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IV-B. Annotated Copy of Eight-Year Review Report Provided to the Academic Senate by Linguistics Graduate Students of the UCLA Slavic Department

October 30, 2000

What follows is our reaction, as some of the linguistics graduate students in the Slavic Department, to the 8-year review report of the UCLA Slavic Department, and to some of the documents associated with this report. Our comments are interspersed in blue type with the original text in black type.

We would ask that this document be read only by members of the Graduate and Undergraduate Councils, with the proviso that no member of the Slavic Department be given access to this document. Moreover, we would ask those who do take the time to read this to be mindful of the need to preserve confidentiality. To this end, we would further request that the contents of this document not be discussed by those who read it with members of the Slavic Department, nor with those whom the readers of this document might have reason to suspect are sympathetic to the Slavic Department faculty. We realize this sounds quite paranoid, but experience has taught us that in instances such as this, there can be no such thing as too much caution.

We would also ask that this document be read only in Luisa Crespo's office and in Luisa Crespo's presence.

We apologize for any typographical errors we might not have caught. We were pressed for time to make the submission deadline, and did not want to sacrifice content for style. We realize that this is a rather longish document, but felt a document of this length was necessary to address adequately the points brought up in the 8-year review report and in the documents associated with this report...

1999-2000 ACADEMIC SENATE REVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SLAVIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

Internal Reviewers:

Harold Martinson, Chemistry & Biochemistry, Graduate Council, Chair of Team
Elinor Ochs, Anthropology, Graduate Council
Fred Burwick, English, Undergraduate Council
Chris Stevens, Germanic Languages, Undergraduate Council

External Reviewers:

Alan Timberlake, Slavic Languages & Literatures, UC Berkeley

David Bethea, Slavic Languages & Literatures, U. of Wisconsin

Date of Site Visit: February 24-25, 2000

Date of Report: June 6, 2000

Approved by the Graduate Council: Approved by the Undergraduate Council:

Draft Report of Internal Review Team

Appendix I: External Reviewer Reports

Appendix II: Site Visit Schedule

Appendix III: Factual Errors Statement from Department Chair, M. Heim.

Response to Statement from H. Martinson

Appendix IV: Self Review Report

Internal Report on the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures

Preface

The following Academic Senate review of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures was conducted during AY1999-2000 on the normal 8-yr cycle. The core of the review was the site visit on February 24 & 25, 2000 during which the four internal reviewers (Fred Burwick, UGC, Chris Stevens UGC, Elinor Ochs, GC, Harold Martinson, GC, Chair of Team) and the graduate student representative (Mark Quigley) were joined by the two external reviewers (David Bethea, Wisconsin, and Alan Timberlake, Berkeley). The site visit consisted of two full days of interviews with faculty, staff, students and administration. After the site visit, the external reviewers prepared and submitted a joint report (attached), based on the site visit plus additional data and information supplied by the Graduate Division and the Department. Meanwhile, the internal review team conducted additional interviews, as necessary, to clarify issues raised during the site visit. The following account is based on all of the above sources of information, and relies heavily on the report of the external reviewers (henceforth, ER).

Introduction

The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at UCLA has, for decades, been recognized as one of the finest and most distinguished in the country. Not only are all the faculty individually of national or international stature, but also the department as a whole is unique in the breadth of its scholarship. This breadth is two-fold. First, while departments elsewhere tend to be strong in literature at the expense of linguistics, UCLA's strong literature component is paired with a linguistic component that is unmatched in the country.

This last part ("a linguistic component that is unmatched in the country") is debatable. There are many in the field who feel that the *synchronic* linguistic component of the UCLA Slavic Department has failed to remain current with linguistic theory. The *diachronic* linguistic component remains strong.)

Second, following a period during which good departments nationwide have trimmed non-Russian components from

their programs, the department at UCLA has remained dedicated to maintaining its comprehensive Slavic character. In the future, UCLA's continued pre-eminence in Slavic Languages and Literatures will depend both on maintaining the quality of this faculty and on ensuring that adequate FTE are available to sustain its breadth.

Slavic studies, at UCLA as elsewhere, has been uniquely buffeted by international events in recent decades. Shortly after the last review, the initial euphoria following the collapse of the Soviet Union gave way to apathy-and a nationwide decline in Slavic studies enrollments. Now interest is picking up again and Slavic studies at UCLA has emerged from this dark period stronger in comparison to departments elsewhere and is in a privileged position to capitalize on the trend. Indeed, the department worked tirelessly during the dark period to expand and advertise its undergraduate offerings...

(It should be noted here that this effort was confined primarily to Olga Yokoyama and Olga Kagan, and was indeed opposed by a significant segment of the faculty...),

...and its undergraduate program is now probably among the best in the country. Undergraduates interviewed during the site visit were effusive in their praise of the program. In the future, to maintain its stature in the field, the department must turn its attention single-mindedly to the graduate program, which is in a state of complete disrepair and endures only because of the resilience and quality of its surviving graduate students.

Faculty

The uniformly high quality of the faculty has been noted above, as has the remarkable breadth of scholarship in the department. However, recent departures have left gaps in current coverage of the literature component that must be filled before the department will be recognized as truly balanced, having equally prestigious linguistic and literature components (ER, pp. 4-5).

This is problematic at two levels:

1. Not everyone in the department sees the need to achieve a "balance" between literature and linguistics. As was correctly noted, most Slavic departments barely have a linguistic presence, and many have none. Given this state of affairs, it is unclear why the UCLA Slavic department cannot remain the one department in the country with an emphasis on linguistics. This is not to say that the literature side of the department cannot also be of the highest quality, but not everyone sees the need for this aforementioned "balance". Indeed, even when one overlooks the wildly exaggerated claims made by the department as to placement of its graduates, it must be stated that it has been more successful than some (but not all) major Slavic departments in placing its *literature* graduates in tenure-track positions. Thus, it seems that in spite of the fact that this department has a profile tilting towards linguistics, it has nonetheless been relatively successful in placing its graduate students, thus begging the question, why change? If anything, it is the department's linguistic graduates who have had difficult times as of late competing for and obtaining tenure-track jobs.

2. The question of "prestige" is also problematic, especially with regard to this department. For years, the department's reputation has been measured by the prestige of its faculty and its publications. What was not measured to any significant degree, and thus not taken into the calculations which determine a department's "prestige", is the effectiveness with which the faculty trains new scholars and allows them to contribute to the growth of the field in general. We feel that the failure to measure accurately this part of the department's obligation has contributed greatly to the current state of affairs now obtaining within the department. Many of the faculty feel that as long as their academic reputation remains strong and intact, they have *carte blanche* to run the program and interact with graduate students and staff alike in any manner they choose. The result may (or may not) be a continuing stream of high quality publications, but what cannot come out of this is a healthy graduate program, one in which the next generation of leading Slavic scholars will be trained. In the prevailing atmosphere, innovation and exploration of

other aspects of our field and of other disciplines in an attempt to gain new perspective on our own discipline are not only not encouraged, they are actively discouraged and openly scorned. What is encouraged is very safe, very detailed work which will not embarrass the faculty, but which also takes no chances whatsoever and which contributes very little to the overall body of knowledge in our field.

We understand that, as a part of the faculty's responsibility in producing valued scholars, they must from time to time rein in overly enthusiastic graduate students who might want to run before they have learned to crawl. This is, in our view, both necessary and appropriate. However, when the attitude becomes so restrictive and so self-enclosed that outside influences aren't even allowed to filter in, then we feel that the faculty not only deprives the graduate student of the wide ranging liberal arts foundation necessary for innovative approaches to the type of scholarship which characterize leaders in any field of academic endeavor, but even worse, the faculty is then forced to take the less than ground-shaking papers and dissertations which result from this atmosphere and declare them significant.

This attitude that students learn here as graduate students cannot help but carry over into their professional lives, the result being that, with the exception of Gil Rappaport at the University of Texas, Austin, none of UCLA's Slavic linguistic graduates is even close to taking over the reins as a leader in the field. One former graduate student who left our department to continue his education at another university was quietly pulled aside by some members of that faculty and asked what the situation is with the linguistics faculty at UCLA: why, given the size and quality of that faculty, are the next generation of leaders in the field of Slavic linguistics not emerging? To those of us who are going through the UCLA program in Slavic linguistics, the answer to this question is clear.

Thus, we feel that we as students, and the field as a whole, would be better served by a department concerned less with difficult to quantify concepts such as "prestige" and more with the time it devotes to mentoring its graduate students in an intellectually open manner. We are confident that this would be a much better and more honest approach to the goal of obtaining prestige, since said prestige would emanate not only from the reputation of the faculty, but the quality of its graduates as measured by their ability to lead, and contribute to, the field.

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.

While a Golden Age specialist would of course bolster the literature profile of the department, we would emphasize that in the search for a highly regarded specialist in this field, UCLA should not lose sight of the problems that have led to the current state of affairs in the Slavic Department. From our point of view, better a young and fair-minded junior scholar than a highly regarded senior scholar who shares the opinions of the current faculty with regard to the treatment of graduate students.

Moreover, to raise the department to a position of unchallenged preeminence both reviewers argued that the appointment must be made at the tenured level (ER, p. 5, and repeated assertions during the site visit). The Dean has authorized a search at the assistant professor level. This search should continue, but it would be wise for the department simultaneously to try to identify a specific mid-career individual, highly respected in the field-and also here, who would be willing to move. The Dean may reconsider the rank if presented with a specific and compelling alternative.

The dilemma in this is that the ladder faculty are already 100% tenured, and only one of these is at the associate professor level. However, there were two faculty losses last year and the above appointment would replace only one

of them. The external reviewers urge that the second FTE also be replaced, this time at the junior level (ER, p. 5) and with a twentieth century specialist which the department sorely needs ER, pp. 4 & 5). While the 19th century appointment is critical to the stature of the department, the 20th century appointment also is very important programmatically and (given a senior 19th century appointment) is essential as an opportunity to bring in young blood.

As mentioned earlier, a hallmark of the Slavic Department at UCLA has been the breadth of its scholarship. Essential to maintaining this breadth is representation on the faculty of a permanent South Slavist, an area of expertise represented in most major programs in the country (ER, p.5). Currently this position is filled by an Adjunct appointment which has been satisfactory as a stop-gap measure but which does not give the position permanence.

For the record, the South Slavist position has been filled much, much more than "adequately" by the current adjunct professor. Not only are his publications outstanding, but so is his willingness to help so many students in our department and serve on committees as an outside member. As the leading department in the country in Slavic linguistics, the South Slavic position is fundamental, since the earliest attested Slavic writings are South Slavic in nature, and it is these writings which have influenced the development of a great many of the Slavic standard literary languages. Since the retirements of Birnbaum and Albijanac, this adjunct professor has pulled the entire weight of the department in this regard, in addition to being an excellent instructor in Serbo-Croatian, in which he has a truly native-speaker capacity.

The problem the he has encountered, and which those of us who are familiar with the linguistic program in the Slavic Department know all too well, is that, for whatever reason, he has fallen out of favor with those linguists who are identified in this report as "the two difficult faculty members...both of whom are in the linguistics program". Why he would be out of favor with them, no one of us could possibly know or understand, but given the respective histories with the people involved, it is not in the least difficult to infer with whom the problem lies.

Moreover, it makes it difficult for students because Adjuncts do not "count" on examination committees, and students hesitate to choose this area for their dissertations because they cannot be sure that the expertise will still be there when it comes time to read their theses.

The Slavic Department lost three FTE during the period under review. Ideally they should be replaced as outlined above, including a permanent South Slavist. However, recognizing that this may not be possible at the present time, but in view of the importance of making these appointments, we urge the department and the administration to explore aggressively the possibility of filling the 20th century and the South Slavist positions with joint appointments. This solution is being pursued increasingly across campus, and for a small department like Slavic would be adequate to maintain the breadth that has been a pillar of its reputation.

Strongly disagree. We need a full-time South Slavist. This department made its reputation on historical linguistics, and the key to historical linguistics in Slavic is South Slavic linguistics.

Undergraduate program (including language instruction)

The reader is referred to the department's excellent self-review (pp. 4-6) for a complete account of the department's many accomplishments in this area. The external reviewers, like the undergraduates mentioned earlier, were effusive in their praise of the Slavic undergraduate program (ER, pp. 1-2). Note that the 19th and 20th century literature appointments will be very important for the undergraduate program as well as for the reasons discussed above, as these areas (particularly 19th century) attract substantial enrollment.

However, while it is usual for literature to attract more students than linguistics, we wish to emphasize, along with the external reviewers (p. 2), that this should not be used as an excuse for the linguists not to participate in the undergraduate program. As the externals point out, "the linguists need not teach only highly specialized courses in linguistics per se." They, like the literature faculty can extend themselves to develop courses of more general interest, and thereby better serve their department and the university community at large. "The asymmetry in the utilization of faculty energy needs to be addressed" (ER p. 2).

Strongly agree. It is our feeling that the failure of linguistics faculty to participate in the undergraduate program is closely connected to their overall problems in dealing with students. Graduate students are, by their nature, easier to teach, and they are much, much less likely to challenge their professors, whereas undergraduates, whose success at the university is not dependent on just one or two faculty members, readily and freely question and challenge their instructors. It comes as absolutely no surprise that these difficult linguistic faculty members shy away from undergraduate courses.

It is also worth noting that the UCLA Slavic Department, which has always prided itself on its strength in linguistics, barely addresses this subject at the undergraduate level anymore, with only one linguistic course listed for undergrads, down from three a decade ago. The UCLA Slavic Department is hardly in a position to complain about the lack of preparation on the part of its incoming graduate students in the field of Slavic linguistics when its own undergraduate program is so deficient in this field.

Graduate Program

Student welfare. During the site visit the review team heard several amazing accounts of emotional abuse perpetrated on students by certain members of the faculty. So fearful were the students that several asked to meet in private "somewhere far from our dept" after the site visit was finished. These students told of still others who were too fearful to meet with us at all. These meetings led to additional interviews designed to assess the credibility of what was heard. In all, dozens of interviews were conducted with current students, former students, faculty and staff. The picture that emerged was one in which many students live in personal fear of specific faculty members, and in anxiety about their futures within a program perceived as capricious and self-serving. We note that the external reviewers devoted more space to this issue than to any other single aspect of the Slavic program despite the fact that they heard but a fraction of all the complaints.

The last part of this sentence--" ...despite the fact that they heard but a fraction of all the complaints"--should be noted when reading the most recent comments of the two external reviewers in which they lend their strong support to the UCLA Slavic Department.

It is important to maintain the proper focus on what follows. The mandate to the review team was not to conduct a fact-finding mission or to determine the guilt or innocence of particular individuals, but rather to assess the welfare of the graduate students and to recommend corrective action, if necessary, to assure their well-being.

This then begs the question as to what *exactly* the mandate of the review team was. While we do not question the sincerity of the review team's efforts and while we acknowledge that, in comparison with other 8-year reviews, this review was indeed severe, it is nonetheless the case that this review focuses on but a fraction of the abuses that have occurred in this department over time. The review committee itself, as it was constituted, was simply incapable of doing the type of in-depth study of the department which would have been needed to present a true picture of the abuses that have become institutionalized there. There was, to our knowledge, no detailed (i.e.

involving extensive review of all financial aid awards) investigation done into the system for distributing financial aid, nor was there any financial auditing of the department's funding accounts to ascertain the allegations made by students as to irregularities and inconsistencies in the distribution of financial aid. While the report states that former graduate students were contacted, in fact only a very small percentage of these former students were actually contacted.

If the mandate of the 8-year review committee did not include an in-depth investigation and analysis of the department's fiscal practices and did not include a comprehensive examination of all former graduate students, then who in the Administration *is* charged with looking into these matters? If the 8-year review committee was indeed not instructed to "conduct a fact-finding mission or to determine the guilt or innocence of particular individuals", then who *is* charged with this task? Graduate students in the Slavic Department took and continue to take considerable risk to their future careers by cooperating so closely and extensively with the 8-year review committee to uncover the abuses which have existed for years in this department. Now that some of these abuses have been discovered and now that the Administration has been alerted to the fact that such abuse is extensive and of long standing, what does the Administration plan to do about this? Is it the Administration's plan to be satisfied with what was uncovered in the 8-year review process, hoping that once reforms are made the situation will be forgotten, or, having been alerted by Slavic graduate students as to the real nature of the department, is the Administration going to authorize the real and in-depth type of investigation of this department that needs to be done? A failure to do this begs the question as to who, if anyone, controls the behavior of academic departments at UCLA. In addition, any such failure of the Administration to continue the investigation into the Slavic Department could create the impression that the Administration simply wants this problem to go away, to fade with time.

The Slavic Department, and by extension UCLA, is guilty not only of repeated and institutionalized abuse of its graduate students, but also of lying to its graduate students concerning funding and academics, resulting in students who have been forced out of the field, or in students who have been trying to hold on and suffering financially because of this. The Administration must realize that the UCLA Slavic Department is not a thing apart, not an academic entity "associated" with UCLA, but rather it is a part of UCLA. Moreover, it was UCLA's representative to the students, UCLA's conduit to students and the conduit by which UCLA monies were distributed to students. To the extent that the UCLA Slavic Department abused its powers and abused its students, it is to this same extent that UCLA as an academic institution abused power and abused its graduate students in the Slavic Department. UCLA has transgressed. UCLA has for decades harmed and wronged students in the Slavic Department. It is now incumbent upon UCLA to right that wrong, to make right what it has allowed to happen, and to do whatever is necessary, financially, academically, and professionally, to remedy the situation vis-a-vis those of its past and present graduate students adversely affected.

Thus, the issue is not whether any or all of what we heard is correct in its detail or interpretation. The issue is the emotional trauma perceived by the review team in the students entrusted to the care of this department. This is not to cast doubt on any part of what we were told. Great care was taken to ensure the legitimacy of the information upon which we have based the conclusions at the end of this report. Several case histories from different sources were compared and no example of any significant discrepancy was found. In other instances different case histories involving similar situations were compared across time. The consistency was remarkable, even between former students who had never met. But to emphasize again: regardless of the details, the fear and the anxiety among the affected students is real, it is deep, it has interfered with the education of many, and it has crushed the careers of some. This level of graduate program dysfunction is unprecedented in the collective experience of this review team.

Without exception all who spoke with us feared retribution if they were planning to make their career in Slavic

studies, and we heard reports of both threatened and perceived retaliation. Some students, initially willing to tell their stories, later requested (even in tears) that we not use any details. Therefore, to preserve anonymity, we will present most information only in general terms, and the students, about half of whom were directly affected, will be referred to collectively. However, we begin our account below with one specific case history whose several facets reflect themes we were to hear repeated over and over. This student, whom we will call simply XX, did not fear recognition because she has left the field. The following is her story.

XX entered the program with excellent credentials. For various reasons-and on the advice of another faculty member-XX decided it was best to drop a particular graduate course during her second quarter. When XX spoke to the professor involved, the professor reportedly went on the offensive, not only insulting XX repeatedly, but also disparaging, with gestures and sarcasm, the other members of the faculty from whom XX had obtained advice. When exchanges like this continued unabated-and after being reduced to tears, XX concluded that she was merely a pawn in a jealous rivalry between this professor and other members of the faculty. Therefore, XX resolved to go to the Chair. According to XX the Chair responded with soothing words, and a statement to the effect that "there are problems among some of the faculty in this department. It is too bad that you have been caught in the middle of it. You just have to work around them." Accordingly, rather than addressing the problem, and with a comment to the effect that enrollment was low, the chair suggested that she re-enroll. Having heard numerous stories about the professor in question, and concluding that the Chair was merely circling the wagons, XX, in "the saddest decision I've ever made", left the program and the field. The "sad decision" quote above was not provided to us by XX simply for effect. Others have quoted her as saying at the time, "I have a broken heart This was the love of my life."

If the above case history were an isolated report it could justifiably be overlooked.

(We wonder at this statement. Even if it were just one person and one incident, why would the review committee think it would be "justifiable" to overlook it?)

However, every detail in this account has counterparts in the accounts of others dealing with this professor. We were told of other highly qualified students who were driven away, of another chair who sat idly by (indeed, reportedly suggesting that a student apologize to the professor for requesting to drop the class!). Thus, the perception of students that this professor takes even the most routine matters personally led XX to leave rather than spend "5 years worrying that the most innocent move or comment can turn into a major battle." And so a highly qualified student with a passion for the field, was lost.

The above is the only case history we have been given permission to present explicitly. However, during the course of our interviews we were told of

- physical displays of faculty anger including frequent yelling and even slamming a chair on the floor
- students being intimidated into taking particular classes because of enrollment concerns
 - students who fear writing anything but laudatory comments in the "anonymous" course evaluation forms
- a fractious faculty so immobilized by disagreement that no common reading list can be agreed upon (at least for linguistics) to assist the students in preparation for their exams
- students who feel compelled to tailor their intellectual approach in exams to the committee membership, and who are advised to "get one on your side" before going into exams
- students who don't dare complain for fear of retaliation in the MA or PhD exams, or in obtaining a dissertation signature

- students who feel that the only value of their comments is for use as ammunition in the internal squabbles of the faculty
- repeated episodes of students being ridiculed for having various deficiencies in their background; e.g. "What the hell are you doing here?" or "Well, you might as well just be an undergraduate!"
- students feeling abandoned and with no place to turn
 - faculty who appear to change their minds about the quality of work in response to unrelated circumstances
- ladder faculty conspiring against non-ladder faculty in the presence of students
- faculty playing out their rivalries by deprecating students' choices of dissertation advisor
 - students being threatened with loss of funding in arguments with faculty, e.g. " ... and don't think you are going to get funding next year..."
- students being threatened with disciplinary action for voicing disagreement with faculty

We would take pains to emphasize that the above list is accurate, but *very* general and not comprehensive.

Funding. A persistent complaint among students for years has been the chronic shortage of funding and the apparently capricious manner in which it is distributed. Students complain about lack of transparency in the criteria and processes governing the awarding of graduate student support. Certain jealousies and rivalries among the faculty are said to be so conspicuously displayed as to be common knowledge among the students. So vengeful are the faculty, we were told, that many students sincerely believe they are merely pawns among these colliding ambitions and that the awarding of support often is little more than manipulation resulting from jealousy or retribution.

