: according to the Dean of the Humanities at the time of the review, whatever action is taken against the professor in question is done so in secret; not even the students who bring up the complaint are allowed to know what that action is. Not only can one not know the severity (or lack thereof) with which the offending faculty member has been punished, it's not even possible to know if he/she was punished at all. This is particularly problematic in that it removes the embarrassment and shame of public censure as a tool for keeping faculty in line and discouraging them from practicing

the sort of abuse that was characteristic of the UCLA Slavic Department.

Thus, past experience would tell us that none of these four options are much of an option at all, at least not if one hopes to bring about effective action in restraining the offending faculty members.

The sort of "made for display" nature of "the new policies the one most directly relevant to the issue of faculty conduct is the establishment of a formal grievance procedure" is best seen in the fact that these policies are not in the least bit "new". These options, weak as they are, have *always* been available to graduate students, even when the storm was blowing its worst in the UCLA Slavic Department. It is precisely because they were so weak that they were rarely if ever used. It was only when things got so bad that there seemed to be no alternatives for large numbers of students other than to quit the program altogether that graduate students availed themselves of options such as going to the Dean of the Humanities and the Academic Senate, the results of which action will soon be discussed here. The main point, however, is that the UCLA Slavic Department faculty, in proclaiming this "new policy" and the "establishment of a formal grievance procedure", has in fact done nothing of the sort. They merely repackaged the old, insufficient system and presented it as new. Granted, this works well for those looking in from without, but for those who are familiar with the Department, this was nothing more than yet another Potemkin village built to impress onlookers with the new sense of concern this faculty suddenly developed for its students.

This is the sort of "reform" that has been on-going in the UCLA Slavic Department. One last final example of such "reform" will be examined here, one supposedly dedicated to making clear the opacity of the funding process. In an internal report of the UCLA Slavic Department dated November of 2001 (entire text is appended below) the Slavic Department faculty address the funding procedure, declaring that henceforth there would be a student-self assessment involved, and that the criteria would include level of academic performance, timely progress to the degree, and support history (i.e. how much support an individual student has had in the past compared to that provided his peers). This is much the same approach that the faculty used when adopting the "new" procedures for dealing with faculty abuse of students and the "establishment" of a "formal grievance procedure". There is nothing new in all of this. It is simply a repackaging of the old criteria. It is not as if the criteria themselves are bad. They are not now bad, nor were they bad then. It is simply that the criteria themselves were so loosely adhered to that they couldn't even be said to have been guidelines. Let's take them one at a time:

- 1. Student-self assessment:** Nothing new here. This simply harks back to the time when graduate students had to include a statement of purpose when requesting departmental support. The particulars might be slightly different, but the principles are the same.
- 2. Level of academic performance:** On the face of it, this seems reasonable. The problem is how one judges the levels of academic performance. The Eight-Year Review report

speaks of students being threatened with lower grades simply for disagreeing with instructors. It speaks of criteria so poorly defined that students don't know what they should be studying. How does this putatively "new" system do anything to address those issues? The answer is that it does nothing to address them.

**3. Timely progress to the degree:** Again, *prima facie*, this seems reasonable. But it can only be seen as reasonable if the responsibility for moving through the program, and, more importantly, the ability to move through the program, rests with the student. There is a reason that UCLA graduate students in Slavic, especially in linguistics, have such abnormally long time to degree averages. When students do not know what to expect, they naturally tend to slow down, to try to concentrate their efforts on finding out what is expected in classes, on homeworks, on papers, in comprehensive exams, and in dissertations. The less sure the individual student regarding what is expected of him/her, the more cautious he/she will become.

What is also true is that the amount of support offered to students figures in directly to the time to degree. Since this support is often based on the above-mentioned "Level of Academic Performance", the failure of this system to work often has ripple effects on students who are trying to make progress on their degree. Inaccurate systems of student evaluation and ranking lead to lower or nonexistent funding, and this in turn leads to longer than normal times to degree.