The issue is not the nature of the details giving rise to this perception, but rather the perception itself of a systemic disrespect of graduate students, and their apparent treatment as chattel in the department. The chronic shortage of funds, almost universally identified by the faculty as the principal source of student dissatisfaction, is secondary to the spiritual blight in the department in the eyes of the students. Nevertheless, the inability to find adequate student support is also unacceptable and must be remedied (at least in the short term) by reducing the number of acceptances into the program.

Attrition. Based on the above one would expect the level of attrition in the Slavic department to be quite high. While attrition cannot reliably be determined from statistics alone, a rough estimate based on the total number of degrees awarded (MA+PhD) compared to the number of admittances between Fall of '88 and Spring of '98 suggests that Slavic has the highest record of attrition of any comparable department in the Humanities (comparison among 10 departments). But the reported mistreatment of students appears not to be the only reason for attrition in the Slavic department. A cursory survey of case histories for students who have left the program in recent years suggests that several were underqualified from the start. In addition, many of the others have had backgrounds considered grossly inadequate by some of the faculty ("What the hell are you doing here?"). In particular, students frequently reported being castigated for insufficiency in Russian. The impression is that the department over-admits and then relies on attrition to select for the students that will eventually get their degrees. Under normal circumstances this would be a healthy selection-capable, well prepared students would be admitted and the motivated ones would persevere and succeed.

It is not clear to us what the internal reviewers mean by this. Our complaint has always been that the department issues a blanket statement to the effect that if students "do well", then they will be funded. Never is the term "do well" defined, for the to us all too obvious reason that the department can never fund all of its graduate students. What if all the graduate students did equally well? Would they all get funded? Of course not. The department has always known this yet it often keeps this information from potential graduate students. The department has no ethical or moral obligation to fund every graduate student. The department does have, however, a moral and ethical obligation to be truthful to all its current and potential graduate students about the state of funding in this department.

What is potentially troubling about the statement of the internal reviewers above, i.e. "Under normal circumstances this would be a healthy selection-capable, well prepared students would be admitted and the motivated ones would persevere and succeed," is how one interprets the term "motivated". What if all students were equally motivated? Would all then be provided funding? Or is could this criteria be used in exactly the same way the department has used the terms "good" and "satisfactory" in the past, with funding only available for those who fall under the "good" rubric according to criteria known only to the faculty? In other words, if *all* the students of a given class proved to be outstanding, would they *all* then be provided funding? Or is this just another construct (with "motivated vs. non-motivated" replacing "good vs. merely satisfactory") through which the department could continue its policy of Social Darwinism?

However, in this department the reports we heard paint a picture of a process that results not in cultivation of the best and the brightest, but in the survival of the toughest and the most resilient-with the rest simply being discarded as damaged goods.

Attrition is a terrible waste. Resources, desperately needed by other students, are squandered on students who do not return. Precious time in the young lives of these students is needlessly lost; they either should not be admitted or, once admitted, they should not be driven away. Talent, important to the field and to UCLA, is shunted aside or destroyed. It is imperative that the department reform its attitude towards graduate students. These are young human beings entrusting themselves to the department for intellectual nurture and professional training. The department should consider more carefully exactly what background and capabilities it expects its students to bring to the program and then should screen the applicants rigorously. But once the students are admitted to the program the department is obligated to work as conscientiously as possible to mentor *each* student to success.

Apparently some faculty have very strong opinions about the level of preparation required of students who enter the program. The admissions committee should enlist these faculty in the screening of the applicants. Where possible, interviews in person should be conducted. When this is impractical, telephone interviews should be substituted. But some kind of direct interaction appears to be necessary to avoid admitting students who are considered inadequate. However, once the students are admitted, no faculty member has the right to ridicule their level of preparation-the faculty are responsible for whom they admit.

Here we, quite obviously, strongly agree with the internal reviewers and we appreciate the forceful way in which these points are made.

Graduate requirements. A number of specific issues were discussed with the review team, leading to the following recommendations by the external reviewers (ER, p. 6). "Reasonable and coherent reading lists [must] be established". The "exam format [must] be regularized ... and the expectations for student performance be made explicit". "The graduate program [must] be simplified and the time to-PhD be reduced". The internal reviewers strongly support

these recommendations and refer the reader to the report of the external reviewers for a complete discussion of the issues. However, because none of these issues-nor others the internal reviewers would ordinarily have raised-can be meaningfully addressed unless the problems above are resolved, we forgo further elaboration here.

Moreover, there is an additional problem that must be solved before these graduate program issues can be dealt with. The faculty must find some way to make collective decisions. Repeatedly we were told that particular issues had not been resolved because no consensus could be reached. In some cases this involved dissertation committees whose members, we were told, changed their minds or could not agree-leaving the student stranded! In other cases departmental issues were involved, such as the infamous (and functionally non-existent) reading lists. When we asked the chair what the vote of the department had been, we were told that there had been no vote! Further questioning left the review team, with the impression that the faculty avoids voting on issues that might go against the strongest personalities in the department. This tendency would be consistent with reports of attempted intimidation following such votes in the past.

Even now, as this is being typed, months after the release of the report, it is *still* the case that the radical changes that need to be made are being thwarted by the same two linguistic faculty members mentioned in the report proper. We have heard of faculty shying away from changes which need to be made because "you-know-who would raise a fuss." *This*, then, is precisely what the 8-year review pointed out, the Slavic Department faculty avoiding issues and proposed changes which "might go against the strongest personalities in the department".

Some way must be found for the department to make collective decisions so that the students can have the security of knowing what is and what is not expected of them. In the current climate many students feel obliged to tailor their preparation to the perceived idiosyncratic preferences of specific members of the faculty.

Action

Although the problems reported to us centered primarily on just two members of the faculty, the greatest anger of the affected students was often reserved for the majority of the faculty who they say take no interest in, and no responsibility for, their plight. 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). Therefore, with but this one exception, the entire faculty, collectively and individually, is culpable.

With one small exception, we agree fully with this assessment. We do feel that some of the native Russian faculty should not be held to the same degree of responsibility as the Americans on the faculty since their understanding of the academic system as a whole is not as comprehensive as one would expect from an American scholar whose academic training and teaching has, in the main, been done in the American system. In fact, certain of these native Russians have made significant attempts to rein in the two problem faculty members in linguistics and to circumvent difficulties associated with these two faculty members.

Accordingly: 1) To reduce the burden of students in the department and to preclude additional students from entering an unhealthy environment, the Graduate Council has voted to suspend admissions to the graduate program of the department of Slavic Languages and Literatures until such time as conditions for graduate students in the department improve.

2) To protect students already in the program from further abuse, and to prevent any possibility of retribution

against those who may have cooperated with the review team during this review process, it is hereby recommended that the Administration place the department of Slavic Languages and Literatures in receivership until such time as external oversight is no longer deemed necessary to protect the legitimate rights of the students to:

- be treated with respect
- take courses that benefit their education rather than the need for enrollments
- be provided with reasonable and coherent reading lists
- be informed explicitly of the format and expectations for exams
- have their dissertations read in a timely fashion and to receive constructive and useful criticism
- and in other ways, not specified above, to be enabled, not impeded, in their education.

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.

These are certainly strong words. Unfortunately, it seems as though the Administration is incapable of providing the protection it promised to students who would volunteer to come forth and speak with the committee. Immediately after the release of the report the Chair of the Slavic Department, Michael Heim, announced that he wanted to speak individually with each and every one of the graduate students in the department. This was immediately brought to the attention of the Administration. Subsequent to this, one of the emeritus professors also began asking students what they knew about the 8-year review, and this same professor then openly confronted one student, accusing her of trying to bring down the department.

The Slavic Department graduate student representative several times made clear to the Chair of the Slavic Department that she thought this sort of interaction, one-on-one, between *any* professor in the Slavic Department, including the Chair, with graduate students concerning the 8-year review would be inappropriate, simply because it would put the student in a position of having either to openly state his/her opinions of the review to the Department Chair, or it would force him/her to lie in instances where he/she did agree with the report. Additionally, for every student that *does* speak with the Chair, this draws further suspicion to those who choose not to speak with him, especially in a small department such as Slavic. The Slavic Department graduate student representative offered to act as a conduit to the Chair if he wanted to solicit feedback from the students, but the Chair continued to disregard her request (made several times) that he not seek to meet with students individually to discuss the report, even after other students voiced complaints.

Eventually, the Administration took action, instructing the Slavic Department faculty that only the Chair of the Department should be talking with students. While this was a good first step as far as it went, it was bad in that, far from instructing the Chair not to discuss the 8-year review with the students individually, it in fact appeared to give him a mandate to do so.

What follows is perhaps some of the clearest evidence that the UCLA Slavic Department faculty, far from being inclined to accept the report and to work with the Administration to fix what is clearly a broken program, is

intent on holding on to its power and on attempting to defend its treatment of graduate students. Certain members of this faculty actually threatened legal action against the Administration and the University for abridging their First Amendment rights. This strikes us as outrageous. We are not lawyers, so we cannot comment on the validity of their claim. It seems that in other areas of employer-employee relations, an employer would be more than justified in asking his/her employees not to speak with customers about certain issues. Apparently, however, because of the "special status" of professors vis-a-vis the university for which they work, i.e. issues related to academic freedom and tenure, these restrictions cannot be placed on tenured professors.

We do not know for sure that this is true, i.e. that professors in this instance are privileged over and above non-academic workers in this regard. As we have said, we are not lawyers. What we do know is that the Administration, when challenged by these dissatisfied Slavic Department faculty members, quickly acquiesced and recognized the faculty's "right" to approach students and speak with them at will concerning the 8-year review. This implies one of two possible scenarios:

1. That the Administration conferred with its lawyers who told them that those Slavic Department faculty and their legal representation were in fact correct, and that the Administration has no power and no right to preclude conversations between faculty and students on certain issues. If this is the case, then the UCLA Administration should have known this beforehand, and should have made it clear to students that, if they were to honor the Administration's request to participate fully in the eight-year review process, then they would be doing so knowing that there is no way they could be protected from direct inquiries from the UCLA Slavic Department faculty. The fact that the effort was made by the Administration to preclude such conversations (excepting the Chair) shows good faith on the part of the Administration, but clearly this was an area in which the Administration was ill-prepared and as a result, led the Administration to offer what it could not provide, namely protection from the Slavic Department faculty.

2. The second possible scenario is that the Administration, when confronted with the threat of legal action from the Slavic Department faculty, chose simply to give in, not wanting to risk an intra-university legal battle which could open up a legal can of worms vis-a-vis the always sensitive issues of academic freedom and tenure. In other words, rather than taking the difficult road of engaging its own faculty in the legal arena, the Administration defaulted to the faculty's position and thus left Slavic Department graduate students open to this type of intrusive questioning. If this is the case, there is no other word for it than shameful.

Regardless of which of these two scenarios is true, it is clear that either the Administration or the Graduate Council or both is still either unable or unwilling to protect Slavic Department graduate students from unwanted conversation with Slavic Department faculty members regarding the 8-year review. When the Graduate Council was asked by graduate students to make the 8-year review available via e-mail (this in response to Michael Heim's sending out to graduate students via e-mail documentation which supported the position of the Slavic Department faculty), the Graduate Council was extremely reluctant to do so. This reluctance itself seems to indicate a bias toward faculty sensibilities. Whatever arguments might have been made against releasing the report via e-mail surely would lose their justification in light of the fact that the Slavic Department faculty itself was using e-mail to communicate its own side of the story (and *only* its side of the story) to graduate students. In spite of the fact that the Slavic Department itself was sending out reports which reached graduate students immediately, regardless of where these graduate students were (i.e., student out of the area or abroad would instantly get the department's side of the story via e-mail, but not the original report to which the department was responding), it appears as though the Graduate Council did finally buckle in to the Slavic Department itself and refused to send out the report via e-mail. A sort of "compromise" solution was reached whereby the Graduate Council agreed to send out paper copies of the report to individual graduate students.

Even more disturbing than the double standard seen here (e-mail for statements and arguments favorable to the faculty, snail-mail for the report itself), was the letter which accompanied the report, in which Slavic Department graduate students, many of whom had already expressed clearly their desire not to discuss the 8-year review with Slavic Department faculty (including the Chair, Michael Heim), were actually encouraged to participate in what the letter termed the department's "self-review process". In spite of student objections to communicating directly with Michael Heim and other Slavic Department faculty members about the 8-year review, the University has not only failed to prohibit Michael Heim from communicating with graduate students concerning the 8-year review, it has in fact given him a mandate to do so.

UCLA's handing of this matter in promising what it could not (or would not) provide in terms of protection from retaliation will cast a long shadow not only over future 8-year reviews but on the reputation of the University as a whole.

Recommendations

It is the goal of the councils to use the review process to strengthen departments. Therefore, we urge the Administration to refrain from imposing punitive measures (such as withdrawing the 19 century FTE). This would diminish the department's stature and would harm even the graduate students we seek to protect.

We sincerely appreciate the internal review committee's desire to protect graduate students. We do not, however, necessarily see a contradiction between such protection and punitive measures being taken, not against the department per se, but against those faculty members who have abused graduate students and those who stood by and allowed it to happen.

Problematic in this regard, however, is that, as things stand now, the censure procedure as it exists requires students to come forth, give up their shield of anonymity, and testify on record as to the wrong-doing of the professor in question. In a field such as ours, going public with complaints about one's own institution is tantamount to making oneself persona non grata in the Slavic world. That is not especially fair, but it is true nonetheless. UCLA should have in place an investigative and censure procedure which would not rely on the direct testimony of graduate students.

Another problem with academic censure, as we understand it, is that, astoundingly, this is supposed to be a "confidential" process, the result of which is to be known only to the Administration and the faculty member involved. While we doubt that any graduate student would want to even avail him- or herself of the opportunity to try the censure option, simply because of the need to lift the shield of confidentiality, the absurdity of this "confidentiality" requirement begs the question as to what value the entire procedure could possibly be? If a student *were* willing to give up confidentiality to participate in a censure procedure, the hope would be that, by censuring a faculty member, that faculty member's standing and prestige in the field would be negatively affected, as would, consequently, his or her power to harm graduate students, either by outright negative commentary or by instances of "damning with faint praise" directed towards colleagues in the field who might be considering hiring the graduate student in question. But if the entire process itself is "secret", then there would be no sense of disapprobation visited upon the faculty member by others in the field, again leaving open the question, why would a graduate student even bother? As long as graduate students are giving up their confidentiality anyway, they might as well file suit in court, where at least they stand a reasonable chance of collecting damages, and in addition, they can at the same time focus the spotlight on the misdeeds of the offending faculty member.

Instead, we offer the recommendations below in the hope that they will be supported by the administration so that the department may emerge stronger and more respected than before. The department, for its part, can minimize the inevitable stain on its reputation resulting from the measures outlined above, by working quickly to address and redress the problems described in this review.

The one thing this department has not done since the release of the report is to work "quickly to address and redress the problems described in this review." On the contrary, this department has fought against these results tooth and nail from the very beginning, and continues to do so today. The Chair of the Slavic Department has not only refused requests from the graduate student representative that he refrain from engaging students in one-on-one conversations concerning the 8-year review, he has continued his campaign against a former graduate student in this department who had the courage not only to speak out, but to allow her story to be used publicly.

In the internal review team's response to Michael Heim's "Error of Fact" statement, it is made abundantly clear that Michael Heim will twist and shade the truth, and even completely deny the truth, in his efforts to undo the results of the 8-year review. To quote from this response from the internal reviewers: "The pattern that emerged was consistent denial or minimization of the problem-until confronted with overwhelming evidence.". This pattern of which the internal reviewers speak continues to the present day. One would think, after having been confronted so openly and undeniably with such a characterization of his actions, the Chair of the Slavic Department would mend his ways, but not so. In the above-mentioned e-mail he sent out to all graduate students, *in spite of the fact* that the Slavic Department's practice of always striking out at the weakest and most vulnerable of its members, namely graduate students, had been exposed in the 8-year review report, and *in spite of the fact* that the internal reviewers had effectively rebuffed his attempt to demonize the one student brave enough to allow her story to be told (the very first point addressed in the internal reviewers' response to the Chair's "Error of Fact" statement), the Chair of the Slavic Department unbelievably *continues* to attack this same student. In doing so, not only does he falsely characterize her abilities, but he actually releases details of her private transcript from UC Riverside, without her consent, to other students, thus putting him in violation of UC regulations, to say nothing of the Family Privacy Act of 1974.

Far from complying with the suggestions in the 8-year review, the Chair of the Slavic Department has done everything in his power to refute the facts stated in the review. He has stated his intention of not only arguing against receivership (which is the very *least* that the Slavic Department should receive), but also his intention to ask that the ban on incoming graduate students be lifted.

As for the rest of the faculty, clearly there are elements who will stop at nothing to thwart the University's attempts to reform the Slavic Department. They have already challenged the University's authority legally (and won?). Tenure grants them next to absolute security in their positions, and they are well aware of this. If they succeed in avoiding receivership, which is what the rumor mill is saying will happen, this will only strengthen their resolve, for they will know that not only have they consistently and grotesquely abused graduate students, but that even though this has been exposed publicly, they have still managed to hang on to power, which will make them even more arrogant (if that is possible) than before.

The University should be under no illusion that this department will ever voluntarily comply with the suggestions contained in the 8-year review. It will never voluntarily acknowledge that it was abusive to students. It will never consent to give up power or to reform itself, because to take steps to do so would in effect acknowledge the correctness of the report, namely that reform was needed and that abuses did occur.

To the department and the administration

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. It is understood that recruiting such a person may be temporarily delayed by the measures outlined above, however the delay can be shortened by aggressive cooperation on the part of the department to correct the problems that have been noted above.
2. Seek a joint appointment to fill the 20th century position.
3. Seek a joint appointment to provide a permanent South Slavist.

As mentioned above, not all of us agree that a 19th century position is as important as a South Slavist. Some of us believe that a *full-time* South Slavist should be the next appointment approved, assuming the Slavic Department continues to be a viable academic department at UCLA.

To the department

4. Engage the linguistics faculty in the development of a more balanced undergraduate curriculum in which the linguists share in the undergraduate teaching.
- Increase the selectivity of admissions to reduce graduate student attrition. The goal should be to generate a smaller (by half), better prepared student body, with more funding per student. Simultaneously, efforts to find additional sources of funding should continue. Any subsequent increase in admissions should be accompanied by commensurate increases in funding opportunities for the students.
6. The procedures for and the criteria upon which funding decisions are made must be clearly explained to the students in writing.
 7. Lift the veil of secrecy characteristic of the department. For example, admit the MSO to faculty meetings as is done for all other departments in the Kinsey Humanities Group, and allow graduate students meaningful participation.

Time line

A follow-up review of the department will be conducted in the Spring of 2001 by a process to be decided before June 30, 2000.

It is now October of 2000, four months have passed since this process was to be determined, and no one among the students has heard anything of it.

Approved by the Graduate Council: June 9, 2000

Approved by the Undergraduate Council: June 9, 2000

Appendix I: External Reviewer Reports

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External Reviewer Reports

Alan Timberlake, Slavic Languages & Literatures, UC Berkeley
David Bethea, Slavic Languages & Literatures, University of Wisconsin

TO: Duncan Lindsey, Chair, Graduate Council, Academic Senate Office, UCLA

FROM: David Bethea, Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures, University of Wisconsin-Madison;

Alan Timberlake, Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures, University of California at Berkeley

ABOUT: External Review of the Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures, UCLA, February 23-25, 2000

1. General. For several decades UCLA has been a leader in Slavic studies in North America, the hallmarks of its program being an enviable breadth and rigor. It has been especially strong in the area of linguistics and poetics. Perhaps more than any other department in the country, UCLA's has embodied, and to a significant degree still embodies in some of its faculty, what the great structural linguist Roman Jakobson called the study of the "Slavic word"-- the investigation of how the disciplines of linguistics, poetics, folklore, and literary study interrelate and interpenetrate on Slavic soil. UCLA's Slavic faculty are virtually without exception highly productive and distinguished, with national and in several cases international reputations.

This is true for some faculty in the Slavic Department. Others are looked upon as productive, but not particularly relevant or distinguished, as they have failed to keep up with developments in the field.

On the undergraduate level, the department has generally worked hard to make itself accessible and relevant to today's students, and it has done so without abandoning its traditions and high standards. The language program at UCLA, about which we will have more to say below, is one of its singular strengths. With regard to the graduate program, the students appear to be exceptionally well trained,.....

Yes and no. Linguistically, the program here is seriously deficient in current theory. No one is saying that the linguistic component of the UCLA Slavic Department should turn its focus completely on current linguistic theory. There is much to be said for its emphasis on historical and Jakobsonian linguistics. But it does its students no favors when it fails to offer even a cursory introduction into Government/Binding and Minimalist linguistic theory. One need not be able to claim expertise in this area in order to be taken seriously in the field, but one should at least be conversant in this school of linguistic thought, since it is the dominant scholarly construct for linguistics in this country. One need not necessarily agree with it, but in order to even debate it, one must know what it is.

In this respect, then, not only has the UCLA Slavic Department not trained its charges well, it hasn't trained them at all. It's a problem. Of the seven UCLA Slavic Ph.D.'s in linguistics who received tenure track positions in the 1990's, three received tenure, three were denied tenure, and one has yet to come up for tenure. It is telling to see UCLA graduates at national conferences delivering papers on issues brought up by Jakobson 50 years ago while their colleagues are addressing cutting edge topics in the world of linguistics.

Thus, while *some* of the linguistic training received by UCLA students is good, much of it is not, and much of it is non-existent. This raises the question of how the external reviewers came to this evaluation of the teaching in the UCLA Slavic Department. Was Timberlake (the linguistic member of the external review team) relying on his own memories of UCLA when he was a tenured faculty member in the 1980's, or did he do a full investigation into the current UCLA Slavic linguistic training which he ranks so highly?

.....a fact further corroborated by the department's record of placing seven out of seven new Ph.D.s over the past five years. This record of placing students in recent years is unparalleled among Slavic programs in America.

Indeed, UCLA's record of "placing seven out of seven new Ph.D.s over the past five years" is in fact unparalleled, more so than Profs. Timberlake and Bethea can know, since not even UCLA has managed to do this. When statements like this occur, one is forced to ask if the external review committee did any reviewing/investigation at all, or did it simply allow the UCLA Slavic Department to feed it information? It is not as if this would be a difficult claim to check: the UCLA Slavic Department web site lists all the department's recent Ph.D. recipients. It would have been a simple matter of asking where exactly each of these graduates has received the "tenure track positions" they are supposed to have.

In point of fact, of the ten students who have received Ph.D.'s during this time period (Rob Romanchuk-99, Andrea Lanoux-98, Kelly Herald-97, Eun-Ji Song-97, Lingyao Lai Walsh-97, Christopher Gigliotti-97, Iida Katerina Hirvasaho-97, Amanda Nowakowski-96, David Macfadyen-95, Karen McCauley-95) only four received tenure-track positions. Interestingly, for a department which claims such expertise in linguistics, none of these four positions were in linguistics. Of the three linguistics Ph.D.'s, one is working as a lecturer in Korea, one is working in a library, and one is out of the field altogether. When combined with the fact that full half (3 of 6) of the UCLA Slavic linguistic graduates who came up for tenure in the 1990s failed to receive tenure, a very different picture of the department's academic successes emerges.

How would the external reviewers explain the discrepancy between 7 out of 7, on the one hand, and 4 out of 10, on the other? Perhaps the external reviewers should be asked why they were so eager to accept blindly whatever information was provided to them. At best, this suggests they were careless, lax and naive. At worst, it suggests collusion on their part with the faculty of the Slavic Department in an attempt to somehow neutralize the record of long-term abuse of students with an impressive placement record.

It has been suggested by some that this is not the fault of the external reviewers, that they took the information provided to them simply because this was the customary way of conducting 8-year reviews at UCLA, i.e. they would have never dreamed that they would have been provided false information. This may or may not be the case. If it is, however, then this begs another question, namely why even have external members (or internal members, for that matter) on an 8 year review if the reviewers are going to accept unquestioningly statistics provided by the very entity they have been asked to investigate? . This practice in essence turns the review into a self-review. Why even bother with external members if they are simply going to parrot the statistics provided them by the department itself and echo the department's own view of itself? Why not just have the Slavic Department review itself?

It is this, frankly, which is most disturbing. This incident serves not only as an indictment of this particular external review team, but of the entire review process. It leaves the impression (and indeed, can anyone argue that in this case this impression is not that far removed from reality) that this is nothing more than an "Old Boys Network", with each department nominating as potential external review members only those scholars whom it knows to be sympathetic to the department under review. Thus, the purpose is not to actually review the department from without, but rather

to provide cover for the department, to make perhaps some superficial criticism of the department, but basically to confirm the department's view of itself and allow the department to claim that it is indeed subject to oversight of sort (granted, only once every eight years, but that is beside the point).

If the external review committee's blind acceptance of the department's statistics is not convincing enough evidence that this was indeed the case in this review, then one need look no farther than the external reviewers' shameful letter in support of the Slavic Department (appended and commented on below) which was solicited by the Slavic Department after the review came out and which was distributed to all Slavic Department graduate students via e-mail, a letter in which the external reviewers frantically attempt to distance themselves from their initial report and to undermine the internal report. (Because of Alan Timberlake's close association with two of the problem linguistic members in the Slavic Department, the two mentioned explicitly by the Slavic Department chair in his Statement of Facts response, *and* because he himself was a former member of the UCLA Slavic Department, many of the senior graduate students would have nothing to do with the report, fearing bias on Timberlake's part. Given the results of the internal report, and given the aforementioned revisionist letter on the part of the external reviewers, can anyone say that it was a mistake on the part of these graduate students *not* to talk to them? More on this below in the section dealing with this revisionist letter.)

UCLA has thus managed to keep intact a basic infrastructure for Slavic study which should allow it to be well positioned for the future. This depth and breadth will be necessary as a kind of gold reserve, which can be drawn upon over time, as the needs of the world at large and of the student body at UCLA change. It goes without saying that no Slavic program, in the country has been immune to the vast cultural and demographic shifts brought on by the fall of the former Soviet Union and the onset of the new global economy and changing interests on the part of American undergraduates, who ever more treat undergraduate education as training for future employment.

God forbid that anyone should ever accuse the UCLA Slavic Department of being concerned with its students' future employment opportunities.

The key is to find a way to adapt to external changes while still maintaining the basic integrity of one's programs-to provide needed training to undergraduate and graduate populations without becoming in the process a service department.

What exactly does this mean? A "service" department? Is it not the duty and role of a state university to provide service to its students and to the public at large which supports it?

This type of statement is distressingly familiar to the graduate students in this department, usually because it is a code of sort, wherein "service"-type activity is defined as anything that the faculty does not happen to be interested in at a given moment. The refusal of the department historically to involve itself in (not *advocate*, mind you, but simply *teach/make aware of*) the various incarnations of Chomskian linguistics, i.e. in that school of linguistic thought which dominates the field, has often been justified using that same phrase: "Oh, we are not a *service* department, dancing to the tune of whoever has the loudest whistle. We are *true* scholars."

Perhaps the Slavic Department at UCLA, should it survive this review, would do well to think of it self more in terms of service, however much that might offend the pure and scholarly aesthetics of those currently in power there.

The external reviewers sense that Slavic at UCLA can successfully adapt to the demands of a smaller (yet still strategic) language, literature, and culture program in today's academy, but some of the decisions it will have to make

will not be easy and will necessarily go against the grain of the department's own traditions. In what follows we try to offer some points of orientation as well as concrete recommendations that the department and administration may want to take into account as they consider the future.

2. Undergraduate Program. The interviews with the department's undergraduate students were one of the most pleasant aspects of our two-day review experience. Slavic appears to be blessed with a number of gifted undergraduate instructors. We cannot recall an instance where one of the students being interviewed said something negative about the department or the individual course or courses. So-called "heritage" (émigré or second-generation) students were especially numerous and enthusiastic: they stated repeatedly that the new courses designed to educate them further in a language and culture they left prematurely are both much needed and well taught. Several individuals praised the accessibility of the instructors and TAs. They felt themselves to be part of a small "collective" on a large campus, with the staff making time to accommodate their needs in a cheerful and always professional way. The "Russian room," a specific location where students can drop to chat with TAs or a native Russian speaker (Ninel Dubrovich) is a demonstrable success.

[Ms. Dubrovich is one of the few bright points in the Slavic Department and she should be compensated accordingly.](#)

The system of offering three parallel tracks for majors (Russian language and literature, Slavic languages and literatures, and Russian studies) appears to work well and to, build on the strengths-especially the breadth---of the department. We would also like to applaud the new major in European studies, which further integrates Slavic into the campus mainstream. The department is to be commended for the efforts it has made in the last decade to broaden its appeal. We are confident that the department is genuinely committed to these efforts, and under the department's present enlightened leadership, ...

[It should be obvious at this point in the reply that not all share this view of the present leadership as "enlightened". Quite the contrary: the present leadership of the department, while not himself one of the main abusers, has for years turned a blind eye to such abuses, his objections notwithstanding. The response to his Statement of Fact by the internal reviewers makes this clear.](#)

...even more new courses will emerge and the efforts will continue, organically and effectively, to broaden Slavic's undergraduate presence on campus.

[Again, it is important to note that this effort is supported much more by some faculty members than by others, who have no interest whatsoever in the undergraduate program. See our reaction to the internal reviewers brief commentary on the undergraduate program above.](#)

We would like to note, however, that, based on enrollment data for the 1997-98 and 1998-99 academic years provided by Academic Planning and Budget, there appears to be a significant asymmetry between the literature and linguistics faculty in terms of their respective undergraduate teaching assignments. Literature faculty regularly teach undergraduate courses, linguistics faculty do not. It looks to us that virtually every course that contributes substantially to the undergraduate student credit hour numbers for Slavic-Russian 25 (The Russian Novel in Translation), Russian 99A (Introduction to Russian Civilization), Russian 99B (Russian Civilization of the 20th Century), Russian 124D (Dostoevsky), Russian 130B (Russian Poetry of the Late 18th to the Early 20th Century), Russian 140B (Russian Prose from Karamzin to Turgenev), etc.-is taught by a member of the literature faculty, and those student credit hours have allowed their departments to offer low-enrolled graduate courses and thereby to keep these programs going. This creates the impression that, at present, the senior linguists are doing the majority of their teaching at the graduate level, a distribution of faculty energy which naturally results in problems with enrollments

and student credit hours. Linguists need not teach only highly specialized courses in linguistics per se, which in any event would have trouble drawing from an undergraduate population; instead, they might consider offering courses in such related fields as folklore, mythology, culture, history of culture, etc. After all, literature faculty around the country have been called upon to "reinvent themselves" by offering more general education and writing-intensive courses that serve the larger college population; literature faculty regularly extend themselves to develop courses in film, art, or periods of literature in which they are not research specialists. Another possibility is that the department's linguists offer already existing courses for other departments and programs—for example, a course on dialectology for the Linguistics Department or a course on discourse theory for Applied Linguistics.

We very strongly agree with this sentiment. Again, we would refer to the aforementioned undergraduate section of the internal reviewers report above as to exactly why certain linguistics faculty members shy away from contact with undergraduates. As to working with students in other departments, this would expose some of these faculty members to 1. students who are not under their direct control and thus not amenable to pressure, and 2. students who are versed in areas of linguistics about which this faculty knows very little or students who are current in schools of linguistic thought in which this faculty has not remained current.

We would also point out that not all of the linguistic faculty in the Slavic Department fall into this category. Two of the "non-problematic" linguistics faculty (both of whom have strong reputations in the field) have in fact taught large undergraduate classes here at UCLA, drawing in students from outside of Slavic.

We might note parenthetically that small departments like Slavic would be encouraged in attempts to reach larger audiences if the University were to adopt a policy of crediting the home department of the instructor rather than the department offering the course;...

Strongly agree.

...this would be an incentive for faculty in small departments to teach established, high-enrollment courses for other departments. And even if it is not UCLA's policy (for now) to give official credit for enrollments logged by home faculty in visiting departments, Slavic in this instance would still get the reputation for being good citizens. The asymmetry in the utilization of faculty energy needs to be addressed and something approaching equality of undergraduate-graduate teaching assignments for all ladder faculty ought to be instituted.

3. Language Program. UCLA is fortunate to have an exceptionally strong and well-integrated language program with a bright and responsive staff. Professor Olga Kagan is generally recognized as one of the three leading experts on Russian language pedagogy in the country, along with Patricia Chaput at Harvard and Benjamin Rifkin at Wisconsin. She has remained active as a writer of a widely-used textbook and course materials, and her writing and boundless professional activity also serve to raise the visibility of the department. Her leadership and highly professional manner are in evidence throughout the program. The departments TAs seem very satisfied with Professor Kagan's supervision of their teaching duties and with the preparation they receive in Slavic 375 (Teaching Apprentice Practicum). When we interviewed all the language instructors together, including those in Russian, Czech, Polish, Ukrainian, Hungarian, Romanian, and Serbian/Croatian, there appeared to be excellent camaraderie among them. We were particularly impressed with the numbers of students in Dr. Galateanu's Romanian classes. The enrollments in most upper-level Russian classes are relatively robust, comparing favorably with enrollments in other institutions, and that is a good sign. It is also impressive that there is remarkably little attrition from one quarter to the next in the basic sequence of language courses. There is also much more emphasis on non-linguistic content in the language courses than was the case just a few years ago. Again, students seem to reflect the well organized nature of the program and the dedicated attitude of Professor

Kagan and her colleagues with their comments, which virtually to a person show a high degree of satisfaction. It was a wise move to fix Olga Kagan in place as permanent faculty, at a time when it was difficult to make lecturer appointments with SOE. It is our judgment that the language program, while forced like many sister programs around the country to pay heed to enrollments and to continue to reach out to a changing student population, is in good hands for the indefinite future.

The work done by all the teachers of non-Russian languages in the Slavic Department has been outstanding, again one of the few bright points in a department such as this. Dr. Galateanu has gone out of her way to recruit undergraduate students to her class, and Dr. Kresin is very much liked and respected by both undergraduate and graduate students, having done a wonderful job in undergraduate teaching in both Czech and Russian and in sponsoring UCLA's Russian Club. Dr. Corin's contribution to the undergraduate program in Serbocroatian has been nothing short of outstanding, especially so in light of the fact that he has been the department's de facto South Slavist for the last six years or so. (See responses above to the internal reviewers section on the need for a South Slavist for more on Dr. Corin's role in this department.)

(We omit comment on Dr. Simon not as an implied slight--indeed, from what we have heard her students appreciate her course--but simply because we don't have any experience with her since Hungarian was just last year added to Slavic Department offerings.)

Given the relative difficulty of languages in the Slavic group, we would urge the administration to give the department some flexibility in setting smaller class sizes in lower level courses: aiming for the mid-20s (with maximum at 26) seems high to us; a limit of 15 would be better, given the context.

4. Graduate Program. As we suggested in our opening remarks, at present Slavic is undergoing as much change as any field in the humanities. Without doubt much of this change has to do with demographics and the "new" economy, but some does not. At many universities deans are not replacing slots automatically, but are waiting to see if student demand warrants the same outlay as in the past. Financial aid for graduate study in the humanities, usually one of the more difficult sells to campus administrations even in prosperous times, has not been helped by news of shrinking applicant pools and the ever fragile job market for new Ph.D.s. Thus, we would like to stress that there are various factors over which no Slavic program, including that of UCLA, has had control since the time of the last review in 1992. Disciplines can grow up when there is a need (say, the "Cold War" or "sputnik"), but they can also languish when that need disappears. We are all historically situated in this way, as any look in a course catalogue just a few short generations ago will show. It is a cliché, but it is perhaps worth repeating: in order to remain viable, today's Slavic departments and programs will have to attract and train today's, not yesterday's, students; they will have to find ways to maintain intellectual integrity while still being responsive to different audiences.

Having said this, we believe that Slavic at UCLA is at an historical crossroads for other reasons as well. If the "infrastructure," in terms of faculty resources and national reputation, is there to insure that the program is well situated to face the future, there are also real challenges that need to be addressed soon, and in a thorough, collegial manner. As capable as UCLA's graduate students in Slavic are, and as appreciative as they are of the intellectual training they receive, they suffer from an alarming level of anxiety, bordering on demoralization.

In light of this comment by the external reviewers, and other similar comments that they will make throughout their review, one can only wonder how they were able to justify writing the aforementioned revisionist support letter, a copy of which is appended and commented upon below.

(The issue of faculty collegiality will be addressed farther on.) We realize that to be a graduate student is to be, by

definition, in a vulnerable, transitional status, with the result that a certain amount of legitimate (and sometimes less than legitimate) "ventilating" is to be expected. Bearing this in mind, we must nevertheless report that what we found during our visit was much more than what can be attributed to run-of-the-mill graduate student anxiety. We would urge the department to do everything in its power to address these problems in an open, fair, and non-defensive manner...

If nothing else has come out of this review, it should be abundantly clear that this department is utterly incapable of receiving criticism in an "open, fair, and non-defensive manner". Indeed, they are incapable of taking criticism at all, as is evidenced by the Chair's repeated attempts to deny the substance of the internal report.

...We do not wish to be alarmist, but neither do we wish to treat euphemistically an atmosphere that can poison and further undermine the continuing life of the department.

To begin with, too many applicants have been accepted in the past relative to the level of support that the department is capable of providing. This in turn has translated into a system, where: 1) some (many?) continuing students do not have a reliable sense of their possibilities for aid in the future; 2) not everyone is given the opportunity to teach (a real liability for those going on the job market);

This is a sore point among graduate students. Those graduate students who do manage to survive this program and graduate are many times woefully under prepared in terms of teaching experience. It should also be pointed out that the allotment of teaching slots is far from uniform, with some graduate students teaching for years while others have been denied any chance to teach at all.

and 3) the program has more people in the on-leave status than it ought. (The practice of dividing TA positions into two in order to spread the opportunity to teach perhaps has a certain logic, but it is unheard of at other institutions, and should be eliminated.)

We disagree. Until the faculty takes steps to increase enrollments, these divided TA-ships are absolutely essential to providing teaching experience to graduate students.

We anticipate that the shrinking applicant pool will probably take care of this problem by itself, but even so, the department should as a policy decide to admit fewer students and to provide more initial funding and continue to fund those it does admit on a more regular, longer basis.

What the department needs to do more than anything is be up-front and honest when discussing the possibilities for funding with potential graduate students. There is no disgrace in not having enough money for your graduate students. Stigma should be attached, however, to those who promise funding to students *knowing in advance* that this funding cannot be provided to all students. This is a shameful practice of long-standing in the Slavic Department.

In addition to being the responsible thing to do given the current job market in Slavic, this would both improve student morale. Some change in initial funding-a commitment to four- or five-year support packages-is absolutely necessary to compete successfully against the other strong programs that offer multi-year financial aid packages.

One thing that became clear from the review team's discussions was the need to make a more concerted effort to find teaching and research support positions for Slavic graduate students on campus. It appears that there are very real

opportunities for Slavic graduate students to, teach in other programs, to serve as: TAs in ESL courses (after the minimal training), TAs in other languages of competence (many grad students in Slavic are foreign), TAs in writing-intensive or composition sections and in literature discussion sections of large General Education lecture courses (if this is a possibility); possibly TAs in content courses in Linguistics, etc. It would take a little effort to learn what the realistic possibilities are, but once the paths of employment in other programs, once discovered, quickly become worn.

Strongly agree. This is the single best suggestion for the improvement of the Slavic Department offered by the external reviewers.

The department also has in place some specific projects, specifically the journals edited by Professors Ivanov and Klenin, that are of value to the profession as a whole. It would be a valuable source of modest support for one or two graduate students if such projects could be funded on a reliable and recurrent basis.

The graduate students interviewed complained repeatedly that the procedures for selecting those to be funded in a given year are not explained to them in a consistent fashion. (For the record, the external reviewers are of the opinion, based on their experiences at home institutions, that the *procedures* for determining who receives financial aid should be made explicit, but that publicizing the actual ranking of all the students can be divisive and ought to be avoided.)

For the record, based on our experiences at *this* institution, we are of the opinion that publicizing rankings should *certainly* be done. For years this department has chosen to operate in the fog, where requirements, criteria for success, and true evaluations of students all remained in the dark. This attitude very much suits the faculty of this department, for they know that the murkier the requirements, the greater their freedom to act in whatever manner they please, since they are, in the end, the final arbiter of grades, funding, and success or failure.

If this department is only going to fund only *some* of its graduate students, then *all* of the students have a right to know how they were evaluated against their peers.

Equally troubling were the numerous stories of confusion and frustration with regard to exams and readings lists: there does not seem to be an understanding of what the core material is that all students should know for their M.A. exams (linguistics), as apparently the faculty cannot agree on a single format; likewise, there does not appear to be a clear policy on the composition of examinations: what should come from relevant course work and ,what from outside reading (NB: no reading list exists). Finally, the Ph.D. exam (linguistics) too often repeats "broad knowledge" aspects of the M.A. exam without allowing the student to do the sort of in-depth analysis he or she will have to show at the dissertation level.

Strongly agree. The exam process here, especially in linguistics, is both one of the major abuses perpetrated upon students as well as a major source of power for the problem faculty discussed above. Especially abusive are the oral exams, in which the faculty is unrestrained and free to go wherever they choose. In a department with fair-minded faculty, this would not be much of a problem. Clearly, that is not the case here.

We would take pains to point out that not all students object to the concept of an MA exam *per se*; the objection is to having to take an exam without having any idea as to what body of knowledge we are responsible for knowing. When this objection has been put to the faculty in the past, we have been accused of wanting to be "spoon-fed" the exam. No one expects to be spoon-fed anything, certainly not in this department. What we do expect is to have the corpus of knowledge which we are expected to assimilate be clearly, comprehensively, and precisely defined, such

that the faculty cannot (as they have done so often in the past) pull something out of the air, accuse the student, with an air of disbelief, of "not knowing something so basic to the field" (a direct quote, by the way), and then use this "shocking" lapse on the part of the student either to assign a lower grade (thereby putting future funding in jeopardy) or to fail the student in a comprehensive exam.

Defining this corpus of knowledge clearly, precisely, and in detail is not, in our view, anything close to the "spoon-feeding" of which the Slavic Department faculty speaks so derisively and with such disdain. Quite the contrary, this is part of what the University itself and the taxpayers who support it demand that they do. A vigorous and demanding exam based on such clear criteria is certainly possible. Defining and crafting this body of knowledge would, however, require effort on the part of the faculty, and even worse, from their point of view, it would limit their ability to be arbitrary in their assessment of students and in the type of questions they could pose to students on exams, which is of course *exactly* the reason why this type of detailed definition for the corpus of knowledge covered by the exam should be required.

On the literature side, the students asked that the reading list be updated, a course on recent Russian literature be instituted (in the bargain, probably displacing moving the requirement of Medieval Literature to the Ph.D. level), and the Movements and Genres course be replaced by Introduction to Graduate Study (or in Other terminology, a pro-seminar on literary theory and research methodology). These are all reasonable requests in our view.

We agree. This proposed "pro-seminar on literary theory and research methodology" should not, however, be merged with a similar class for linguists. This has happened before in the past with the result being a course no one wanted to take and no faculty member wanted to teach.

As stated, one of the special strengths of the UCLA graduate program in Slavic has been its breadth in linguistics offerings and its expertise along the "seam" of linguistics and poetics, and some faculty (especially from the linguists side) continue to teach and do active research in this tradition. But this strength has also created its own weakness. This broad interest could be one of the sources of a problem that we sense both the faculty and the grad students are loathe to acknowledge: the average time to Ph.D. for 21 students from 1988 to 1998 was, by our calculations, 9.347 years (based on the "Profile for Slavic Languages and Literatures," p. 2). Despite some improvement in recent years, we believe this time frame is much too long, given the department's financial aid constraints and the job market in Slavic. Programs should make every effort to advance their (hopefully now better funded) students through all the requirements, including writing the dissertation, in a 5-6 year period.

We agree. We would point out that, while spending nine or more years in a Ph.D. program is indeed a grotesquely wasteful use of time, at least those students whose time-to-degree was analyzed by the external reviewers actually *received* their Ph.D., for what it is worth. There are other students in this program who spent that much time and left with nothing, good students who had been highly regarded and recruited by the Slavic Department.