**4. Support history:** The idea behind using support history, i.e. the amount of support a single student has had over time, as a criterion for further funding is yet again, *prima facie*, a normal one, with the idea being that students who have had great amounts of funding shouldn't be ranked higher than students who haven't had that much funding. If this were actually the practice of the UCLA Slavic Department, then this would be fine, but in fact this is not the practice. Students used to be given vague promises of funding ("If you do well, we will fund you", without any further definition of "doing well") but that soon gave way as funding dried up. The next line used by the Department was that it would endeavor to provide four years worth of funding for its graduate students. The problem is, some students got nowhere near four years of funding while others were funded for five, six, seven years and beyond. There are examples of favored students being allowed to teach classes as TAs that had only one or two students in them, simply to keep that funding available to the students in question. There are other examples of students who had nowhere close to four years of funding yet were listed as having had this funding anyway.

So while it would in theory make sense to include support history in any decision concerning funding, it makes no sense to collect information on the support history of each student and then ignore it and fund whomever you want to fund. That is what the UCLA Slavic Department has done in the past, and there is nothing in this "reformed" funding procedure that would prohibit them from doing it again. The point to such a "reform", then, is simply to be able to claim that reform has occurred, be that true or not. Of course,

such reforms would never survive a true investigation into the Department, nor would they fool any supervisory entity determined not to be fooled. If the UCLA Slavic Department knew one thing, however, it was the environment in which it was operating. It knew that the University Administration wanted, at all costs, to keep a real investigation from happening, the to prevent the conducting of a "fact-finding mission or to determine the guilt or innocence of particular individuals". (The quote is taken from the internal reviewers when they themselves were describing what their investigation was *not*.)

Before moving on to the actions of the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate and of the Dean of the Humanities in this matter, it is instructive to look at one final excerpt from the "Response by the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures to the Eight Year Review". At the end of this document, the faculty make the following point: "We therefore request that the Graduate Council reinstate the Department's right to admit graduate students into its program, effective immediately. It may seem questionable whether changes made over the eight months that have passed since the site visit can resolve problems that developed over a period of eight years. Should the Graduate Council have any doubts about the current ability of the Department to create an atmosphere productive of intellectual stimulation and growth, we invite you to ask the opinions of our students, including those interviewed during and after the site visit." Above, it was noted that the *single most crucial point in the review* was when the University Administration failed (or simply gave up) in its attempts to keep the Chair of the Slavic Department and the faculty of the Slavic Department from talking to students about the Eight-Year Review. The consequences of that failure can be seen here in the quote above, in which the UCLA Slavic Department practically dares the UCLA Administration to continue questioning students. And why should it not have adopted such a confident air? The Chair of the UCLA Slavic Department and some of its faculty not only successfully asserted their "right" to talk with students about the Eight-Year Review wherever and whenever they choose, they also made clear to graduate students the limits of the "protection" that was supposedly made available to them by the UCLA Administration in return for their cooperation in the Eight-Year Review.

This is not to say that there was not some level of reform in the UCLA Slavic Department. After so devastating an Eight-Year Review report, it would have been impossible for there not to have been some reform. The question is whether such reform is sufficient to keep such abuse from recurring and whether such reform will redress the damages done to current and former students. On both counts, what the Department tried to pass off as reform fails. It is also possible that there were some students who were not intimidated by talking to the faculty, at least not to Michael Heim, who had a reputation as a faculty member on whose shoulder students could cry after having gone through abuse at the hands