Understanding this outer limit as a reality will force the department to make some changes in its program. Some of these changes might (and probably should) be: 1) instituting an 4-6 course outside minor (French, Philosophy, History, Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, Film, etc. the list is quite open-ended) that would give the students an added area of expertise (very attractive in today's market) but would have to come *at the expense* of existing requirements; 2) doing away with a formal M.A. exam (with obvious exceptions: when a student comes with a M.A. from elsewhere and needs to be tested or when the M.A. is terminal) and focusing attention entirely on the Ph.D. qualifying exam;

Again, not all students object to the concept of an M.A. exam in and of itself, we simply want to know what the corpus of material is on which we are being tested. Some among us would also object to *automatically* granting an M.A. to students who are continuing on into the Ph.D. program while requiring at the same time terminal M.A. students to take an exam in order to receive their M.A. If the M.A. is granted, it should mean the same thing for everyone who receives it, otherwise you call into question the academic integrity of the degree-granting entity. From what we have seen and heard at other universities, when the type of "automatic" M.A. granting system is in place, one will often see students who claim from the outset that their goal is to get the Ph.D., but who in fact want only the M.A. and who, upon receipt of the automatic M.A., simply drop out of the Ph.D. program, with their M.A. in their back pocket.

3) using the Ph.D. written examinations to test the student's comprehensive knowledge of the field, but using the Ph. D. oral examination as an opportunity to discuss and refine the dissertation proposal (i.e., replacing what is now called the "qualifying paper" by a new category); 4) considering requiring reading knowledge of French or German rather than French and German; 5) establishing thorough, up-to-date (both in terms of the primary and secondary literature), yet manageable/"realistic" reading lists in linguistics and literature; 6) announcing as policy to students that they be expected to take the qualifying exams by the end of their fourth year of graduate study; 7) making the study of the "second Slavic" language and literature an option for a minor rather than a requirement.

By calling for these or analogous changes, we recognize that in some cases we are asking the department to move in a direction opposite the one they would prefer. For example, we gather from the linguistics graduate students and faculty that many would like for all M.A. students to have demonstrated proficiency in several "core" courses- Introduction to Phonetics, Introduction to Historical Linguistics, Phonology, Syntax-before being admitted to the Ph. D. program. Here the implication is that until all the Ph.D. candidates are on the same level playing field, it is disruptive and inefficient to have them study together. Only by having capable but insufficiently trained new students take the requisite courses outside of the department, presumably in Linguistics, can the situation be dealt with, goes this logic. Again, the impulse to fix the problem has been to add rather than subtract. But we fear that this solution, while understandable and perhaps desirable in a world of unlimited resources, could end up extending further the time to degree of these students.

We disagree. Most graduate students who come here and opt for the Slavic linguistics track come here with next to no formal training in linguistics, and this is not taken into account by the linguistics faculty. The result is not only frustration on the part of the students, but also gross inefficiency, a horrible waste of time spent looking up and trying to understand even the simplest of linguistic concepts (phone vs. phoneme, etc.). If one were to have even the most elementary of linguistic background, and by that we mean the type of undergraduate introductory courses for phonetics, phonology, syntax, historical linguistics, and semantics taught in our Linguistics Department here, it would make a world of difference for students.

Similarly, students were enthusiastic about the possibility of courses that would extend in the twentieth century past the thirties, but at the same time seemed unwilling to understand that any such addition will lengthen the program.

It is unfortunate that the students with whom the external reviewers spoke "seemed unwilling to understand" the point of the view of the external reviewers. We would hold open the possibility, however, that they did indeed understand with this position, they simply, however, disagreed with it. In fact, it may even be the case that these same students can appreciate the need to reduce the time to degree more than the external reviewers could ever hope to realize, but that they want this done in such a way as to preserve the academic integrity of the program. To imply, which the external reviewers seem to do here, that there is an unresolvable contradiction between the presence of

well-prepared graduate students and a reasonable time-to-degree strikes us as illogical. The *real* causes for the absurdly long time-to-degree (or "time-to-*no*-degree, as the case may be) have nothing to do with efforts to make sure students have an elementary foundation of knowledge before entering into graduate courses concentrating on highly abstract and complex concepts, but rather have everything to do with failure of this faculty to carry out their responsibilities and the litany of abuses listed (and the many abuses *not* listed) in the internal review. When you take care of that problem, you will have gone a long way towards solving the time-to-degree problem. Ignoring the common sense suggestion that students have the prerequisite knowledge needed to understand, much less assimilate, the material presented in advanced graduate courses does not only does little to affect the time-to-degree problem, it also damages the integrity of the program and the level of scholarly discourse which can take place in it.

These points were made clearly to the external reviewers. It is unfortunate, however, that they seemed unwilling to understand them.

Evidently some changes need to be made to adjust the real preparation of incoming students. Perhaps it would be better for the colleagues teaching the graduate curriculum in Slavic linguistics to think of ways to provide some of this rudimentary knowledge in phonology or syntax in already existing (or, if necessary, newly designed) courses. Or if they truly believe that students entering the program need to do work outside the department before they are qualified to study with their peers, then the burden will be on these same colleagues to come up with a way to reduce the students' requirements at a later stage.

And lastly, in the spirit of morale building, we would urge the faculty to have an open discussion among themselves and come up with simple guidelines for how to provide feedback to students when correcting papers. Although students applauded the faculty for being generally accessible and responsive in one-on-one situations, they want more explicit feedback on their written work (especially when the professor possesses competence in their native language). As this is a culturally nuance issue, the best solution may be to establish some general "do's" and "don't's" (including silence). With regard to faculty advising, the students ask that their own professional needs be placed above enrollment issues when recommending courses.

We strongly agree.

They would also like the option of taking exams either by hand or on the computer (a fairly widespread practice these days), and they would like to have greater access to the reading room, but in a way that doesn't jeopardize security.

5. Faculty. The Slavic faculty at UCLA gets high marks for its splendid publication record and its national and international visibility. It is true, moreover, that the department has made strides in the 1990s to balance its profile between linguistics/language, on the one hand, and literature, on the other. Professors Ivanov and Yokoyama are major appointments by any standards, and Professor Koropeckyj has been an excellent addition as Polonist with other areas of expertise. Be this as it may, there are gaps in current coverage that will need to be filled before the department can be considered to be at full speed and competitive with the top programs in the country: 1) a specialist in "Golden Age" prose (Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, etc.) with theoretical sophistication and a well-established record in the field; 2) a specialist in twentieth century Russian literature, particularly the contemporary period; 3) a South Slavicist. It is our belief that the first position, the Golden Age specialist, is absolutely crucial to the long-term health and viability of the department: this is where the biggest enrollments reside in any Slavic program, and to have a well-known person representing this area would certainly add to the luster of the department. It is the core area of any graduate program, and it would not be unnatural to expect the person filling the position to exercise a leadership role in the definition of the literature program. For this latter reason, we recommend that the search be open as to rank; the department might be extremely well served if it could identify and attract a prominent colleague at an

intermediate rank (approximately, the senior associate rank-that is, ready to be promoted to full professor) and with one or more outstanding books to his or her credit. To repeat, however, nothing in our estimation would do more to raise the profile of the department and to solidify its orientation as an equal parts literature and linguistics faculty than this appointment.

As was discussed above, our priorities are different. We see the most critical need being for a *full-time* South Slavicist, and we do not see the need for the department to "solidify its orientation as an equal parts literature and linguistics faculty". Every other Slavic Department in the country has an orientation strongly toward literature. We do not see why this department could not continue to be the one department in the country with an orientation towards linguistics. Just because the problem faculty members have overwhelmingly come from the linguistics side of the house does not mean that this need remain the case. Two of the problem faculty have already retired, and at least one other soon will (we hope).

There is a misconception among some in the field that being in such a department is a disadvantage for students of Slavic literatures. In fact, coming from such a department, i.e. a department with a strong linguistics profile and a solid (yet not the most prominent) literature faculty does not at all seem to be an impediment to receiving jobs. As was stated above, despite the Slavic Department's ludicrous claims as to the amount of students they place, the fact is that the last three students they have placed in tenure-track jobs during the last four years have all been literature students. If anything, it is the *linguistic* students in this department who have had a difficult time competing for tenure-track jobs, for reasons already discussed.

The second literature appointment is also important programmatically and politically: the graduate students would like more training in contemporary literature and they are right to assume that this would make them more marketable-but perhaps a little less so strategically. It could and probably should be at the junior level. The South Slavic position, which both the linguistics faculty and students lobbied for eloquently and for years, is an area that most major programs in the country still have coverage in. Since breadth has always been UCLA's hallmark, it would be a significant blow to its tradition and reputation to do away with this position. The question seems to be whether to fix it in place as a permanent ladder position or to continue to fill it on a visiting/adjunct basis. The adjunct position has evidently been a satisfactory temporary and ad hoc measure (with the reservation that no adjunct person can serve on examinations). If one of the senior linguist positions (two are relatively close to retirement) could be "mortgaged" for this one, and if the position description were crafted not for a narrow linguist but for a person genuinely able to teach the language(s), literature(s), and culture(s) of the former Yugoslavia, then it would make sense to make the appointment sooner rather than later.

We agree. Both the last South Slavicist and the current adjunct replacement have fit this profile of a broad linguistic, literary, and cultural background. We urge that, should the Slavic Department remain intact after this review, this be the first appointment made.

For, to reiterate, we do believe that UCLA should have a South Slavicist.

6. Leadership and Collegiality. We understand from the faculty, graduate students, and staff that the period since the last review has not always been easy for the department. The Slavic field has changed and business as usual, probably never a viable option, is even less a possibility today than it was eight years ago. Moreover, there have on occasion been personnel issues in the department, which we will touch on briefly below, that have sometimes strained relations and caused problems with morale, especially the morale of the graduate students.

The external review team, as was mentioned above, was not privy to all the information which the internal review

team received because of the presence of Timberlake. Thus, it would be unfair, since they were lacking this information, to upbraid them for some of the conclusions they have reached. It is fair, however, to correct some of the misimpressions they may have received.

It is inaccurate to characterize the "personnel issues" as something which happens "on occasion". These "personnel issues" are much more the norm than the exception. True, there may not be an outburst at every meeting with a problem faculty member, or perhaps not even every second or third meeting, but they happen often enough such that the atmosphere of potential/probable retaliation is always in the air. This cannot help but effect the nature of the relationship between student and faculty member, causing anxiety and fear, and stifling the exchange of scholarly opinion. (Who wants to put forth an idea only to have it ridiculed publicly, and potentially be penalized for it in terms of grades/funding?) The result is a system wherein opinions of students (or even questions they might have) are put forth very cautiously, if at all. Even worse, one often finds oneself in the humiliating position of having to confirm in the presence of the faculty conclusions drawn by the faculty, even if the student is not in agreement with that position.

As students, we do not expect that our opinions will always be right: indeed, we are here to learn from those who supposedly are the best in the field. And yet, if we live in fear of even uttering dissenting opinions (or even opinions which in some way question the opinion of the instructor) then how can the learning process flourish? It is a vexing and humiliating position in which to find oneself.

But we do not believe the fabric of trust and collegiality has been irreparably torn, only frayed.

We find it very possible that trust and collegiality has been irreparably torn.

In this respect, it seemed obvious to us that the current chair, Michael Heim, with his patience, good will, sensitivity, and the respect he universally enjoys, has done an admirable job of bringing the department out of a situation of potential crisis; he is the right chair for the department at this time.

Clearly, we could not be more at odds with this statement. Michael Heim is not and cannot be a part of the solution to this department's woes. On the contrary, he has been and is a part of the problem. Although he is not one of the faculty members who regularly abuses students, he is clearly one of those guilty of appeasement, of letting this abuse continue unabated for years. Why he does this, we do not and cannot know. He is tenured, he has a solid reputation in the field, and he is certainly not lacking in perception. And yet, for years, he has denied that there were any real problems in the department. Nothing makes this more clear than his Factual Errors Statement and the response to it by the internal reviewers. Even now, he continues, in front of students, his attempt to defend the indefensible, namely the conduct of this faculty.

Not only has Michael Heim not done "an admirable job of bringing the department out of a situation of potential [potential?] crisis", but in fact he is an impediment to positive change. Michael Heim is not a part of the solution, he is a part of the problem. This fact needs to be clearly understood.

It was especially encouraging to us to see the solid relationship that Professor Heim had forged with Dean Yu and the administration-this at a time when a positive relationship needs to be and can be developed.

This is very troubling. It is our understanding that the recommendation of the Academic Senate that the Slavic Department be placed in receivership has been rejected by Dean Yu in favor of allowing for a one-year period of

supervised adjustment and reformation.

We very much disagree with this course and cannot help but wonder if the "solid relationship that Professor Heim had forged with Dean Yu" has played a role in her choice not to follow through with the Academic Senate's recommendations. This department has next to no ability to govern itself. With the exception of a brief chairmanship cut short several years ago, this department has never shown the leadership and the willingness to deal with the problems which lie at the core of the current crisis.

Indeed, in our view (and here we rely on observing analogous situations at our own and other institutions), it can be catastrophic when trust between department and administration breaks down, and there is no justification in this instance for the department not to work cooperatively with the current administration.

We find it startling that the external reviewers can, on the one hand state that "there is no justification in this instance for the department not to work cooperatively with the current administration", and then, on the other hand, after having seen Michael Heim's continued pattern of evasion and excuse, write the aforementioned revisionist letter (appended below).

Yet all of the patience and intelligent stewardship of one individual will not by themselves succeed in mending the frayed fabric and getting this academically superb department again on sound footing. Nor will additional resources in and of themselves. For this mending process to take place, other colleagues will have to participate. They will have to be willing to compromise on some issues (the shape of the curriculum, the set of requirements, the length of the program of study, etc.) but not on others (what constitutes "Professional" behavior).

Which brings us at last to the thorny issue of (for lack of any other general word) collegiality. We, the external reviewers, heard numerous descriptions from the students and staff of how some Slavic faculty behaved in a manner that can only be called unprofessional. We mention these incidents now neither to denounce specific individuals nor to establish the allegations as true-we were not given the time or the mandate to determine the veracity of these reports or to adjudicate in these matters- but simply to let the department know that there is a significant problem of aggrieved *perception* (and quite possibly fact) with regard to student-faculty and staff-faculty relations...

The fact that the external reviewers, like the internal reviewers, were "not given the time or the mandate to determine the veracity" of much of what they are reporting, thus making it necessary, as was also the case with the internal reviewers, to state the problem in terms of "*perception*", again underscores the need for the University itself to undertake an official investigation of this department to determine the extent to which wrongdoing was done, and the extent to which individual students suffered abuse. The University can take no steps to reprimand or terminate offending faculty without first having conducted such an investigation.

We live in a litigious society...

We agree.

...and, issues of normal civility aside, the power differential between a tenured faculty member and a graduate student is too great not to take seriously the potential for abuse. To repeat, the issue is not whether any of this, or even a small part of it, happened (although this much smoke suggests there must be some fire). Rather, the issue is that the "air needs to be cleared," the students and staff need to feel that they have been heard, and a statement needs to be made that nothing like this will occur again and that the department is making a fresh start.

While this suggested remedy falls far, far short of what needs to be done, it is understandable that the external reviewers might come to such a conclusion, since few graduate students were willing to meet with them because of the presence of Alan Timberlake on the external review team. (Again, in hindsight, especially in light of the aforementioned revisionist letter, this correctness of this decision on the part of those graduate students has been fully confirmed.)

We make no official recommendations here other than to say that the department must find a way to reunite around Michael Heim's and others' leadership. How they accomplish that, either with the help of professionals or on their own, is best left up to the department and to the administration. But at the end of the (hopefully short and efficacious) day, *something must be done*.

7. *Conclusion*. The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at UCLA has been, one of the premier programs in the country for three decades, especially in linguistics, where it arguably has the strongest research faculty in America....

"Arguably" is the operative word here. Some of the faculty have done and continue to do quality work in diachronic, especially Slavic/Indo-European, linguistics, and one is doing innovative work in synchronic linguistics. Others long ago burnt out and confined themselves to areas of linguistics which are not only not current, but frankly, not even that interesting. There is a serious lack of scholarship and dearth of knowledge among the faculty as a whole in the field of theoretical linguistics.

...Its students are being placed....

The external reviewers' misperceptions as to the placement record of the UCLA Slavic Department has already been discussed above.

...The research and editorial activity of its faculty are visible and respected by colleagues in the field. But like any program it has evolved to the point where it faces a series of challenges, some external, some of its own making. To respond to those challenges we recommend the following:

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM:

- 1) that undergraduate teaching assignments be shared equally by linguistics and literature faculty through the development of a more balanced curriculum;
- 2) that the department continue to seek ways to include General Education, writing-intensive, and other courses appealing to a campus-wide audience in their curriculum;
- 3) that the beginning sections of Russian not be filled to 26, but be allowed to be smaller (app. 15);

GRADUATE PROGRAM:

- 4) that the number of new students being admitted to the graduate program be reduced and that the goal be to give financial support to all grad students in the program;

- 5) that other forms of financial aid for graduate students on campus be investigated (TA-ing in ESL courses, language courses outside of Slavic, etc.);
- 6) that reasonable and coherent reading lists be established for the Ph.D. (and if still necessary, M.A.) programs in linguistics and literature;
- 7) that an exam, format be regularized for both linguistics and literature exams, M.A. and Ph.D. levels, and that the expectations for student performance be made explicit;
- 8) that the graduate program, be simplified and the time-to-Ph.D. be reduced by a variety of changes, possibly including: eliminating the M.A. exam. (except for specific circumstances), offering the choice of French or German, establishing a non-departmental minor while reducing other requirements, replacing the "qualifying paper" with a "dissertation proposal" (to be discussed at the qualifying exam. oral), etc;

FACULTY:

- 9) that a Golden Age prose specialist, at open rank, be appointed as soon as possible;
- 10) that a junior specialist on contemporary literature be appointed as soon as the Golden Age specialist has been fixed in place;
- 11) that a well-rounded South Slavicist, with possible background in linguistics but with the ability to teach various courses in the language(s), literature(s), and culture(s) of the former Yugoslavia, be appointed as a "mortgage" for one of the senior linguist positions;

[Our disagreements with the external reviewers have been detailed above. We feel that the South Slavicist position should be filled and maintained, and *not* at the expense of another linguist position.](#)

- 12) that the department work together to address issues of collegiality that have damaged relations with graduate students, staff, and the administration.

(signed)
David M. Bethea
Vilas Professor
University of Wisconsin-Madison

(signed)
Alan Timberlake
Professor
University of California at Berkeley
Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures

Appendix II: Site Visit Schedule

Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
Site Visit Schedule
February 24-25, 2000

*All meetings will take place in 374 Kinsey unless noted otherwise

Wednesday, February 23, 2000

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7:00 p.m.: Dinner meeting for review team members only. Tanino's Restaurant, 1043 Westwood Blvd. (between Kinross and Weyburn, (310) 208-0444.

Thursday, February 24, 2000

8:00: Breakfast discussion with Chair Michael Heim

9:00: Meeting with Dean Pauline Yu

10:00- 10:40: Linguistics Faculty (Henning Andersen, Andrew Corin, Vyacheslav Ivanov, Emily Klenin, Olga Yokoyama)

10:40 - 11:20: Literature Faculty (Michael Heim, Vyacheslav Ivanov, Joachim Klein, Emily Klenin, Roman Koropecykj, Alexander Ospovat, Rob Romanchuk)

11:20 - 12:00: Language Faculty (Nelya Dubrovich, Georgiana Galateneau, Michael Heim, Olga Kagan, Roman Koropecykj, Susan Kresin, Judith Simon, Mel Strom)

12:00: Lunch

1:15: Meeting with Undergraduate Students

2:00: Meeting with Graduate Students

2:45: Review of TA Training Program - Olga Kagan , Susan Kresin and Julia Morozova

3:15: Review of Advising - Henning Andersen, Inna Gergel, Roman Koropecykj, Alexander Ospovat

4:00: Closed Session for Review Team only

5:00: Dinner at Michael Heim's home

Friday, February 25, 2000

-
8:30: Breakfast for Review Team

9:00: Conference call with Ron Vroon

9:15: Conference call with Gail Lenhoff

9:30: Marilyn Gray, graduate student

9:45:

10:00: Minhee Kim, undergraduate student

10:15: Olga Yokoyama, Professor

10:30: Cori Weiner, graduate student

10:45: Susie Bauckus, graduate student

11:00: Julia Verkholtantsev, graduate student

11:15 :

11:30: John Narins, graduate student

11:45

12:00: Lunch

1:00: Meeting with Slavic Staff (Mila August, Inna Gergel, Carol Grese, Jami Jesek, Sasha Mosley and Carolyn Walthour)

2:00: Final review team with Michael Heim

3:00: Closed Session

4:00: Exit Meeting (2121 Murphy): Review Team; Chair Heim; EVC Hume; Assoc. Dean Hune; Dean Yu; Provost Copenhaver; GC Chair Lindsey; Ugc Vice Chair Bjork; FEC rep K. Baker.

Contact Person for the Site Visit:

Inna Gergel
Phone #: X53856
Fax #: 65263
115F Kinsey

Appendix III: •Factual Errors Statement from Department Chair, M. Heim
•Response to Statement from H. Martinson

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Crespo, Luisa

-
From: MICHAEL HEIM [heim@HUMnet.UCLA.EDU]
Sent: Thursday, June 08, 2000 1:54 PM
To: crespo@senate.ucla.edu
Subject: response to academic senate review

8 June 2000

Professor Duncan Lindsey
Professor Orville Chapman
Academic Senate Executive Office
3125 Murphy Hall
140801

Dear Professors Lindsey and Chapman:

Please distribute the following to the members of the Graduate and Undergraduate Councils. It is my response to the drafts of the internal and external reviewers' report of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. I will address both errors of fact and errors of omission.

Let me begin by saying that I have no bones whatever to pick with the external report: it is not only factually accurate but conveys the spirit of the Department. I cannot say the same about the internal report or, rather, about the section of the internal report entitled "Graduate Program" (pp. 2-5). It contains a number of inaccurate statements, fails to make certain important points, and - most important - draws a picture of the Department I do not recognize.

This statement leaves us struggling to understand. For years Michael Heim has heard of the abuses visited upon students by certain faculty members. Indeed, he has somewhat of a reputation as the professor to whom students go when they are at the end of their rope and need a shoulder to cry on. He has been part of the problem here in that he has allowed to continue, and tried to excuse, the behavior of some of his colleagues, but he himself was never one who psychotically lashed out at his students. Why, then, he would feel the need to try to defend what has happened in this department for so many years is a mystery to us. If Michael Heim does not understand the picture of this department presented by the 8 year review report--a picture which, by the way, is not comprehensive and which homogenizes individual acts of abuse in order to preserve the anonymity of the students, and which passes over other abuses altogether--if this picture is unrecognizable to Michael Heim, it can only be because he does not wish to recognize it.

Before I try to set right the general impression, however, I will set right some details. The specific case history on p. 3 opens by stating that the student in question entered the program with "excellent credentials." In fact, her Russian was so poor that she had to take not the usual remedial course we recommend in such circumstances - that is, the fourth-year undergraduate course - but the third-year course.

This is a deliberate misrepresentation of facts on Michael Heim's part. What happened is this: several students of that year's incoming class had weak Russian. (And again, this is not their fault: they were accepted into the program as is. If this student with the 3.9 GPA out of Riverside was indeed too "weak" for this department, then it is the department's fault for having admitted her.) These students were given the *choice*, with emphasis on the word "choice", as to which of the two classes they wanted to take, 3rd- or 4th-year Russian. There are very good reasons why the student in question opted for 3rd year Russian over 4th year Russian. These two courses have widely different content, with the 3rd year course being much more a review of the grammar and grammar rules, while 4th year is much more free-flowing and much less concerned with the grammar and formal structure of the language, and much more concerned with widening the student's exposure to Russian in a variety of contexts.

The student in question (XX) was a linguist and as such, felt that the 3rd year course would be much better suited for her than the 4th year course, and she was absolutely correct in this belief. Another of her colleagues who came in with her that year, a literature student whose Russian was at a similar level, was also given the option of taking 3rd or 4th year Russian, and she opted for the 4th year course.

What must be understood, then, is that these are two very different kinds of courses. This department has a history of admitting students, especially in linguistics, and then berating them mercilessly because their Russian is not up to par. The knee-jerk recommendation of this department is for such students to take 4th year Russian, but the problem is that 4th year Russian doesn't provide the type of linguistic knowledge about Russian that the linguistic faculty demands of its students. And, to be truthful, neither does 3rd year, but it is much closer in this regard than 4th year.

To someone not in the department (e.g. all of you reading this) it would be easy to come away with the idea that 4th year is more advanced than 3rd year, and in some respects it is, but in many respects it is simply a very different course. XX could just as easily have taken 4th-year Russian. The reason she chose not to is because of the content of the course, not because of its degree of difficulty. Michael Heim knows very well that this is true. This is yet one more attempt by him to twist facts and smear the one student who had enough courage to come out and tell her story openly.

When she came to me, I did express sympathy, I did say there were problems with some of the faculty, and I did say we would have to work around them. I also promised to talk to the instructor: I needed to hear both sides of the story to find a way to handle the situation. I talked to the instructor for several hours and was ready to talk to the student, but although I phoned and e-mailed her repeatedly she never responded.

XX herself is at odds with this account by Michael Heim of his attempts to communicate with her concerning this incident. We would suggest that, if and when an official investigation of the Slavic Department is begun, that she be contacted and asked to give her account of what went on between her and Michael Heim.

I was of course sorry that we lost her and I do not condone the conduct of my colleague, but I am certain we could have solved the problem had she come back to see me.

Exactly how would Michael Heim have solved this problem? This professor in question, one of "problem faculty" so often mentioned, is a full professor with tenure. Just how was Michael Heim going to force her to allow this student to audit the class? Any attempt to do this would have been met instantly and ferociously with cries from her and her husband, an emeritus professor in the same department, that her "academic freedom" was being violated. The *only* way to possibly bring about change is to expose them publicly, something Michael Heim refused to do.

Even worse, the very act of having challenged her would have been enough to make XX's remaining time in this department a living hell. This exact same scenario happened years before with other students, students who eventually wound up packing it in and either transferring or quitting the field altogether. Michael Heim knows this as well.

The section entitled "Attrition" on p. 4 includes a statement to the effect that "mistreatment of students is not the only reason for attrition!" In fact, the student in question was the only student we have lost as a direct result of a conflict with a faculty member.

Unbelievable. For Michael Heim to make a statement such as this leaves us stunned. Not only is it false, not only does he *know* it is false, but what is so stunning is that surely, surely he must know how easy this statement would be to disprove. Is he so sure of himself and so sure that, as a tenured faculty member, his statements would never be challenged, that he feels he can say whatever he needs to say at any given moment, regardless of whether or not his statements correspond to reality? If Michael Heim were under oath, would he continue to make statements like the one above?

The following statement - that several students who have left the program were "under-qualified from the start" is correct;

If these students were "under-qualified from the start", then why were they admitted to this department in the first place? Surely if this department is as highly regarded in the field as it claims to be, then it would have well-qualified

students knocking down the doors in an attempt to get in, and there would be no need to accept such "under-qualified" students.

This is simply another example of the department doing what it does best: when confronted with problems existing in the department, their first, second, and last instinct is to deflect blame by turning on that segment of the department which is most vulnerable and least able to defend itself, that being the graduate students.

If students are "under-qualified" by the department's estimation, then the department has no one to blame but itself. Instead of checking on each potential student's level of Russian, however, this department has always relied on a Social Darwinistic approach of welcoming people with open arms, thus taking care of the need to keep their enrollments up, only to crush them out of the program a year or two later (sometimes with a low-pass M.A., sometimes with nothing more than another ten thousand dollars in student loan debt) once these students have fulfilled their role as warm bodies for the enrollment count.

...what is incorrect is the conclusion that the department's treatment of students "does not result in cultivation of "the best and the brightest, but in the survival of the toughest and most resilient."

This is utter nonsense. For years, very highly qualified students have entered this program, only to leave a few years later, broken and discouraged. It is *exactly* the truth that this program is designed for the "survival of the toughest and most resilient". Slavic department faculty have even said as much. For Heim to say otherwise is galling.

In fact, three out of the seven students who have received degrees in the past five years were only marginally acceptable at the time they applied; all of them are now teaching at institutions of higher learning.

We know all the students (ten, not seven) who have received degrees in the past five years (see list above) and we have no idea as to which of these students were deemed by Heim to be only "marginally acceptable". The backgrounds of these students were superb: almost any Slavic Department would have been happy to have such students. One wonders what sort of background an applicant must have in order to be classified above the level of "marginally acceptable" for this department. (We have already seen how Michael Heim characterizes the background of XX.) Must an applicant already have a Ph.D. in order to be considered "acceptable"? This question could easily be characterized as a semi-rhetorical, sarcastic barb aimed at Michael Heim and the Slavic Department *were it not for the fact* that there actually was an instance of this department accepting into the program an applicant with a Ph.D. in Slavic linguistics from another Slavic country. Then again, even this, apparently, was not enough to raise this applicant above the level of "marginally acceptable", since this particular student lasted less than two years in this program.

It was a pleasure to teach them and watch them develop.

Please...

What the report's discussion of attrition omits are points like the following: because the country has fewer Slavic Departments than most other language departments the pool of applicants is smaller and we have to gamble a bit more; the loss of interest in our field during the nineties restricted the pool even further; the only group of applicants that grew was that of international students, but their qualifications were harder to judge, especially until we had gained some experience.

The reason fewer applicants apply to UCLA has little to do with the a restricted pool of applicants and much to do with the reputation of the UCLA Slavic Department throughout our field as a place to pursue graduate study. Many of us had heard the whispers before we applied to UCLA, and more than a few of us had been told by our undergraduate professors that UCLA was not the place to be if you had any hope of getting through with a Ph.D. in a reasonable period of time.

It is the common belief among graduate students that one of the reasons we have so many foreign students in our department (Koreans, Taiwanese, Russians, Eastern Europeans) is that they are perceived as being more compliant than American students, partially, perhaps, because of cultural factors or from the uncertainty that always comes from studying in a foreign country, but almost certainly because they are more reliant than even their American colleagues on funding from the Department, for if they fail to receive funding, not only do they have to pay fees, which are at \$1500 per quarter, but also they have to pay out-of-state tuition, which for almost all of them would effectively mean the end of their graduate studies at UCLA.

We would also emphasize that almost all of these students, in spite of the claim that "their qualifications were harder to judge", are in fact very qualified.

In the early nineties, when fellowships were easier to come by, we could admit more students and let them prove themselves, and as I have indicated a healthy selection did take place.

This is the second time in this report that the phrase "healthy selection" has been employed. We stand by our aversion to this phrase and all that it connotes.

Now that funds are tight, the situation has changed. Consequently, last year and this year we admitted only two students instead of the cohorts of six to eight students we used to aim for. But all the students we admitted we gave a fine education; never did we discard students "as damaged goods."

This is absolutely not true. Regularly were students allowed to drop off the department's map as damaged goods. Of course, the department never saw it that way: to the faculty, this was a "healthy selection". Again, it is stunning to us that Michael Heim would make this claim given the relative ease with which one could refute it. Look at the number of students admitted vs. the number who graduate. Do the math.

In the "Graduate Requirements" section the issues of exam format and reading lists come up several times. Neither is in fact an issue for literature students: the exam format is standard, and the reading list, though currently under revision, is perfectly functional - reasonable and coherent - as it stands.

Again, untrue. The problems on the literature side of the house are not nearly as severe as with the linguists, but it is untrue to say that neither the exam format nor the reading lists are an issue for literature students. The last two students to take the MA exam in literature can attest to this, as can the faculty members (including Michael Heim) who administered that exam.

The linguists have not yet agreed on a reading list, but are working on one and have put together a data base as a first step.

They linguists have been working on a reading list since 1991 (so we are told). *Never* have they been able to agree on a reading list. One would think that after the 8-year review report, they would finally be able to put together such

a list.

The section also mentions dissertation committee problems. These have occurred - again only among the linguists - but I mediated one such problem this year, and the student has recently defended the dissertation successfully. The section calls upon the faculty to "find some way to make collective decisions." We have recently agreed to institute a new experimental MA in Russian Language and Culture and an optional outside concentration at the PhD level, two major decisions. It took many meetings to arrive at a consensus - two linguists opposed the programs - but we have done so.

By now a pattern should be emerging.

Yes, we have indeed noticed a pattern.

The students' complaints refer primarily if not exclusively to two members of the faculty, both of whom are in the linguistics program. Until the section entitled "Action" on p. 5 the text reads as if all faculty members were equally guilty.

We have commented on this above.

Under "Funding" on p. 4, for example, it states, "So vengeful are the faculty, we were told, that many students believe that they are merely pawns among these colliding ambitions." Some (though not all) of the linguistics students may believe this, but I am certain that none of the literature students (who comprise approximately half the graduate population) do.

This is partially true. Not all the linguistics students believe this. The vast majority, however, do. Most of the literature students do not feel that this description applies to them, although a few do.

Even after the "Action" section on p. 5 does allow that only two members of the faculty are involved, it continues to refer to "students," as if all students had experienced the problems equally.

The department I read about in this report is a dysfunctional one (the report in fact speaks of "graduate program dysfunction" on p. 3), a department where no learning can take place because graduate students and faculty are constantly at loggerheads. The department I experience is one where office doors are open and graduate students and faculty are constantly discussing scholarly issues, that is, one in which first-rate training is the order of the day.

Some literature students may feel this way. Very few if any of the linguists share this point of view. What good is an open door if what awaits you inside is an unbalanced, vicious, and unpredictable faculty member? It is precisely because of this that, with the exception of a couple of tenured linguists, there can be no true intellectual give-and-take, no sharing of ideas or attempts to innovate or to approach problems from new and different perspectives. We have already discussed at the beginning of our commentary on this report (above) the attitude taken by faculty toward such attempts at innovation and the consequences this attitude has for the reputation of those who do a Ph.D. in Slavic linguistics here at UCLA.

I do not deny that the regretful aberrations described by the students occurred, but they are aberrations.

Again, we are stunned at Michael Heim's assertion. This is not unlike the claims made by dictators who, once the

enormity of the crimes they have committed is made clear to the world, then "fess up" with a sort of general purpose statement such as "Well, it's true, mistakes were made. But..." Not only are the incidents described not "aberrations", they are regularly occurring events. This report, because of the time and manpower limitations placed on the 8-year review committee, was limited in its ability to investigate this department, thus it was forced to concentrate only on this incidents which were the most egregious. (Or, to state it better, on those egregious incidents which graduate students were willing to talk about. There are some incidents which people refused to bring up again, not wanting to go through that type of turmoil.) This report scratched the surface of the abuse that goes on in the Slavic Department. It is for this reason that an official, intensive, and thorough investigation of the department, using outside auditors, is what is needed.

They make it more difficult for the students involved (who, I repeat, are mostly, if not entirely, students in linguistics, but who do not include all linguistics students), but the record shows that they do not in the end stymie the educational process. This year, for instance, two literature students and one linguistics student passed their MA exams, one linguistics student passed her PhD exams, and one student (the one I referred to above) defended a dissertation in linguistics, another in literature.

Again, it stuns us that Michael Heim can make a statement such as "the record shows that they do not in the end stymie the educational process." Surely he must understand how easy it would be to prove him wrong, a simple matter of going through the records and looking at the ratio of students admitted to students who finally finished.

The latter begins a tenure-track position at the University of Florida in the fall.

What we see running constantly through this department's attempt to defend itself and its actions is this leitmotif, this mantra of "our students get tenure-track jobs", as though that will somehow resonate with the Academic Senate and somehow place their abuse of students in a better light. So desperate is the department to defend itself that it even resorts to providing false figures as to who gets tenure-track positions and who does not (see above).

The point is, though, that even if this false profile provided by the department were true, even if most or all of its students did indeed graduate, even if most or all of its students did receive not only tenure-track positions, but also tenure—even if all this were true, it still *would not* and *could not* justify the way they have mistreated students for all these years. Aside from being angered by this, we also find it more than a small bit pathetic (although not at all surprising) that they would even attempt to make this argument.

What I miss first and foremost in the report, in other words, what I consider the greatest sin of omission, is any indication that the faculty members in question have been given the opportunity to give their side of the story.

If the faculty wanted to give their side of the story, we would have no objection to this. In fact, we would welcome it. We know very well what the story is, and we know the usual rhetorical ruses employed by the faculty to cover up their actions. Nothing would please us more to have them go on record and *in detail* as to their version of events. We would hope that any official investigation into the Slavic Department will cause this to happen.

Asking the faculty at the time of the investigation, however, would have been disastrous for students, many of whom had grades, recommendation letters, and comprehensive masters or doctoral exams scheduled before the end of the school year. This was also the same time that funding decisions were being made for the next academic year. We already caught a small example of what this faculty is capable of when they immediately began questioning students (and, in one instance, shouting accusations at a student) at the beginning of the summer after the report had come out. One can only imagine what things would have been like had the content of the report been made available to

them while classes were still in session. This is a student body which lives in fear of this faculty and the actions which come out of their mood swings. It is very possible that more than a few students would have broken under that sort of pressure. (Yet another reason why the University's refusal/inability to keep Michael Heim from questioning students about the report is so disturbing.)

The other problem with this is if the 8-year review committee spoke in detail about any of this with the faculty, it would immediately identify the student in question, bringing about a swift and fierce response from the faculty. As was stated above when discussing the University's "censure" policy, ours is a very small field (and growing smaller!). Word does travel fast, and it wouldn't take much at all for a job candidate to receive the label of "troublemaker" or "rabble-rouser". In a field where you have hundreds of people applying for a single job, it doesn't take much to have an application nudged from the "possible" pile to the "reject" pile. This faculty not only has connections throughout this country, but throughout the world. It is no exaggeration to say that they could and would do their utmost to blackball a candidate from getting a job. Clearly, many of them are abusive and vindictive, but what they are not is stupid. They understand academe, they understand the value system of academe, and they understand the need to be sophisticated and low-key in doing something such as blackballing a candidate. They are truly masters of damning with faint praise. We have seen this done personally.

And again, Michael Heim knows all this. Why he insists of maintaining this course of denial is beyond our understanding.

The Preface to the report states that "the internal review team conducted additional interviews, as necessary, to clarify issues raised during the site visit," but it never asked to see me again. True, the chair of the internal committee got in touch with me twice after the site visit - once by e-mail to request a list of the institutions at which our recent PhD's were teaching and once by phone for details about one student's account (the report as it stands mentions neither) - but why was I not interviewed about the student who left the program after the run-in with her professor? She was interviewed for her side of the story, but I had no chance to tell mine. I have filled in a few details here, but I could say a good deal more about the case. Why was I not asked about admissions and reading lists and dissertation committees? As chair I have been actively involved in all of them. And most important, why was I not asked about what I regard as the most damning accusation, which occurs in the first sentence of the "Action" section: "... the greatest anger of the students was often reserved for the majority of the faculty who take no interest in, and no responsibility for, their plight." Who are "the students" here? What does "often" mean? Who is included and who is excluded from "the majority of the faculty"?

What would Michael Heim have the 8-year review committee do? Identify the students? As to who is excluded from "the majority of the faculty", it is quite clear to most of us who that person is. (Although, as we said above, we would also exclude to a large degree those faculty members from Russia and of course all non-tenured faculty, whose precarious job position precludes them from forcefully advocating for the students.) The question of "how often" is easy enough to answer: often enough to become the norm.

How do the students know that I or any of my colleagues take no interest in, and no responsibility for their plight"?

You know people by their actions. We know that Michael Heim has made efforts to deal with problem faculty. We have always known that. The problem is that he is only willing to go so far, and that he is not willing to do what is necessary to bring about change. What was necessary to bring about change was to expose publicly the abuses which occur in that department. Of course he was right to attempt initially to deal with these problems quietly, but that more often than not that does not work in our department, and if he tells you otherwise then he is not telling you the truth. We have seen what happens, all too often, when problem faculty get their minds made up. They have tenure, they can't be threatened with losing their jobs, and when they get stubborn, no power on earth is going to move them,

especially not Michael Heim's delicate efforts.

What we truly find offensive, however, is how Heim, time and again, attempts to justify what the faculty has done, or tries to put it in a different light in an attempt to make it seem as though there is no real conflict, just a matter of mutual misunderstanding on the part of professor and graduate student alike. This is not only insulting, it's infuriating. Michael Heim needs to be disabused of the notion that he can never say anything critical about another professor to a student. This type of "collegiality" does nothing but serve to cover up problems. There is nothing wrong with Michael Heim saying to a student "Yes, my colleague's action in this respect is offensive and inexcusable, but he/she is tenured and there is really little that I can do about it just by talking to him/her." We understand that. What we don't understand are these repeated attempts to maintain "civility" in dialog when that civility is completely one-sided.

For years and years we have watched Michael Heim refuse to acknowledge that there is a problem. To do so would have been unpleasant. We understand that. And yet, he, and the others who said nothing, must be held accountable. He and they are protected: they have tenure. We have nothing. We as linguists are totally at the mercy of the faculty. If he and his colleagues aren't going to stand up and expose the abuse which characterizes the Slavic Department, then who will?

I can understand that the internal reviewers were outraged by the student complaints listed on pp. 3-4, but I cannot understand why they assumed there was no other side to hear. The students do not know, for example, about the hours I spend every week mediating between them and the two difficult faculty members; they do not know because it would be unprofessional of me to tell them.

Clearly, from what we have just said in the paragraph above, we do not agree with this. Quite the contrary: we felt it was unprofessional of Michael Heim to continue, year after year, to provide cover for abusive faculty and to try to justify their actions.

This section of Michael Heim's response is also interesting in that it seems to conflict with what he had said earlier. According to Michael Heim, the internal reviews drew a picture of a department in chaos, which is, according to Michael Heim, "a picture of the Department I do not recognize". And yet here Michael Heim speaks openly of "the hours I spend every week mediating between them [the students] and the two difficult faculty members". It is disturbing, and telling, that Michael Heim can hold these two contradictory facts in his mind and not experience any cognitive dissonance. This illustrates perhaps better than any other thing the essence of his approach to the Slavic Department and what goes on there.

But neither do the internal reviewers know, because they have taken everything the students say at face value.

The second part of this statement is, as far as we know, very wrong. We cannot speak for every Slavic Department student, but our experience with the internal reviewers leads us to a different conclusion. Not only did they not take everything we told them at face value, they were constantly challenging the information, asking for clarifications and repetitions of what they were being told.

I am by no means implying that the students are not telling the truth; they are telling the truth as they see it, but there are many things they do not see.

Does Michael Heim really believe that his perspective as a fellow professor gives him a better perspective on professor-student abuse than does our perspective as students? Yes, indeed, we were telling the truth as we saw it. Regardless of what Michael Heim has done or hasn't done, that doesn't change the reality of the abuses we have

experienced and seen here year after year. The reality of these abuses exists independently of his ability (or lack thereof) to perceive them.

I am not surprised that the reviewers found "no example of any significant discrepancy"(p. 2) among student accounts: their accounts come from the same point of view;

What Michael Heim appears to be suggesting here is that because there is one point in common among all the students, namely just exactly that, the fact that they are students, this then implies that their points of view would all be the same. As students, we have a very wide array of backgrounds. If one follows the "logic" proffered by Michael Heim, all of us then must share the same point of view. Presumably, then, not only do we all share the same point of view, but we also all made the same mistake in thinking that abuse was being perpetrated by the faculty.

I am surprised that the reviewers did not see fit to solicit other points of view, that of the chair, for instance.

The result of which would have been what? That there is no abuse going on in the Slavic Department? To be sure, this is exactly what Michael Heim told the internal reviewers at the beginning of the review process. (See "Response to Slavic Chair's "Errors of Fact" statement", point 5, below)

There is another point of view missing: as far as I can tell from the report, the reviewers have not interviewed either of the difficult faculty members. Interviewing them would have served several purposes. First, it would have furthered the cause of justice. Is it not normal for both sides of a story to be heard?

Again, as stated above, we have absolutely no objection to this. We very much do want to here the detailed responses by these faculty members to charges brought against them. Unfortunately, there is no way to make specific charges without losing anonymity. Michael Heim's desire to "[further] the cause of justice" is to be admired. Michael Heim also knows full well that faculty and students are not operating on an even playing field in this situation. The faculty members have tenure. In the last 50 years, only a handful of tenured faculty members have ever lost their jobs at UC. Contrasting markedly with this almost iron-clad job security is the situation of the students, who not only have no job security or jobs, but who don't even have their degree yet, and who are dependent upon this same faculty not only for grades and guidance, but also for recommendations, and who also have to fear the influence of this faculty throughout the field. (For example, the one faculty member who actually shouted accusations at one of the students right after the release of the report is actually a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences. This same faculty member has also, by the way, been allowed to participate in the meetings of the Slavic Department linguistics faculty which have taken place since the results of the 8-year review were made public, even though he has been retired for 8 years. Given the fact that he himself has always been one of the most abusive faculty members in the department, this gives us further cause to doubt the department's sincerity in wanting to reform itself.)