of the faculty. It was never a question of Michael Heim himself being an abusive faculty member. Michael Heim will be discussed at length later on in this report, but while he had weaknesses as a teacher and a mentor, he also had strengths. There are students in the Department who like and respect Michael Heim. But the point is not whether or not Michael Heim himself was abusive. The point is what Michael Heim did when he was put in a position where he had to choose between the good of his colleagues and the good of the graduate students. To repeat what was already stated above, when asked again and again to refrain from questioning graduate students about the Eight-Year Review, he refused, again and again, to do so. At that point not only was the trust of the graduate students betrayed, but it also compromised the veracity of whatever they say thereafter. No doubt there were some students who would have said that some things had gotten better. There were also students who would have said that what was going on here was nothing more than a cover up. This latter group of students, however, had been around too long not to see the handwriting on the wall. They had already cooperated fully with the investigation instituted by the UCLA Administration, in return for which they were promised protection from retaliation and protection from interrogation. That promise had already been broken, in spite of repeated pleas bordering on begging for the UCLA Administration to protect them. There was no way those students were going to have anything more to do with this system, one which had already so egregiously betrayed their trust. It is because of this that the UCLA Slavic Department could so confidently invite the University Administration to come in and interview the graduate students. Those who had no complaints would add credence to the faculty's claim of real reform. And those who did have real complaints would say nothing. Those students who had not understood the true nature of the relationship between the tenured faculty of the UCLA Slavic Department and the UCLA Administration now understood this relationship quite well. Order had been restored.

### **The Decision of the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate**

This was the backdrop against which the Chair of the UCLA Slavic Department followed up on his promise to go to the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate and ask that the ban on incoming graduate students be lifted. Graduate students were somewhat taken aback that he would even attempt to do this given the severe nature of the review and given the fact that he had been proven, time and again, to be untruthful in response to repeated inquiries from the internal committee of the Eight-Year Review team. When combined with the feedback requested by the Graduate Council from graduate students on the Eight-Year Review report (including the annotated copy of the report, appended here, which responds in detail to almost every section of the report and which not only exposes more untruths and the scope of the cover up activity, but

also reveals that the Chair of the UCLA Slavic Department went so far as to break federal and state law in his attempt to smear one ex-graduate student) the hope was that this request would be seen for what it was, an exercise in temerity.

In the end, this was to be an empty hope. The faculty head of the internal committee argued at length and persuasively that this ban should not be lifted, and that the culture of denial and intimidation that was for so long a part of the UCLA Slavic Department could not be changed in such a short period of time, even if one had had a cooperative faculty that had been willing to assess honestly and forthrightly the sins of the past. The Chair of the UCLA Slavic Department, as expected, presented the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate with his quantitatively impressive list of "reforms", and argued that keeping the ban on the admission of new graduate students would hurt both the Department and its students. It is the latter part of this assertion that seems to have carried the day. If the ban hurt the Department itself (and by "Department", we mean here the faculty in it, along with their reputation), then this as it should have been. As for hurting students, one could argue for this or against this, and probably one could come up with compelling arguments either way. Certainly when a department is in trouble and word leaks out, then that cannot be seen as helpful to students who are coming from that department and whose chances at employment depend, to a certain extent, on the reputation of that department. On the other hand, allowing students to go on in a department that has essentially denied that any wrong doing took place at all cannot be good for the remaining graduate students, and it is nothing less than disastrous for any future graduate students. If the faculty of the UCLA Slavic Department can be exposed so devastatingly in a review and *still* be allowed to accept and train graduate students, then it would only confirm and embolden them the next time questions of faculty conduct and abuse of students were to arise.

The reaction to this news by graduate students was diverse. Some felt that, given the nature of academe and especially the nature of academic tenure, nothing short of the faculty committing murder was going to be enough to get faculty members terminated, so why prolong the agony? Others felt that perhaps some good might come of this decision and that the faculty would have learned a lesson. Still others were shocked and stunned that the graduate Council of the Academic Senate would again put power into the hands of those who had abused, lied, and broken the law, and then denied it time and time again, even *after* they were caught. The only saving grace that could be imagined was that the Graduate Council had taken this decision with the tacit understanding that the Dean of the Humanities would eventually get around to implementing the recommendation of the Eight-Year Review committee that the UCLA Slavic Department be put into receivership.