Given this discrepancy in status between student and professor, and in light of the fact that confronting these faculty members with the specifics of their behavior (as if they don't know already!) would immediately identify the students involved and leave them vulnerable to the retributive acts which would surely follow, we are curious why Michael Heim has failed to integrate these facts into the calculus supporting his admirable desire to further the cause of justice.

Second, it would have given the reviewers first-hand knowledge of what the rest of us (students, colleagues, and staff) are up against.

Again, no cognitive dissonance on Michael Heim's part: he claims that the internal reviewers present "a picture of the Department I do not recognize" while at the same time he speaks of providing the reviewers with "first-hand knowledge of what the rest of us (students, colleagues, and staff) are up against". It seems to us that the reviewers know full well what those associated with the Slavic Department are up against.

Third, it would have made the two faculty members aware of the accusations that have been leveled against them and of the enormous issue their behavior has become.

Yet again: how can Michael Heim on the one hand speak of "the enormous issue their behavior has become" while at the same time claiming non-recognition of the Slavic Department as described by the internal reviewers?

And fourth, it would have helped the internal reviewers to come up with advice about how to deal with them.

What would Michael Heim have had them say? These abusive faculty members are tenured, they can't be fired, and beyond that, they have been provided cover for the behavior for years by Michael Heim and other faculty members like him. What possible advice could the internal reviewers have provided to the abusive faculty in question and to those who continually enabled and helped to obscure that abuse? How does one give advice to a faculty which refuses even to admit that there is a problem?

Both the faculty and the students looked forward to the review because we hoped it would bring us useful insights.

Absolutely untrue. In no way, shape or form was the Slavic Department faculty looking forward to this review. In fact, the Slavic Department faculty actually polled Slavic Department graduate students asking them what they thought of the possibility of putting off the review for two more years, which resulted in a near unanimous vote by the students (there may have been one or two dissenting votes or abstentions) against putting off the review.

We have in fact received a number of such insights from the external reviewers, but the two recommendations made by the internal reviewers I find not only less than useful; I find them harmful.

The first, "to suspend admissions to the graduate program of the department of Slavic Languages and Literatures until such time as conditions for graduate students in the department improve" (p. 5), will harm both the department and the students.

Let us be very clear of what Michael Heim is saying here: his drawing of a distinction between the department and the students, but not between the department and its faculty, is telling. Yes, if one draws no distinction between a department and its faculty, then the department will indeed be hurt, and that is as it should be. Whatever small amount of punishment the university is able to mete out to tenured faculty members should be meted out, to the fullest extent possible.

We as students are all too aware that these recommendations may hurt some of us in the short run, especially those of us close to finishing and being out on the job market. Yet, we are willing to take that risk. This should be obvious from the numbers of students who were willing to talk to the internal committee despite the risk of incurring the wrath of the faculty. Anytime a tumor is excised some healthy tissue is inevitably taken with it. This is by far preferred to allowing the tumor to remain and grow.

Our field is small and tightly knit. Word travels fast.

We agree. It should be noted, however, that word had already gotten out about the UCLA Slavic Department, and

about its failure, given the brilliance of its faculty, to produce the next generation of leaders in the field of Slavic linguistics. (See above.)

Once it becomes known that a punitive action like this has been taken against us, we will lose the reputation that has allowed us, for example, to place all our students in tenure-track positions in the last five years.

In the first place, whatever positive reputation the UCLA Slavic Department might have had deserves to be lost.

Secondly, once again we see Michael Heim throwing out inaccurate statistics in an attempt to somehow ameliorate the depiction of the department's behavior in the eyes of the Academic Senate. This appears to us to be an almost desperate attempt by Michael Heim to hoist whatever meager arguments he can find to the fore to neutralize the impact of the 8-year review. Apparently, he believes (and it may well be true) that for high-powered research institutions such as UCLA, success in placing graduate students in tenure-track positions is the "coin of the realm", so to speak.

As we have already stated above, even if Michael Heim's claims were true, that would not justify the type of abuse visited regularly upon graduate students by this faculty. Also as stated above, however, this statement on Michael Heim's part (his claim that the Slavic Department has placed "all our students in tenure-track positions in the last five years") is nowhere close to the truth. As was explained above in our commentary on the external reviewers' report, only four of the ten students who finished during the time period referred to by Michael Heim (four of 12 if we include two who finished before the start of this academic year) have received tenure-track positions.

Moreover, for years after the ban is lifted, we will have trouble attracting students.

Indeed. This is as it should be. This faculty has forfeited its rights to train graduate students. It would be a gross injustice to allow graduate students into this program without major and sweeping changes which would, in our opinion, take years to bring about.

As I pointed out above, we have recently voted in a new MA track and an optional outside concentration on the PhD-level. Just as we are making the first move in the nearly thirty years I have taught in the Department to develop the graduate program in new directions and broaden the applicant pool, we are told to suspend graduate admissions. Furthermore, we are about to make our first new appointment in Russian literature in ten years. We began the search last year and, although for technical reasons we had to suspend it, formed a short list of three candidates. We were the first choice for all three. What will happen this year if we have to tell our candidates that we have been forbidden to accept graduate students? What decent candidate will come to such a department?

What will happen is that UCLA will still be the first choice for all three. The job market in Slavic is always very tight. It is highly unlikely that any candidate for a job here would turn it down because of the suspension of graduate student admissions. Even if a candidate were to turn down a job here, however, does that mean that it was wrong to suspend admissions? This exemplifies much of what is wrong about the Slavic Department: rather than worry about graduate students, this department worries about not filling a faculty slot. Of course, since Michael Heim apparently believes that there was no problem and no abuse of graduate students, outside of the occasional regrettable "aberration", perhaps this can explain his concern about not filling this open faculty slot.

What will be the effect on the Department and the University of missing the opportunity to hire the best candidate?

The University is strong and resilient. We suspect that it will be able to muddle through somehow.

The internal reviewers do not tell us how the move will help us to solve our problems, only that it will remain in force until the problems are solved. But I can easily imagine that the havoc the move will play with the Department will exacerbate our problems rather than solve them.

The second recommendation is to place the department in receivership, in other words, to deprive it of the right to govern itself.

Given the fact that this department has shown that it is clearly *unable* to govern itself, the loss of this "right" does not impress us as all that great a loss. What receivership would do, however, is to prevent, at least to some extent, is the ability of this faculty to threaten, abuse, and arbitrarily lash out at its graduate students.

As I have said, both the students and the faculty had hoped that the review would help us to solve our own problems.

As we have said, this is not in the least true. The only hopes the faculty had for the 8-year review was that it wouldn't take place.

The fact that we have put into practice some of the suggestions of the external reviewers before their official report even reached us (the institution of the outside PhD concentration, for example) indicates we are perfectly capable of dealing with things on our own.

Our reaction to Michael Heim's claim that he and the other faculty members "are perfectly capable of dealing with things on our own" would not differ substantially from that found below in the "Response to Slavic Chair's "Errors of Fact" statement".

I might also add that within a week of the site visit, following a suggestion that was made then but does not figure in either the external or the internal report, I consulted a member of the Ombuds Office about the difficult faculty members ...

Again, no cognitive dissonance here. Either one of two things can be true: either this is a department which had faculty members so difficult that one is required to consult the Ombuds Office in dealing with them, or this is a department in which "there was no student dissatisfaction to speak of". It cannot be that both of these statements are true.

...and have adopted a new approach to them, which has begun to yield results. Whether or not the "help of professionals" referred to on p. 8 of the external report is necessary remains to be seen.

Graduate students in our Department have suffered, and there is no excuse for that suffering.

But that is all that Michael Heim is doing and all that he has done: offer excuse after excuse after excuse. It is neither unfair nor an exaggeration to say that he never saw a case of professor-induced suffering in the Slavic Department for which he couldn't find some sort of excuse.

But the report blows their suffering out of proportion.

This is offensive and arrogant beyond measure. It may be the case that Michael Heim does not know the true extent of the abuse visited upon students in this department. In fact, we would say that is probable. What cannot be, however, is that he is unaware of the fact that graduate students have, at the hands of the faculty, for years undergone

extensive abuse, mistreatment, insult, and harm, a representative part of which was detailed in this 8-year review report. For years, Michael Heim himself has spoken with and offered some measure of comfort to students who have been scorched by the ferocity of the linguistic faculty. How is it then possible for him to turn around and dismissively claim that this report "blows their suffering out of proportion". This is either outright prevarication or a case of denial so severe that it would have to be said to border on mental instability. We see no alternative to these two possibilities.

It projects the injustices done to a number of linguistics students onto the student body as a whole;

We disagree. While it is possible for different readers to reach different conclusions as to what is projected and what is not projected by this report, it is our belief that this report does not project "the injustices done to a number of linguistics students onto the student body as a whole". Obviously, a lion's share of the problems originate with the linguistic faculty, so it is only natural that the fate of linguistic students is more thoroughly documented in this report than that of literature students.

Two further points:

1. Many of the literature faculty, particularly Michael Heim, have long pointed to the fact that the difference between linguistics and literature in our department is such that it is not only not possible, but indeed inappropriate, for literature faculty to intervene on issues between linguistic faculty and linguistic students. While this reluctance to intervene is presented by many of the literature faculty as a determination on their part to honor traditional academic decorum (e.g. "It would be inappropriate and a violation of academic freedom to intervene in the way a fellow faculty member interacts with his students..."), we see this explanation as nothing more than a rather thin facade hiding the fact that, for them, not confronting their linguistics colleagues is a winning proposition on a number of levels: their students don't receive the same level of abuse as do linguistic students (although they do at times experience such abuse, contrary to what Michael Heim says--see point 2 below), and they avoid the always unpleasant task of having to confront the unstable personalities who for many years now have predominated in the linguistics side of the house. We see this desire to look at the Slavic Department as almost two mini-departments as the result of their not wanting to take responsibility for what is happening in the linguistic side of the department. We have seen and heard this before: "Well, that's unfortunate, but that's something for the linguists to work out among themselves."

2. In making statements such as "[The report] projects the injustices done to a number of linguistics" Michael Heim seems to be implying that it is only linguists who have been subjected to such injustices. This is not at all true. Literature students, although not bearing the brunt of such abuse, have continually been subject to it intermittently for years now. Contrary to what they might have others believe, we are not two mini-departments, but one single department. Literature students do have to take a certain number of linguistic classes, and some of the problem faculty have also in the past offered literature classes. Linguistic faculty sit on funding committees and have influence in other ways, both within the department and within the field. At times, linguists have sat on literature M.A. and Ph.D. committees.

To imply that only linguists have been subject to this abuse is wrong. Even some of the very general scenarios listed in the internal reviewers' report represent events involving literature students, some of whom have been driven out of this program because of this abuse. Michael Heim himself has spoken to such literature students and knows what went on between them and the problem linguistic faculty. For him to act as though he doesn't know of any such examples (which is the clear implication of the statement above) is disingenuous.

it makes it seem as if only suffering and no learning were going on. At the same time it projects the excesses of a

minority onto the faculty as a whole. I reject its conclusion on p. 5 that "the entire faculty, collectively and individually, is culpable";

We have touched upon this point above when commenting on the "action" section of the internal reviewers' report.

I reject the claims of "inaction" and "complacency."

Clearly, we could not disagree more with Michael Heim on this point.

They run counter to the external report and, more important, to my daily interaction with the students and with my colleagues.

As has been discussed above, the external reviewers had nowhere near the access to graduate students that the internal reviewers did because of the presence of Alan Timberlake on the external review committee. We have also indicated above the extent of our disagreement with the external reviewers vis-a-vis their opinion of Michael Heim.

If I did not request to talk to the internal reviewers after the site visit, it is because I had no idea they would come to conclusions I can only call one-sided. I have voiced only a fraction of the objections I have to the report because I think we can come to an agreement about how best to remedy the situation only if we talk the issues through in person.

It is unfortunate that Michael Heim chose to list but a fraction of his objections as we would have preferred to have heard all of his objections to this report. We would repeat our assertion that, because of the time and manpower constraints placed on the 8-year review committee (and because of the need to protect sources and anonymity), what is represented in the 8-year review itself is but a fraction of the abuses which have occurred in the Slavic Department.

I therefore request a meeting with the internal reviewers. I also request that before our meeting takes place they have separate interviews with each of the two difficult faculty members.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Heim
Professor and Chair

Response to Slavic Chair's "Errors of Fact" statement

The review team has the highest personal respect for the Chair of the Slavic department. Nevertheless, there appear to be irreconcilable differences in our respective points of view.

1 . The Chair objects to characterizing student "XX" as having "excellent credentials".

- The review team stands by this characterization-XX came in with an undergraduate GPA of 3.97 from UC Riverside, and had a 4.0 at UCLA until her run-in with the faculty member in question.

2. The Chair states that XX is the only student that has been lost as a direct result of conflict with a faculty member.

- This is not true.

3. The Chair repeatedly objects to the failure to identify clearly the specific faculty members and students who are referred to in the report.

- As explained in the report "to preserve anonymity [we presented] most information only in general terms." Also, as stated, it was not our purpose to establish the "guilt or innocence of particular individuals." Some wording in the report will be modified to counter the impression that all students experienced problems equally.

4. The Chair strenuously objects to the failure of the review team to confront specific faculty members with specific complaints so that they could present their point of view.

- As explained in the report, no student would talk without an absolute guarantee of confidentiality. Obviously this precludes going back to the faculty with any specifics. We had already learned that addressing these problems in general terms is fruitless (see below).

5. The Chair feels that he was not adequately consulted in the preparation of the internal report.

- We have explained why checking details with the faculty was not possible, but 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. Thus, there was no recourse but to unearth sufficient detail from the students themselves in order to determine whether the initial impressions reflected a situation serious enough to warrant decisive action. Once this bridge was crossed (and precluded from discussing details) there was little to be gained by rehashing generalities with the Chair of the department.

6. The Chair claims to have "had no idea" the review team would come to the conclusions it did.

- During the site visit, the chair of the review team (believing that the Chair of the department did not appreciate the seriousness of the situation) made it very explicit that suspension of graduate admissions was being considered. When, later, the Chair of the department still did not appear to grasp the gravity of the discussion, one of the external reviewers pointedly reminded him of the review team chair's comment. Later, after the exit meeting, both Graduate Council members of the review team reminded the Chair that his department's graduate program was considered "dysfunctional".

7. Many additional issues regarding procedure and interpretation are raised by the Chair.

- These are matters on which we will simply have to agree to disagree. For example:

-- Issues of long standing (more than a decade) that the review team considers to be of fundamental importance, the Chair characterizes as "aberrations".

-- For a festering problem involving abuse of power that the review team believes requires immediate and decisive action, the Chair believes "hours [of mediation] every week" and "a new approach.....which has begun to yield results" is a sufficient response.

--While the review team has been told of years of student abuse which the department has had no will to correct, the Chair offers a recent revision in the graduate program as evidence of the ability of the department to manage its own affairs.

These differences in perception do not give the review team confidence that the problems of student welfare will be dealt with swiftly and effectively (and with no retaliation towards students) without drastic measures. This issue is now a matter for discussion between the Chair and the Administration.

Appendix IV:
Self Review Report

First Page Missing

(The first page of the Department's self-evaluation was not released to students. This section begins with page two of this self-evaluation.)

(Henning Andersen, Vyacheslav Ivanov, Emily Klenin, and Olga Yokoyama) and four in literature (Michael Heim, Gail Lenhoff, Aleksandr Ospovat, and Ronald Vroon) one associate professor in literature (Roman Koropecjy), and two lecturers for Russian-language instruction (Olga Kagan and Susan Kresin, the former with security of employment); part-time faculty includes one adjunct associate professor in linguistics (Andrew Corin) and lecturers in Romanian (Georgiana Galateanu) and Hungarian (Judith Simon). When ladder faculty members go on sabbatical leave, they are typically replaced by visiting professors who are leading lights in their fields (Leonid Kasatkin, Roza Kasatkina, Roman Timenchik, Elena Zemskaia). We also receive an average of two and a half FTEs yearly for teaching assistants. We have approximately thirty-five undergraduate students majors and minors and thirty graduate students on the current rolls.

Until approximately a decade ago the Department had the reputation of being stronger in linguistics than literature - the traditional components of Slavic departments since they started appearing on the American academic landscape after the Second World War. Research in our Department has concentrated on comparative cultural, literary, and linguistic studies in a number of fields: early Russian literature (hagiography), major authors of the eighteenth century (Sumarokov, for example), the classical poets of the nineteenth century (Pushkin, Tiutchev, Fet), Russian and Polish Romanticism (especially Mickiewicz) and the post-Symbolist avant-garde of the twentieth century (especially Khlebnikov) - all of which incorporate recently discovered archival materials and pay special attention to the historical context; Slavic historical linguistics in a broad Balto-Slavic and Indo-European context with emphasis on the ethnolinguistic issues connected with defining the Slavic homeland and tracing migration patterns, the analysis of newly surfaced materials (Novgorodian birch-bark letters, Old Believer literature of the seventeenth century, dialectal data including Los Angeles Molokane speech), colloquial Russian and its manifestations in recent written texts, the pragmatic aspects of contemporary Russian, and literary translation and translation studies. Currently we are perceived as being equally strong in literature and linguistics, but we will continue to be perceived as such only if we can compensate for certain recent losses.

Let us take literature first. At the end of the previous review period we acquired a specialist in nineteenth-century Russian poetry, Aleksandr Ospovat, at the beginning of the current period - a specialist in Polish and Ukrainian

literature, Roman Koropeckyj. They have been instrumental in improving both the breadth and depth of our offerings.. Although we can still boast scholars publishing in nearly every period of Russian literature, prose and poetry, including the typically less well represented medieval period and the eighteenth century, last year we lost our two specialists in nineteenth century and twentieth-century prose, the core of the undergraduate curriculum and central to graduate studies as well. Dean Yu has authorized a search at the assistant-professor level for one of these positions. We have maintained strength in other Slavic literatures - Czech, Polish, South Slavic, and Ukrainian - in terms of both teaching and research. Only a handful of universities - Berkeley, Chicago, Harvard, Indiana, Michigan, North Carolina, Wisconsin - can begin to match us here, though none has more than two or three "second" Slavic literatures to our four, and the ability to teach these literatures is emerging as a particularly desirable qualification for new literature PhDs entering the job market.

In linguistics, which has suffered more than literature at most other institutions, the UCLA-Slavic Department has been able to maintain a full panoply of courses - in East, West, and South Slavic (the latter filled at present on a regular basis by an adjunct associate professor), Old Church Slavic, and the phonology, morphology, and syntax of Contemporary Standard Russian. A new appointment at the beginning of the period under review, that of the internationally known Slavic and Indo-European linguist and semiotician Vyacheslav Ivanov, has helped cushion the loss of three linguists to early retirement (Aleksandar Albijanic 1992 and Henrik Birnbaum and Dean Worth in 1994), though Professor Ivanov teaches literature as well as linguistics and contractually devotes one third of his time to Indo-European Studies. The linguistics program has likewise been bolstered by the appointment of Olga Yokoyama, who came to us from Harvard several years later and works in the fields of discourse analysis and gender linguistics using data from the Slavic spectrum. Many of the departments once strong in linguistics - Harvard, Yale, Stanford - have reduced the number of linguists, their primary function being to provide service courses to literature students. As a result, they are less likely to produce new doctorates in Slavic linguistics. (Of the eight doctoral dissertations in Slavic linguistics for 1997 [Slavic Review, Winter 1998, 959-60], two come from UCLA; of the other six, several come from universities with recently reduced linguistics faculty. UCLA is the only university represented by more than one dissertation.)

The Department considers the crossover between literature and linguistics central to the mission of its graduate program. This is reflected in the MA requirements (students must take a number of courses in both), in approaches applied in PhD courses (structural analysis of literary texts, discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, semiotics, translation studies, the interface between literature and history and literature and anthropology) and, naturally, in the faculty's research. A recent development - and one that is becoming increasingly common - is the joint publication of articles by faculty members and graduate students. Graduate students also regularly give papers at national conferences: eight will participate at the annual meeting of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages this December in Chicago. They note with satisfaction that the Department is helping to prepare them for the job market by rehearsing them before their talks and staging mock interviews, but would like to see general advising and mentoring strengthened as well.

The Department provides more regular, required Russian-language instruction on the graduate level than comparable programs and has a native speaker available for conversation and consultation on a drop-in basis for twenty hours a week, a feature no other department in the country offers. It also requires a working knowledge of one or two other Slavic languages. Practical language preparation has proven an important factor in the competitiveness of our graduate students on the job market, and some graduate students would like to see more emphasis on perfecting their command of Russian and the other Slavic languages. The Department prides itself on training its TA's in the latest in language-teaching methodology. Not surprisingly, then, the Department plays a leading role' in formulating language-teaching policy on the UCLA campus. And not surprisingly, Professor Kagan was recently named the first chair of a newly instituted campus-wide Foreign Language Resource Committee. The Department also houses Romanian for the Romanian studies Program and has recently elected to take over Hungarian from the Department of Germanic

Languages.

The Department is committed to undergraduate education. We offer two or three general education courses a quarter: The Russian Novel, Russian civilization, Russian Civilization in the Twentieth Century, Slavic Civilization. We offer three majors (Russian Language and Literature, Russian Studies, and Slavic Languages and Literatures, the latter unique in the country in requiring the study of Russian and an additional Slavic language) and three minors (Russian Language, Russian Literature, and Russian Studies, all of which require Russian language study). In the past few years we have made a highly successful effort to attract heritage speakers of Russian by creating language and literature courses with their interests in mind. The Russian club provides undergraduates with a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The number of courses required to sustain this breadth tended to tax our faculty even before we lost two of our faculty members most involved in the undergraduate program, but we feel confident of being able to carry on once they are replaced. If we can make such a claim, it is largely because, while maintaining their reputation for scholarly excellence, members of the ladder faculty regularly teach five courses a year (and many have in fact taught six or seven on an overload basis) and earn consistently high evaluation ratings from both undergraduates and graduates.

During the mid-nineties, when the decision was made to consolidate the staff of several departments into a single administrative unit, the Kinsey Humanities Group, we went through a bad patch. Our main office was left unmanned, and many of us spent an inordinate amount of time directing lost students, answering other people's phone calls, and the like. Mercifully, the situation improved dramatically when Marcia Kurtz, our student affairs officer, was returned to us, and now under Mila August's capable leadership - and Marcia's highly capable Russian-speaking replacement, Inna Gergel - things administrative are again on an even keel. We are currently gearing up for the seismic retrofitting and general renovation of Kinsey Hall. In a year's time we will move to Hershey Hall for the two years it will take to gut and completely reconfigure our current quarters. The chair has had numerous and fruitful consultations with the architects and assures the Department that while individual faculty offices will decrease-slightly in size there will be a notable increase in public space: a second lounge/seminar room, a student commons room, and a set of dedicated computer work stations.

The Undergraduate Program

The euphoria that followed the fall of the east-bloc regimes in the late eighties and early nineties, the period covered by the previous eight-year review, quickly evaporated when the transition to democracy proved more arduous than expected. Undergraduate enrollments in our field, especially in Russian-language courses, dropped dramatically country-wide. The Department nonetheless continued to give regular instruction in five Slavic languages (Russian, Czech, Polish, Serbian/Croatian, Ukrainian) and Romanian; it continued to offer instruction at all levels of Russian - including self-paced Russian and First- and Second-Year Russian during Summer Session - every year. (Five of the textbooks used in courses have been or are being developed by members of the Department: V puti [1996, second-year Russian, Olga Kagan], Cestina hrou: Czech for Fun [1998, first-year Czech, Susan Kresin], Readings in Czech (1985, second-year Czech, Michael Heim, Dean Worth), Communicative Romanian [first-year Romanian, Georgiana Galateanu, Michael Heim], Balakajmo!-A Basic Course for English-Speaking students [first-year Ukrainian, Roman Koropecykj, Robert Romanchuk.]) Our attempts at boosting dwindling enrollments included publicity campaigns (posters, sandwich boards, advertisements in the Daily Bruin), mass e-mailings (lists of our offerings to all eleven thousand undergraduates), regular alphabet-learning sessions, reinvigoration of the Russian Club (with many off-campus activities and integration into the local Russian community), increased frequency of general education courses (the Russian Novel, Russian Civilization, Slavic Civilization) and popular literature-in-translation courses (Tolstoy, Dostoevsky), experimentation with flexible scheduling patterns for language courses, introduction (in addition to the successful self-paced, that is, one-on-one first-year courses) of an intensive Russian course covering the first year in two quarters, and a series of senior seminars taught by advanced graduate students (because of the

quality of our students' proposals the Slavic Department, though one of the smallest in the College of Letters and Science, was the only one allotted two such courses by the Office of Instructional Development last year). Professor Heim piloted a new type of General Education course for the College, a writing-intensive course based on Russian 99B (Russian Civilization in the Twentieth Century); Professor Vroon introduced Russian 30 (Russian Literature and World Cinema), which TAs have now taught for University Extension and the Summer School.

Another tack we took was to increase efforts to attract the pool of heritage speakers from the Russian community, which, again contrary to general expectations, has kept replenishing itself. As a result, we were able to make up for our decrease in elementary language enrollments with enrollments of up to sixty students in advanced classes like Professor Ospovat's Russian poetry and prose series (Russian 130 and 140.), classes which, because readings and lectures are entirely in Russian, were traditionally limited to majors and therefore five or, at most, ten students. The Department is also offering a number of new advanced language courses aimed specifically at Russian heritage speakers: Russian 100 (Literacy in Russian), Russian 103 (Russian for Native and Near-Native Speakers: 103A/Russian National Identity, 103B/Literature and Film, 103C/Special Topics). In this connection Professor Kagan is working on the first textbook for heritage speakers, Russian for Russians. The emphasis on heritage speakers is especially important in view of a major outreach project created by Professor Ivanov to study the diverse language communities of greater Los Angeles, a project that began as an undergraduate seminar in the Department.

The Department was the first in the College to create a minor; in fact, it was Professor Heim who during his stint on the Executive Committee in the early nineties proposed that the College as a whole institute minors. The Department now gives students a choice of three, all of which have a language component.

Finally, we have incorporated video components and web-based material into virtually all courses, language and literature, at the undergraduate level. We have offered Fourth-Year Russian to UC Riverside and Russian civilization to UC Irvine via a distance-teaching hook-up. Support for such activities comes from a variety of campus-wide facilities like Humanities Computing, the Office of Instructional Development, the Faculty New Media Center, and the Instructional Media Laboratory. Graduate research and teaching fellows have designed programs of internet-based instructional materials at various levels. (You may visit our site at www.humnet.ucla.edu/humnet/slavic and click, for example, on the tutorials for Golosa, the textbook for first-year Russian.) Finally, in conjunction with her second-year textbook of Russian and as a result of a \$30,000 grant from Provost Copenhaver, Professor Kagan is working on a pilot project to supplement classroom instruction with interactive web-based exercises that can serve as a template for other foreign languages.

In other words, we have been careful to pull our weight on the university level even when circumstances have kept enrollments and the number of majors lower than we would have liked. One major problem remains. The loss of Professors Irina Gutkin and Peter Hodgson has cut deeply into the Department's undergraduate program in literature: eight of the ten courses they collectively taught per year belonged to the undergraduate curriculum, that is, together they taught approximately 45% of the undergraduate Russian literature courses in translation. We are currently conducting a search for one of their positions and have requested authorization for the second. Our goal is to maintain at the highest level what we feel to be an intellectually stimulating and viable liberal arts program. One student who took several courses in our department but graduated from another recently told us she regretted not having majored in Slavic, which she called "one of UCLA's undiscovered treasures."

The Graduate Program

Several years after the nation-wide decline in undergraduate enrollments the Department began to experience a concomitant decline in graduate applications. With Slavic departments failing to replace retiring faculty, reducing

FTEs, and facing mergers with other language and literature departments or even abolishment, with ever decreasing funds available for recruiting and retaining graduate students, morale plummeted throughout the field. The funding situation became especially precarious when our Center for European and Russian Studies lost its Department of Education grant three years ago: the grant had included several annual FLAS fellowships that supported our graduate students.

What you are not told here is the role the UCLA Slavic Department played in losing that grant. The grant application is very specific, and it is very much language-instruction oriented, meaning that those in DoEd. who issue the grant care less about those things which usually are considered prestigious at a research institution such as UCLA, e.g. previous grants awarded, articles published, positions held within professional societies, etc.) and very much more with the nuts and bolts of teaching language and most importantly, a set series of language classes in the target languages for that FLAS area, and respectable, steady enrollments in those classes. There were times when some Slavic Department faculty out and out ignored the requested information and instead simply reported on what they felt was important (publications, receipt of a Guggenheim Fellowship, etc.). We know there were other irregularities as well involving the Slavic Department in the loss of these FLAS fellowships, but we do not have the specifics.

(Fortunately, the Graduate Division, the College of Letters and Science, and the International Studies and Overseas Programs have made up the difference each year, and we are confident the Center will regain the grant for the coming three-year period.)

Hard times have prompted us to re-examine our mission, that is, to ask how we can best ensure the vitality of our traditions, enhance our present strengths, and accommodate the future needs of the university and the profession. While faculty and students alike agree that it should build on those strengths - namely, the commitment to the entire Slavic field rather than Russian alone and to the interplay between linguistics and literature - we also agree that they can be complemented by certain changes. A once required proseminar is no longer taught and has not been replaced with basic training in research techniques, bibliography, style sheets, etc.; it is sorely lacking. Reading lists for the MA and PhD examinations in both literature and linguistics need to be updated.

In the case of linguistics, these reading lists need to be more than updated--they need to exist.

On a more global level the first area that needs addressing is that of theory. The Slavs have contributed richly to the theoretical background of twentieth-century linguistic and literary studies with Russian Formalism, Czech Structuralism, Lotman's cultural semiotics, and the Bakhtinian approach, and here we are on firm ground. What we need is to cross-fertilize their contributions with current Anglo-American and continental theory. We have expanded the theoretical purview in linguistics by attracting Professor Yokoyama; 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). We need to help our students better integrate theoretical perspectives into their work starting at the basic, MA level.

Closely related is the issue of the direction the field as a whole is taking. Students have expressed an interest in making the program flexible enough to include a new, third track within the Department, one combining linguistics and literature. Professors Ivanov, Klenin, and Yokoyama have been publishing scholarship on the cusp of literature and linguistics for years. We intend to explore the possibility of setting up joint degree programs with the Department of Linguistics (where a graduate student in Slavic is currently a TA in an undergraduate course) and the Department of Applied Linguistics (where, for instance, the theory of language pedagogy is taught).

We strongly support setting up such joint degree programs with the Linguistics and Applied Linguistics

departments. This would not only expand the options for us as students of linguistics, it would also serve to provide for us options not involving the two problem linguistic faculty members in our own department. We would encourage the Slavic Department to also look into similar possibilities for joint programs in conjunction with the interdepartmental Comparative Literature graduate program.

Such programs would considerably broaden our students' options on the job market. We were highly gratified by the fact that last year, for example, the three students who applied for positions (two in literature and one in linguistics/ language pedagogy) each received two offers, and all three are currently teaching (at Brandeis, Connecticut College, and Grinnell). This is a record matched by no other department in the country. Other institutions at which our students found positions during the period under review include the University of Iowa, Ohio State, Dalhousie, Rice, and the Russian State Pedagogical University, and two received tenure (at Brown and the University of North Carolina).

The Department has lobbied the College of Letters and Science for two FTEs to replace those it lost from retirement during the period under review. One is for a South Slavic specialist, the position currently being filled by Adjunct Associate Professor Corin and one that is essential to the Department's programmatic commitment to Slavic languages and literatures. In the framework of our interest in current theory the South Slavist would ideally represent a prominent school in theoretical linguistics not currently represented in the Department (formal, cognitive, etc.) and be versatile enough to develop and teach, for example, undergraduate courses on the cultures of the Balkan Slavs. The other is for a literary specialist whose principal expertise lies in the Soviet and Russian postmodern periods. Current students - both graduate and undergraduate - and many recent applicants have expressed a strong interest in post-Soviet developments in literature, the arts, and popular culture. By filling the second position with a specialist in this area, which is not yet widely taught anywhere in the country, we would be able to compete more effectively for the best students. Such a specialist would also have much to contribute to the Department of Comparative Literature and the Center for Modern and Contemporary Studies.

A department is as good as its faculty - and its students.

Yes, well...

We are currently making our web site more applicant-friendly and doing everything we can to attract qualified candidates for graduate study. However, despite our best efforts at recruitment and retention we are unable to compete with the financial incentives offered by a number of other institutions. The problem is compounded by the fact that, given the Department's international reputation, we have had a number of excellent international graduate students, mostly from Asia and (now that they are free to travel) Eastern Europe, but these students strain our resources inordinately because they must pay non-resident tuition in addition to university fees. To support both them and other qualified applicants - and to fill the Department's sorely depleted coffers - we have begun a fundraising campaign among our alumni and the public at large. We have made contact with all our alumni by means of a departmental Newsletter and collected several thousand dollars.

It should be noted that these last two activities, the fund-raising and the alumni newsletter, were instituted by the one Departmental Chair whose tenure in this position lasted only half a year. Not once but several times and from several different faculty did we as students hear the derisive remarks directed against the efforts. Apparently, for some of our faculty, such activities are "beneath the dignity" of a department with as high an academic and scholarly profile as our own.

This new source of funds together with increased support from the Graduate Division will help us to compete with the multi-year financial-aid packages with which other institutions have wooed promising students away from us in

the recent past.

Comparison to the Previous Review

Let us begin by addressing the recommendations made by the previous review agencies, the Committee on Undergraduate Courses and Curricula (CUCC) and the Graduate Council (GC). Both advised the Department to establish clear and consistent written guidelines for distributing TA assignments and to select TAs in a timely manner. The guidelines have been established and are distributed to graduate students annually together with the guidelines for receiving all types of financial aid. We understand that students wish to learn about TA assignments in the spring preceding the academic year during which they will teach, but since the funding of TAships is inextricably bound with other varieties of funding some of them may simply have to be assigned later. We are careful to keep everyone apprised of the situation as it develops. Nonetheless, a number of students have expressed a desire for a more collegial and transparent atmosphere.

Yes, that would be nice.

We immediately followed the GC recommendation that we create a course to provide students with training in methods of language teaching. All students now take Professor Kagan's Teaching Slavic Languages at the College Level (Slavic 495) in preparation for teaching and her Teaching Apprentice Practicum (Slavic 375) while teaching. We also immediately followed the CUCC recommendation that we evaluate and revamp Russian 1. Methods developed in Slavic 495 laid the foundations for the new elementary language course, but other changes - a new textbook, Golosa, more emphasis on video and computer-assisted instruction - occurred as well. We have also begun to take advantage of the TA consultant position funded by the office of Instructional Development to enable experienced TAs to help train their peers.

The CUCC recommendation that we lobby for funds to use TAs to teach sections in the larger literature and civilization courses took longer to address, but within the past few years funds have been forthcoming and we now regularly offer discussion sections in two General Education courses, The Russian Novel (Russian 25) and Russian Civilization in the Twentieth Century (Russian 99B), which, as mentioned above, served as a pilot course for the writing-intensive component of the new General Education program.

There was a concern among the graduate students about the availability of TAships given the ratio of graduate students to available TA FTE's. To address this issue, not raised at the time of the previous report, we have begun to allot TAships at 25% rather than the full 50% level. The argument in favor of breaking up a TAship is that it gives both experience and fee remission to two students rather than one; the argument against it is that it may result in fragmentation in the classroom. Another problem is how to insure that TAs hired at 25% do not work proportionally more than those hired at 50%.

Instead of adopting the recommendation that the graduate adviser be a given course relief, which would have proved difficult in light of our already tight resources, we decided to divide the responsibilities of the office among four faculty members: a linguistics adviser, a literature adviser, and two members of the admissions and support committee. The way in which admissions and support decisions are reached has also changed: the faculty used to submit comments to the committee, which then made the decisions; now every faculty member rates every applicant for admission and every continuing student, and we meet as a body to discuss and vote on the candidates.

Special Circumstances

We feel we have emerged from a difficult period of transition in our own field (the transformation of East-Central Europe and its very real repercussions in the academy) and in the university (the reduction of public funding and the call for the financial accountability of academic programs) with a sense of where our strengths lie, how best to capitalize on them, and how to adapt to the new situations confronting us. We do not yet have all the answers, of course: we spent a good deal of energy, for example, formulating a new pre-professional MA program in Russian, but the chair postponed discussion until the outcome of our FTE requests is clear. Still, we have come through with our reputation and achievements intact - every faculty member contributes not only to the teaching program but also to the departmental profile of a center of research in a variety of fields - and we look forward to contributing even more to UCLA and to the scholarly community as a whole.

.....

Date: Thu, 13 Jul 2000 18:17:48 -0800 (PST)
From: MICHAEL HEIM <heim@HUMnet.UCLA.EDU>
Subject: missing external attachment (apologies)
To: slavic.department.graduate.students@HUMnet.UCLA.EDU
MIME-version: 1.0
Priority: normal

June 26, 2000

Professor Duncan Lindsey
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Dear members of the UCLA community:

Towards the end of last week, we, the two members of the external review committee, received copies of the 1999-2000 Academic Senate Review of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, a document which includes the Draft Report of the Internal Review Team as well as our own report. We recognize that no response to the Draft Report was solicited from us, the external reviewers. Nevertheless, we would ask you to consider our remarks below, regardless of procedures, because of the importance of the matter: the very existence of this academic unit is at stake. We have sent this letter first by e-mail (through the address of Ms. L. Crespo:crespo@senate.ucla.edu) with the hard copy with signatures to follow. We have addressed it to a minimal number of individuals, but we trust it can be made known to the full bodies of the relevant committees.

When we two left Los Angeles, having heard the same evidence as the internal committee,...

This is completely untrue. For reasons touched upon several times above, a great many students would not speak with the internal review committee because of Alan Timberlake's presence on it. The internal review committee

made this very clear: "We note that the external reviewers devoted more space to this issue than to any other single aspect of the Slavic program despite the fact that they heard but a *fraction* [our emphasis] of all the complaints." This fact cannot be overemphasized in assessing this revisionist letter by Bethea and Timberlake: they heard but a fraction of the abuses heard by the internal reviewers, and the internal reviewers themselves heard but a fraction of the abuses that have gone on over the years in the UCLA Slavic Department. Any conclusions drawn by Bethea and Timberlake were based on this fraction of a fraction.

...and having given a quite detailed and rigorous exit interview, we believed that we shared approximately the same perception as the members of the internal committee of the state of the department, of both its strengths and its difficulties. Accordingly, we were astonished when we read the Draft Report and found that it includes a thoroughly negative evaluation of the department's treatment of its graduate students and, further, that it includes the dual recommendations that the department be obliged to suspend graduate admissions indefinitely and that the department be placed into receivership. The evaluation does not correspond to what we heard during our two-day visit.

It is fair and reasonable that the external reviewers would state that "The evaluation does not correspond to what we heard during our two-day visit". Given the fact that they heard so little directly from graduate students, the evaluation logically could not correspond to what they heard.

These recommendations are counter-productive. >>In greater detail: >>1. The Draft Report (p. 2) states that students perceive the program as "capricious and self-serving," and then follows this assertion by the statement that the external reviewers "devoted more space to this issue than to any other single aspect...," as if to suggest that we, the external reviewers, were in agreement with the immediately preceding statement and, by extension, with the whole of the internal report. Not so. In our exit interview and our written report, we identified a problem, and we wrote about it at some length in order to make it clear exactly what our perception of the severity of the problem was--serious but circumscribed--and in order to offer a recommendation on how to deal with it.

Again, fine as far as it goes. If the external reviewers feel that their position was misrepresented by the internal reviewers, then they have every right to speak up. It is important, however, to note the external reviewers' own words here: "we identified a problem, and we wrote about it at some length in order to make it clear exactly what *our perception* [our emphasis] of the severity of the problem was--serious but circumscribed--". What was in fact circumscribed, albeit through no fault of their own, was the amount of information available to the external reviewers by which to come to the conclusions they eventually did reach, conclusions based on *their perception*, a perception which could be no more accurate than the input they had received and on which they based this perception.

We do not find the program capricious and self-serving. We do not agree with the language of the Draft Report that characterizes the department as treating students as "chattel" and "damaged goods." This simply does not correspond to our judgment of life in the department, and as external reviewers, we want to distance ourselves as far as possible from this characterization of the department.

Once again, fine as far as it goes. We quite obviously disagree with them. For us, the characterization of the department treating students as "chattel" and "damaged goods" is quite mild. But again, we have directly experienced the Slavic Department as students. The external reviewers have not, and, furthermore, were denied direct input from us as to the nature of the faculty-student relationship in this department.

2. The dual recommendations to suspend graduate admissions and place the department in receivership punish the whole department for the sins of a few, invoking the logic that all are "culpable." The logic is peculiar, and the recommendations are unfair to the department as a whole. Punishing the collective for the acts of individuals (a scenario with which we are familiar from our study of the Soviet Union) is a strategy of desperation.

We have discussed above our view of this section of the internal report, and our feeling that some of the faculty

coming from Russia proper should not be held accountable, at least not to the same degree as their American counterparts. Having said this, we would make two points here:

1. We by and large *do* agree that a great majority of the Slavic Department faculty should be held accountable for failing to take steps to stop the institutionalized abuse which has for years (decades?) characterized the Slavic Department.

2. We are aghast and well nigh dumbfounded that the external reviewers would have the chutzpah to draw a comparison with the Slavic Department faculty and victims of Soviet oppression. For year after year it has been the *Slavic Department faculty* acting the role of the capricious thug, stifling any hint of dissent and demanding unquestioning loyalty. For years it has been the *Slavic Department faculty* who have acted with near impunity in any way they saw fit, riding roughshod over anyone who dared get in their way. It has been the *Slavic Department faculty* which has used its protected position to institute a reign of fear and intimidation, primarily over the graduate students, but at times over staff and other faculty as well.

Perhaps the only appropriate analogy to the Soviet Union would be those rare instances in its history when Soviet citizens rose up and rebelled, eliminating the thugs and goons who did the dirty work of the Soviet regime, which would respond by first crushing the revolt and then elevating those same thugs and goons to the position of martyrs. This would be the only appropriate Soviet-era comparison one could make with the Slavic Department faculty.

The external reviewers here perversely attempt to turn the situation on its head. Although there might be some regrettable "aberrations" concerning the mistreatment of students, it is in point of fact the faculty which is truly suffering! In fact, so horribly ill-treated are the faculty by this report that it evokes images in their minds of the victims of Soviet oppression, we are told. In making such an odious and artificial comparison, the external reviewers find themselves adopting the same tactic traditionally used by the Slavic Department: when problems arise, instead of going to and identifying the source of those problems, they attempt to place blame elsewhere. Since graduate students, the normal recipient of this blame, are in this once instance unavailable to fulfill this task because of the nature of the charges made in the report about the abuse of graduate students, the external reviewers instead lay the blame at the feet of those vicious Stalinists who comprise the internal review committee, and who (apparently) are bent on punishing the collective for the sins of the few.

It represents a refusal to take any responsibility for the practical implementation of change.

What would the external reviewers have the internal reviewers do other than report the facts and make the recommendations which are within its purview to make? It is our understanding that the 8-year review committee was charged with reviewing the department in order to offer up suggestions for change. Was it also the charge of the 8-year review committee to take "responsibility for the practical implementation of change"?

In fact, if one takes at face value what the internal review committee said at the beginning of its report on the Slavic Department graduate program ("The mandate to the review team was not to conduct a fact-finding mission or to determine the guilt or innocence of particular individuals, but rather to assess the welfare of the graduate students and to recommend corrective action, if necessary, to assure their well-being.") then we would think that the internal review team has shown great responsibility to the graduate students and has in fact fulfilled its mandate. This is, of course, not to say that this is enough. As we have mentioned above, an official fact-finding mission and an investigation to determine the guilt or innocence of certain faculty members is certainly called for. But that wasn't the mandate of the internal review committee, just as the "practical implementation of change" was not the mandate of the internal review committee.

3. The judgments about the transgressions of individuals place complete trust in the versions of the students.

How do the external reviewers know this? At the beginning of this report, the internal reviewers write the following:

"Great care was taken to ensure the legitimacy of the information upon which we have based the conclusions at the end of this report. Several case histories from different sources were compared and no example of any significant discrepancy was found. In other instances different case histories involving similar situations were compared across time. The consistency was remarkable, even between former students who had never met."