### **The Decision of the Dean of the Humanities**

The feeling among some graduate students was that once the line had been crossed into illegal

activity, someone at some level of the UCLA Administration, be it the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate or the Dean of the Humanities or at the level of the College of Letters and Science or at even a higher level would step in and take over. Not only was there nothing to suggest that the UCLA Slavic Department would be capable of running itself, there was everything to suggest that it would not be capable of this: the continued lying, the continued deception, the continued cover ups, the continued minimalization of problems and exaggeration of successes. And when, on top of this, one sees actual violations of the law by the person in charge of the UCLA Slavic Department, it was just assumed by some that, even though the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate had acquiesced to the wishes of the Chair of the UCLA Slavic Department, that this would simply be a pro forma measure, since the Department would have to be put into receivership given the egregious nature of the violations, violations which were reported to the UCLA Administration. Thus, there was no excuse for the UCLA Administration not to act. They had evidence of wrongdoing, evidence that was provided by graduate students at great risk to themselves. The thinking was, how could the UCLA Administration fail to act given this overwhelming amount of evidence?

And yet, the move to put the UCLA Slavic Department into receivership kept getting delayed. The Dean of the Humanities, the person immediately tasked with making the decision to implement receivership, kept putting it off. Finally someone asked her what the problem was, to which she responded that, instead of immediately making the decision whether or not to follow the recommendation of the Eight-Year Review committee and put the Department into receivership, she was instead going to wait. Incredibly, during this interim period, the same chair who had deceived and covered up during the investigation was going to be allowed to remain in place. When this fact was pointed out to the Dean of the Humanities, she explained that she was going to be acting as the "Co-Chair" of the Department, and thus would have a moderating influence on the Chair that was from the Slavic Department proper.

At this point, any persons even remotely interested in seeing justice done could only throw up their arms in frustration. What more did the Dean of the Humanities need to know? How could any clearer a picture have been painted, not just of the UCLA Slavic Department but also of the Chair of the UCLA Slavic Department? His untruths, his deception, his cover-ups — these were all on paper, for all the world to see. What possible point could have been served by keeping on Michael Heim as the Chair, or the "Co-Chair", or in any other capacity? He had proven himself untrustworthy, time and time again. This is someone who broke the law in his attempts to smear students, a fact that was pointed out, on paper, to the UCLA Administration. And yet, the Dean of the Humanities wants to keep him on as the "Co-Chair"? To what possible end? The only response that was forthcoming from the Dean of the Humanities was, tellingly, the same response that came from the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate: this action was being taken "for the good of the students". But one has to ask, how could this possibly be good for the graduate

students? What would have been good for the graduate students would have been to have had the recommendations made by the Eight-Year Review committee implemented, and to have had the UCLA Slavic Department put into the hands of a strong-willed receiver, one who would make the needed changes and reforms and implement them from above. *That* is what would have been good for graduate students.

As it turns out, the Dean of the Humanities was "Co-Chair" in name only. "Co-" would seem to indicate a joint sharing of duties, but that was never, ever the case, and indeed, how could it be? The Dean of the Humanities was just that, a dean, with all the responsibilities and duties attendant to that position. She might have been a "Co-Chair" in that she oversaw major decisions, but when it came to the day-to-day, nuts and bolts decisions and activities that define the duties of a departmental chair, she was nowhere close to being a "Co-Chair". What she did do was to attend various faculty meetings in which the so-called reforms were discussed. There were, of course, times in which she would assert herself. At one meeting of the faculty, in response to a particularly nasty comment by one faculty member as to why the Dean of the Humanities would not commit to a particular course of action, the Dean replied "because I have not yet decided whether or not I will put this department into receivership." Thus, from time to time, the possibility of receivership would raise its head, but it soon became clear that receivership, despite the fact that it had been recommended for the UCLA Slavic Department and that the faculty head of the internal committee had argued forcefully for it, was never a real possibility. Its role was simply to serve as the Sword of Damocles, a subtle reminder to the UCLA Slavic Department faculty that, in theory anyway, there did exist in the University hierarchy a power greater than themselves. Of course, this superincumbent power in the University hierarchy, as can be seen in retrospect, desperately, desperately wanted to keep from having to use that power.

### **The Consequent Results of the Decisions by the Dean of the Humanities and the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate Not to Follow Through with the Eight-Year Review Team's Recommendations**

As the Fall 2000 Academic Quarter progressed with no sign of the UCLA Slavic Department being put into receivership, it soon became depressingly clear that none of these main recommendations--the suspension of graduate student admissions and the placing of the UCLA Slavic Department into receivership--was going to occur. In fact, just the opposite seemed to be happening. While the Department was still under closer supervision than it had been previously, Michael Heim began to reassert his control over the Department. He was "Co-Chair" in name only. In point of fact, he regained most of his former status and the Department began its plan to pull itself out of its current state. This would, one would think, be all to the good, assuming that the plan to accomplish this turn around included a frank assessment of where the Department had been and what needed to be done to turn it around. Unfortunately, such a frank assessment was

all but impossible given the fact that many of those in authority now, and many of those who were gaining in influence behind the scenes, had long been among the main collaborators and apologists for the old regime. They were the same faculty who had turned a blind eye to student abuse, or who had minimized it, or who had lied about it and sought to cover it up.

As was mentioned above, the first instinct of the faculty was to isolate the abusive linguistic faculty. Two had already retired, and one was on the way out, propelled no doubt by the Eight-Year Review. This left just one such linguist still on faculty, too young to be "golden handshaked" into retirement. This faculty member had also published in Russian literature and had actually inquired as to the possibility of crossing over to the literature side of the house. This caused no small amount of titillation among the graduate students, especially the linguists, who had been burdened by this professor for years. Apparently the literature faculty had no problem telling linguistic graduate students that they would "just have to work around" this particular faculty member, one who had a predilection for throwing a conniption fit when confronted with contrary points of view, but when faced with the possibility of this same faculty member joining up with the literature side of the house, the literature professors were at once aghast and unified in their determination to keep this from happening. Apparently what was said to be good for the linguistic goose ("you linguistic students will just have to learn to work around this person") was anathema to the literary gander.

Given the fact that the report was so devastating, especially with regard to the linguistics faculty in the UCLA Slavic Department, for the first time in the Department's existence, the literature faculty were actually in a position to garner control over the Department. Whether or not they no longer feared the linguists, or whether it was simply a case of fearing the potential damage that could come about if things were not brought under control, no one can say. In any case, the literature faculty did indeed begin to assert itself, beginning with the floating of the idea to abolish entirely the linguistic side of the house. For those readers of this document who are not Slavists, this is not as radical as it sounds, since this would be consistent with a long trend in Slavic Departments throughout the country, most of which are now simply literature departments with (sometimes) a small linguistic component. Another approach that was being considered was to bring in new faculty sympathetic to the literature side of the house. In the review documents, mention was repeatedly made of the need to fill three FTEs in the Department, the most pressing of which was a 19<sup>th</sup> century specialist, after which a 20<sup>th</sup> century specialist and then a South Slavist. That the primary and most pressing need was for a 19<sup>th</sup> century specialist was emphasized again and again. From the internal report, commenting on the external reporters observations:

"Both external reviewers considered replacement of the 19th century specialist to be "absolutely crucial to the long-term health and viability of the department" (ER, p.4). This opinion was

expressed repeatedly during the course of the site visit."

From the Faculty Self-Report: "in literature we are currently conducting a search for a junior position in nineteenth-century prose with proven competence in contemporary Anglo-American and/or continental theory (gender studies, cultural studies, postcolonial theory, neo-Marxism, and the like)"

From the Internal Report's Final Recommendations: "1. To maintain the stature of the department and to bolster undergraduate teaching, raise the current search for a 19th century specialist to open rank, preferably someone already highly respected in the field, and ideally someone who might take a leadership role as the department emerges from the present crisis."

And yet, this search never produced such a 19<sup>th</sup> century specialist. What did happen, in a subsequent search, however, was that a 20<sup>th</sup> century specialist was hired. While this position had been mentioned during the review, it clearly was not listed as the number one priority. So why then would the UCLA Slavic Department hire a 20<sup>th</sup> century specialist and not a 19<sup>th</sup> century specialist? The answer, many suspect, was to do exactly what was mentioned above, to "bring in new faculty sympathetic to the literature side of the house." The choice they finally made was himself a graduate of the UCLA Slavic Department, one who had worked closely with the literature faculty and whose dissertation chairman had been the chairperson of the UCLA Slavic Department during much of the time period in question that was covered by the Eight-Year Review.

At this point it should be made clear that, by bringing this fact to light, an attempt is not being made here to disparage the qualifications or character of that particular new hire. Some of the older graduate students remembered him from his time here as a graduate student, and the consensus was that he was extremely bright and, even better from the point of view of academia, extremely productive. He received a tenure-track position in Canada after finishing his graduate program in record time here at UCLA, quickly published a number of books and just as quickly received tenure from his Canadian institution.

Thus, nothing presented here about this particular individual is meant to reflect negatively upon him. He saw his opportunity and he took it. What his hire does suggest, however, is that the literature component of the UCLA Slavic Department was looking to shore up its side of the house, and since this new hire was a product of that faculty (in so far as they mentored him and served on his committees while he was a student here), it would certainly seem to be a safe bet that his addition to the faculty would serve that particular end.

What was happening was very clear to most of the graduate students on the ground. Of course,

the UCLA Slavic Department had to go through a formal hiring procedure, inviting other candidates to come and give lectures, feedback was solicited, procedures were adhered to. In the end, it came as a surprise to nobody when the Chair of the Slavic Department, in March of 2001, announced that the faculty had voted to offer the position to the applicant who had been a graduate student here, and who had worked under the former chair of the Department. So rather than the specialist in 19<sup>th</sup> century literature that was deemed by all sides to be so critical to the UCLA Slavic Department's future, rather than "ideally someone who might take a leadership role as the department emerges from the present crisis", the Department instead hired a junior scholar expert in 20<sup>th</sup> century who had just achieved tenure at his home institution. The reasons behind this choice were clear to all, but at that point, no one was going to be too vocal about their opinions regarding this hire. As has been pointed out above, order had been restored.

This is not to say, however, that there were no opinions regarding this hire. Few of the opinions centered upon the candidate himself, or his abilities, since these were not the issue. It has already been noted that he himself was an outstanding scholar, and that his abilities in this regard were never in question. What was in question, however, was the commitment of the UCLA Slavic Department to rebuild the linguistics program. Graduate students had been told, during the attempts to induce them to cooperate with the investigating committees, that the only way that the Department was going to improve, and that the only way for the linguistics program to improve was for them to cooperate with the investigating committee. Some chose not to, and in retrospect, who could blame them? And yet others did choose to cooperate, at risk to both their advancement through the program as well as at significant risk to their future careers. Their reward for this cooperation turned out to be nothing. Not only were they not protected against inquiries that might come from the faculty itself regarding the Eight-Year Review, now it appeared that the linguistic side of the program was being allowed to die off. The literature faculty denied this, of course, even while they were actively discussing the possibility of allowing this to happen. As it turned out, those linguistic graduate students who did finally agree to cooperate with the investigating committee not only did not help to improve the linguistics side of the house in the UCLA Slavic Department, they in fact ended up contributing to its demise and thus hurting their own chances for entrance into the field.

### **The Follow Up Review**

After such a disastrous review, and given the state of the UCLA Slavic Department with its theoretical "Two Chair" system, it was deemed necessary that the next review should take place not eight years later, but rather the following year. In fact, this was put off even further, probably due to the fact that even small changes took a while to implement. When this review finally did happen, it consisted of the internal committee of the original Eight-Year Review team. The above facts concerning the slow death of the linguistics side of the house and the frustration

among some graduate students that not all that much had changed was received sympathetically by the internal committee, but by then, this committee had learned what the rest of the graduate students had suspected for many years, that the UCLA Administration would do everything in its power--ignore abuse, ignore illegalities, ignore student frustration and anger--in order to keep from having to "discipline" tenured faculty, regardless of how tepid such disciplinary measures might be. The internal committee noted the fact that some improvements had occurred, but then again, how could they not have occurred, given the devastating report of two years before that? The internal committee then backed off its original recommendation that the UCLA Slavic Department be put into receivership, and instead recommended the appointment of a very strong chair from the outside.

The obvious question that arises is why would the internal committee back off its original recommendation of receivership, a recommendation that it argued strenuously in favor of in front of the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate? After all, a number of graduate students remained in contact with the internal committee during this whole time, and there was nothing to suggest that the internal committee was in the least bit impressed with what the literature faculty of the UCLA Slavic Department was doing. Without question the internal committee very quickly saw through the attempt to allow the linguistic program to die on the vine, and foremost among their recommendations was that the linguistic program be resuscitated. Of course, it is one thing to suggest this, quite another to get the UCLA Administration to provide the FTEs necessary to make this happen. That fact notwithstanding, the UCLA Slavic Department was forced to turn course and at least put on a respectable show of "reviving" the linguistic program. But if the internal committee had been so quick to spot the attempt by the literature faculty to allow the linguistics program to die, why then did they withdraw their recommendation for receivership and substitute in its stead a recommendation for a strong chair, someone brought in from the outside?

It is the belief of a number of graduate students that the internal committee had finally come to the conclusion that the UCLA Administration, be it in the person of the Dean of the Humanities or in the form of the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate, simply did not have the will to implement such measures. If the UCLA Administration itself was going to refuse to implement such strong measures, even in the face of such a devastating Eight-Year Review report, then (so went the thinking) why would or why should the internal committee continue to bang its head against the wall advocating things that were simply going to be ignored anyway? It was known as a fact by some of the graduate students that there was great disenchantment coming from the internal committee, which had taken on the unenviable task of investigating its own colleagues, and which had stuck to its guns in demanding that substantive (as opposed to cosmetic) changes be made, only to, in effect, be ignored.

## **The End Result**

The end result to all this was precisely what the Slavic Department faculty had hoped for. Anger was allowed to simmer and fade, graduate students exhausted by the fight to bring about change either quit the field or quit trying, knowing that their efforts within the context of the system in place at UCLA were doomed to failure, and what had at one point seemed like a tsunami of scandal now appears to be no more in evidence than pond ripples generated from a pebble. It is now early 2005, and no official investigation has taken place, no faculty members have been charged, much less punished, no attempt has been made by the UCLA Administration to pass on to law enforcement officials their knowledge that the Chair of the Slavic Department violated state and federal law, and no efforts have been made to right past wrongs suffered by all who were subjected to the tribulation and suffering meted out by the UCLA Slavic Department.

On the contrary. The Department, having successfully isolated the one remaining abusive linguist, has also had successes in other realms as well. It has, in effect, killed off the linguistics program and in so doing, for all practical purposes driven from the Department the one individual faculty member listed in the Eight-Year Review report as the one who actively and openly attempted to effect positive change. The final act in this redemption drama, a new review of the Department, is about to be completed, if it hasn't been completed already. This review is meant to be the final nail in the coffin of the attempt to expose what went on in the UCLA Slavic Department and to pave the way for a shiny new day for the Department as it rises phoenix-like from the ashes of the 2000 Eight-Year Review, at least in so far as the term "Department" is understood to represent the faculty and their concerns. Many of the students who were subjected to such vicious abuse have left the Department and gone on with their lives, while both UCLA and its Slavic Department remain, as do all institutions, to carry on as before. As far as the faculty of the UCLA Slavic Department is concerned, and as far as the UCLA Administration is concerned, the worst is over, the bullet has been dodged, and the system has survived unchanged.

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