Do the external reviewers mean to question the veracity of the internal reviewers? Is it their opinion that the internal reviewers were deliberately untruthful when they said they verified the information they had received from graduate students? If so, then the external reviewers should come out and say this. Then they should come out and give us, *in detail*, the information they have which supports the statement that complete trust was put in the students' versions of these transgressions.

(Is it not possible that student XX, whose Russian turned out to be extraordinarily weak, was in fact not capable of graduate studies?)

Of course it is possible. There are instances of the problem faculty members chairing Ph.D. committees and approving Ph.D. theses which have no business being approved, which are an embarrassment to the field, from students who were not capable of graduate studies.

So it is indeed possible. It is, however, completely untrue in this instance. This student was a brilliant student who simply happened to have, just as most of us had upon entering this program, weak Russian.

The external reviewers here characterize XX's Russian as "extraordinarily weak". Again, we ask, how do they know this? Do they know XX? Have they heard her speak Russian? Do they know there were two other students who came in the same year as XX and who had similar if not weaker Russian than XX, and yet somehow managed to high-pass their M.A. exams last Spring? Or do they base this bold statement about her not only "weak" but "*extraordinarily weak*" Russian on what they have heard from their UCLA Slavic Department colleagues, presumably the same colleagues who told them about "the department's record of placing seven out of seven new Ph. D.s over the past five years."? Do they know and can they support any of what they say about XX, or are they merely joining in the time-honored defense stratagem of the Slavic Department: attack the weak, especially if they are no longer in the program, and thus presumably no longer around to defend themselves.

It is disturbing, yet at this point not in the least surprising, that the external viewers are so ready and quick to parrot the lines fed them by the UCLA Slavic Department faculty, both with regard to the state of XX's Russian and the placement record of the UCLA Slavic Department.

In all the extensive interviews that went on after we left, there was apparently no attempt to interview any of the faculty members who are tacitly held responsible.

The reasons for this were made abundantly clear in the internal review. As we have said, we would love nothing more to see the "tacitly" responsible faculty put forth a detailed response to charges made against them.

4. Above all, the recommendations are simply ineffectual. They contain no suggestion of a practical mechanism that would

improve the behavior of individuals or the ethos of the department. (There is also no exit strategy: how can the department ever prove that they no longer mistreat their graduate students?) The recommendations punish, but they offer no mechanisms for improvement. They offer nothing that can be implemented.

The implication here seems to be that because the recommendations contain no practical mechanisms, they are therefore "simply ineffectual". Again, we would ask: is the implementation of the recommendations the charge of the 8-year review committee or of the University Administration?

These harsh sanctions have come out of the blue.

This is untrue. For several years now Slavic Department faculty have known that there were questions being raised about them. This reached a head several years ago when one faculty member was made chairman and attempted to institute real reform, only to be stymied at every turn. This faculty member, frustrated at having her hands tied and being rebuffed whenever she tried to introduce even the mildest of reforms, resigned after only six months, ending our brief Prague Spring.

To say that these sanctions (hardly "harsh", by the way, especially when compared with the actions of the faculty which made them necessary) come out of the blue is ludicrous, but even if it were true, so what? The nature of the transgressions by this faculty are such that, in our opinion, the University was thoroughly justified in taking this action.

If the perception within the university was that the department was dysfunctional, the problem should have been addressed in some more productive, positive, problem-solving fashion by the administration prior to this review.

Nonsense. Attempts were made repeatedly, both from below and above, to make it clear to the Slavic Department that their behavior was unacceptable. The result was the same pattern of denial and equivocation.

There is a fundamental issue of fairness and justice to the academic unit that is at issue here.

Again, this is utter nonsense. This department has been warned and approached and pleaded with for years. This is a department that is utterly *incapable* of seeing itself for what it is. Michael Heim's response to the report is the very best evidence for that. The Slavic Department has been warned time and again, but chose to ignore/could not help but ignore these warnings. Not only has the University Administration bent over backwards to be fair to the Slavic Department, it has gone way too far, allowing the Slavic Department to get away with grotesque abuse of its students for years on end. To say that there is "a fundamental issue of fairness and justice to the academic unit that is at issue here" is absurd. What might well be at stake, however, is the reputation and the integrity of the external reviewers who here act as nothing more than advocates for the department which they are supposedly critiquing.

In fact, we, the external reviewers, while we know full well the nature of the historical tensions within the department, do not find it dysfunctional.

Given the fact that they did not have the benefit of speaking with most of the graduate students affected by this faculty, this would be a fair statement. We would suggest, however, that the external reviewers, in spite of Alan Timberlake's tenure as a professor 12 years ago, might very well not be aware of the present day manifestations of the aforementioned "historical tensions within the department". Beyond that, there are issues concerning this department which were not issues during Timberlake's time here, to say nothing of the presence of certain faculty members who were not here when Timberlake was here.

Needless to say, we very much disagree with the opinion of the external reviewers, namely that "do not find it dysfunctional." Indeed, examination of the external reviewers' first report on the Slavic Department suggests that perhaps even they could be persuaded to disagree with themselves: "real challenges that need to be addressed soon"; "[students who] suffer from an alarming level of anxiety, bordering on demoralization"; "UCLA's graduate students in Slavic...suffer from an alarming level of anxiety, bordering on demoralization...*much* [emphasis in the original] more than what can be attributed to run-of-the-mill graduate student anxiety"; "this much smoke suggests there must be some fire".

Are these the characteristics which the external reviewers associate with a non-dysfunctional department? If so, we find ourselves wondering what this says about the state of the graduate programs at Wisconsin and UC Berkeley. (Of course, if the Slavic departments at these two universities can expect UCLA Slavic Department faculty to "return the favor", so to speak, and serve as external members in *their* review process, then the faculties of both those Slavic departments should come out fine.)

The training is excellent.

How do the external reviewers know this? Some of the training is excellent. Much of it is not. Much of it is out of date and poorly presented. And a great deal of it is not coordinated among the faculty members themselves, with the result being that students have paid the price on comprehensive exams as they were forced to choose between competing views on certain issues, with the faculty administering the exams holding different views on these issues.

The department has recently placed its graduates with extraordinary success (though we do not have the figures, we expect its placement record in recent years is better than that of any other national language-and-literature program at UCLA).

It may be that the external reviewers felt here that they "do not have the figures", but that certainly wasn't their feeling in their section of the 8-year review report, in which they wrote with great confidence "With regard to the graduate program, the students appear to be exceptionally well trained, a fact further corroborated by the department's record of placing *seven out of seven new Ph.D.s over the past five years* [Our emphasis]. This record of placing students in recent years is unparalleled among Slavic programs in America."

We have already commented on this above.

And--especially under its current chair--the department has come to a mature understanding of the nature of its problems as a collective and it has begun to find ways of resolving conflict and functioning effectively as a collective.

We have already made clear opinion of Michael Heim's leadership. The idea that this department "has come to a mature understanding of the nature of its problems as a collective" is a flight of fancy. As we have repeatedly said, this faculty is incapable of governing itself or coming to an understanding of itself which is even close to reality.

The historical problems are real, but the resolve to get beyond these problems is no less manifest. The department should be congratulated for its recent efforts to move forward, not punished for the residue of its historical tensions.

This would be laughable were it not so infuriating. This department "should be congratulated for its recent efforts to move forward"? What efforts? Trying to put off the 8-year review? This department does *nothing* unless it is pushed. That is crystal clear to anyone who has had anything to do with this department.

As a more efficacious alternative to these precipitous and harsh sanctions...

We find these "sanctions" to be neither precipitous nor harsh, certainly not in the light of the actions and abuses of the Slavic Department faculty. If anything, the Slavic Department faculty will be getting off lightly if nothing else is done, if no other investigations are conducted. Not one of them has lost his/her job, not one of them has been personally singled out and censured by name, not one of them has been forced to answer before a board for their actions.

..., one might consider a concrete two-step strategy that would consist, first, of a meeting between representatives of the university community--possibly Dean Yu and the chair of the internal committee--and the whole of the faculty of the department. Such a meeting could be used to make clear how the Administration and the larger university community perceive the problems of the department and could serve to remind the faculty of the standards for comportment. After such a meeting, once the ground-rules are set, the department can then, as a long-term strategy, articulate and utilize an internal mechanism for conflict resolution, where necessary involving the services of a professional mediator.

We strongly disagree with this. The Slavic Department should either be put into receivership while official investigations into its actions take place, or it should be disbanded altogether.

We, the members of the external review committee, would take the liberty of reminding you that our external review was an extremely rigorous review.

This is all very relative. Compared with a normal review, this might indeed have been a rigorous review. What it was not, and in our opinion, could not be, is "an extremely rigorous review", simply because the external reviewers did not have anywhere near the requisite amount of time to conduct such a review, a fact which they themselves seem to acknowledge in their section of the 8-year review: "we were not given the time or the mandate to determine the veracity of these reports or to adjudicate in these matters".

We listened carefully while we there, and discussed with each other quite intensely our ongoing perceptions and incipient recommendations. This was no sweetheart review.

It may not have been a "sweetheart review", but for whatever reason, it certainly did not come close to identifying the severity and breadth of the problems which plague the Slavic Department. Because of time and manpower restraints, not even the internal reviewers' report, which had the benefit of input from graduate students, was able to come close to identifying all of these problems, so certainly the external reviewers' report could not do so.

It was a review that identified problems and made clear judgments and strong recommendations, some of which, we knew in advance, would not be popular with all of the individual faculty members at UCLA.

Two points here:

1. Yes, it did identify problems and it did make clear judgments. But we would ask, is that not what an 8-year review committee is supposed to do? Is that not their job, what they are paid to do? Why does the identification of problems and the issuance of clear judgments qualify this review as "no sweetheart review"? There were very clear problems and these reviewers commented on the small part of these problems which was brought to their attention. In other words, they did what they were supposed to do.

2. The external reviewers take pains to point out that they made "strong recommendations, some of which, we knew in advance, would not be popular with all of the individual faculty members at UCLA." Again, what is the implication of this statement? That this review qualifies as "no sweetheart review" because they made statements which might offend their colleagues and, in the case of Timberlake, former co-workers? Again, is that not their job, to report on their findings *regardless* of whom these results offend? Such statements support the inference that the practice of

external reviewers being brought in at the suggestion of the department being reviewed is just another way to keep the "Old Boys Network" in place: "You don't be too critical of us, and we won't be too critical of you." (We have addressed this issue in more detail in our comments on the external reviewers' original report.)

For this reason, we feel particularly distressed that the language and recommendations of the Draft Report run so thoroughly counter to our perceptions of the program, our perceptions of the sense of the committee during our visit, and our judgment of what is practical and necessary to move this department forward.

As the members of the external review committee--as individuals who were likewise charged with evaluating how well the department fulfills its academic mission, as individuals who observed the same department and heard the same testimony as the internal committee--we would urge you to reconsider the decision to impose harsh sanctions on the department and, instead, to formulate a more measured and more constructive response. These sanctions are unwarranted.

Given the fact that the external reviewers, during their two-day visit, had neither the time to conduct an in-depth review of the department nor the graduate student input needed to conduct such an in-depth review, they are in no position to make the statement that "[t]hese sanctions are unwarranted." Since they do not know the true extent of abuse which has gone on in this department, they also have no way of knowing whether these sanctions are warranted or not. The fact that they are nonetheless willing to go on record saying that the sanctions *are* unwarranted does two things:

1. It undermines their *personal* credibility;

2. It undermines the credibility of the process. For them to present such an easily challenged conclusion to you their colleagues and fellow academics suggests they believe that none of you would ever be discourteous enough to call them on this inconsistency. Again, the picture this presents is one of tenured academics taking care of each other, so confident of the fact that they will protect one another and keep anonymous one another's comments that they are willing to put forth the most frivolous and facetious of arguments.

These sanctions will destroy overnight a department...

If, as a result of this 8-year review and the relatively mild (in our view) sanctions resulting from it, the UCLA Slavic Department ceases to exist as an academic entity, then that would at least be better than the alternative, namely to allow it go on as it had been. It not only did not help its own students, but it actually hurt the field as a whole by taking in students willing to give of their time and effort and then crushing them, so that they were lost not only to UCLA, but to the field itself.

We do not agree, however, that these mild sanctions "will destroy overnight a department". They will and should be reflected in the reputation of the UCLA Slavic Department, but options are available for change. It is our opinion that it is doubtful that the UCLA Slavic Department, given the myopia which has characterized it for years, will avail itself of these options, but failure to do so could be then laid only at the feet of the department itself.

...that has been making extraordinary and earnest efforts to improve its undergraduate curriculum,...

Efforts which, as we have pointed out above, have often been ridiculed loudly by some members of the faculty, especially the problem faculty members, as unworthy of a Slavic department of their academic stature. Some of these same faculty members have even speculated aloud as to how much better a place the UCLA Slavic Department would be were it not forced to have an undergraduate program.

its already effective graduate program,...

How the external reviewers could dare characterize the Slavic Department graduate program as "effective", especially after having read the report of the internal reviewers (and knowing that *you*, the members of the Academic Senate, have also read the report), in our eyes further undermines their credibility and strengthens the feeling that this entire review process is for them nothing more than a means of providing cover for colleagues who find themselves in trouble.

.... and its historically imperfect but improving departmental ethos. What is needed instead is a response that will lead to productive change, in the relevant individuals and in the ethos of the department as a whole, rather than to further factionalism and rancor.

Sincerely,

David M. Bethea, Vilas Research Professor, University of Wisconsin
External Member, 1999-2000 Academic Senate Review of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at UCLA
Alan Timberlake, Professor, University of California at Berkeley
External Member, 1999-2000 Academic Senate Review of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at UCLA

.....
Date: Thu, 13 Jul 2000 16:01:02 -0800 (PST)
From: MICHAEL HEIM <heim@HUMnet.UCLA.EDU>
Subject: eight-year review follow-up
To: slavic.department.graduate.students@HUMnet.UCLA.EDU
MIME-version: 1.0
Priority: normal

By now you will have had time to read the Internal and External Departmental Reviews, my "Errors of Fact" statement, and the Internal Review Committee's response to that statement. I am pasting below my point-by-point reaction to the response and sending under separate cover the External Committee's response to the Internal Review. Once you have perused these documents and reviewed the earlier ones, I would like to talk to each of you and hear your suggestions for addressing the Department's problems. I will be out of town from 14 July to 21 July, but will be in town for the rest of the summer. Please drop in or call for an appointment. If you would rather respond with an anonymous letter, please feel free to do so.

Not once, but several times, Michael Heim was asked by the graduate student representative for the Slavic Department not to speak directly with graduate students concerning the content of the eight-year review. The reasons for this we have already discussed above when commenting on the section of the internal reviewers' report dealing with possible retaliation against students who participated in the review. The graduate student representative informed Michael Heim that if he wanted input from graduate students, then she would be happen to take that input from the graduate students and pass it on to him. Twice he rejected this.

Michael Heim has had twenty years here at UCLA to listen to student complaints. Moreover, he often has listened to student complaints, more often than not trying to downplay them or explain them away as "aberrations". The implications of his refusal to agree to the request of the graduate student representative have already been discussed above.

Chair's Response to the Internal Review Team's Response

1. The Chair objects to characterizing student "XX" as having "excellent credentials."

The student in question had excellent credentials on paper, which is why we accepted her; they turned out to be less than excellent in reality. Given that she had to take our third-year undergraduate Russian course (we normally require four years of undergraduate Russian of incoming students) after receiving A's and A+'s in the Riverside third-year Russian course (the Russian placement examination she took upon arriving at UCLA is in her file), I conclude that grade inflation was at work at UCR. I would also point out that her 4.0 GPA at UCLA consists of an A in the undergraduate third-year course she was retaking and two A's in graduate courses from the faculty member with whom she had the conflict.

Truly shocking that Michael Heim, after having been exposed so thoroughly and completely in "Response to Slavic Chair's "Errors of Fact" statement", would, in the UCLA Slavic Department tradition of never blaming itself but instead always seeking to place the blame on the weakest members of the department, continue his attempt to discredit this student. The particulars of the arguments he makes here have already been discussed above, including his violation of the Family Privacy Act of 1974 by sending out the particular's of a former student's transcripts to other students without her consent. Still, we cannot help but respond to his statement that "grade inflation was at work at UCR".

XX had a 3.9 GPA at an institution (UC Riverside) which has plus/minus grading (thus making such a GPA even harder to attain as even an A-minus would lower such a GPA). Achieving a 3.9 GPA says two things:

One, that this individual must have formidable scholarly abilities. She may not be a genius, whatever that term may mean, but clearly she is no idiot.

Two, that this is a person who understands how to interact with faculty, how to avoid getting on their bad side, how to present herself in their presence. This is not to say that such knowledge should come into play when assigning grades, but we all know that in some instances, it does come into play.

Thus, when Michael Heim tries to make the claim that "grade inflation was at work at UCR", the question that immediately comes to our mind is this: was grade inflation at work with *all* of her courses at UCR? Or was it just with regard to her Russian that grade inflation was at work? If the latter was the case, we would like to Michael Heim to share with us how he knows where grade inflation had "stained" XX's transcript and where it had not.

2. The Chair states that XX is the only student that has been lost as a direct result of conflict with a faculty member.

The response "This is not true" is not a rebuttal. Do the internal reviewers mean I have not told the truth or do they merely think I am wrong?

Michael Heim here writes as though these two options were mutually incompatible. Clearly they are not. Michael Heim *is* wrong. Michael Heim *did not* tell the truth. Whether or not the act of delivering such untruthful information

can be characterized as a lie would, we suppose, depend on the semantics of the word "lie". By our reckoning, one lies when one provides untruthful information with intent and knowledge of its untruthfulness. Thus, the question of whether Michael Heim lied to the internal reviewers is a question of intent, a question presumably answerable only by Michael Heim himself.

What is absolutely certain, however, is that Michael Heim provided untruthful information. Of that there is no doubt.

In either case, I must know which student or students they have in mind before I can defend my name or viewpoint. Retaliation here is beside the point because by definition the student/s involved have left the program.

This is nonsense and Michael Heim knows it is nonsense. The power and influence of this department, as has already been discussed above, extends not only throughout this country, but across international borders, even into Russia itself. Faculty members themselves have commented on this influence. Regardless of whether or not a student has left this particular program, if he/she has any hopes of landing a tenure-track job in this field and making a career in Slavic, he/she would be foolish to allow him-/herself to be identified as having taken part in this review process.

3. The Chair repeatedly objects to the failure to identify clearly the specific faculty members and students who are referred to in the report.

Not only do I not "repeatedly object to the failure to identify clearly the specific faculty members and students who are referred to in the report"; I never once do so. I can see how one sentence, taken out of context, might be misconstrued to read as a call for identity. But that sentence - "Who are 'the students' here?" - is the first in a series of four clearly rhetorical questions.

How can we possibly respond to a statement such as this? To try to deny the intent behind a statement such as "'Who are 'the students' here?'" borders on absurdity.

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.

This is chilling and, in our view, very much meant to intimidate. What Michael Heim is telling us, the graduate students, is that we might as well go talk to him. "The jig's up: I know who talked and what they talked about. You might as well come clean." It is an indictment of this process that even *after* Michael Heim has made a statement such as this the University Administration still refused to direct him to cease talking to students directly about the 8-year review.

Most if not all of the students in question have come to talk to me, or I have proactively gone and talked to them.

This is incorrect. Most of the students *refuse* to talk to Michael Heim about this.

I also - again proactively - encouraged all students who I knew had had problems to talk to the review committee openly. The report could at least have stated 1) what percentage of the graduate student body as a whole

reported problems and 2) what percentage of those who reported problems were in linguistics as opposed to literature. That would have given a clearer and more balanced picture of the issue.

4. The Chair strenuously objects to the failure of the review team to confront specific faculty members with specific complaints so that they could present their point of view.

I still strenuously object to the failure of the review team to confront specific faculty members with specific complaints, but not only "so that they could present their point of view" but also, as I stated in my letter, so that 1) the team could judge the complexity (and abnormality) of the problem and offer advice on how to deal with it and 2) the faculty members themselves would understand how seriously the team took the problem. Then there is the issue of confidentiality. How can anyone - review team, chair, colleague - deal with the issues without citing specific instances? The reason students called for confidentiality was to prevent retaliation, but retaliation has never occurred...

Retaliation has never occurred? It is just disgraceful for Michael Heim to make a statement such as this. Retaliation and threat thereof are the defining characteristics of this department. It is the primary method of keeping others in line and preventing outsiders from questioning what goes on "in house".

..., and I will be glad to outline the measures the Department has taken to ensure that it not occur.

5. The Chair feels that he was not adequately consulted in the preparation of the internal report.

When I expressed my dissatisfaction at not being adequately consulted, I referred specifically to the period following the site visit. From my single post-site conversation with the chair of the team, I knew that he had talked to one student. He told me that he was checking my version of an incident against hers and that her case was linked to several others, but he did not tell me how. I cannot imagine that any student would fear retaliation from me

We, on the other hand, *can* imagine this. Very easily.

(in fact, on the first day of the site visit the Departmental graduate-student representative asked me to deliver a statement of their grievances to the committee, a statement that was not sealed or even in an envelope), and as chair of the Department I was in a position to give objective information on any number of cases. The students knew I was aware of the problems: in some cases they had come to me; in others, as I have pointed out, I took the initiative and went to them. I expected to hear about specific cases and was not interested in "rehashing generalities." We held an open meeting with the graduate students before preparing our self-review; we also invited - and

received - anonymous statements from them after the meeting. I therefore went into the site visit with my eyes open. I am here quoted as having given the impression that "aside from funding problems there was no student dissatisfaction to speak of." I certainly never felt that that was the case, and I am not aware of having given or wishing to give such an impression.

[So to be clear: Is Michael Heim then denying the truthfulness of that part of the internal reviewers' report which says the following:](#)

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.

[If it is Michael Heim's intention to claim that the internal reviewers are lying about his comments, then he should come out and say so, officially and for the record.](#)

The disaffected students gave their picture of the Department, which I never questioned, but it was not the whole picture. My job as chair was to give a well-rounded picture, which I might add, coincides in both its positive and negative assessments with the external report.

[It surprises us not at all that Michael Heim's "well-rounded picture" coincides with the external report.](#)

6. The Chair claims to have "had no idea" the review team would come to the conclusions it did.

The statement here is unequivocal: I was told three times during the site visit that "suspension of graduate admissions was being considered." I can only say that I was stunned when I read in the report that the Graduate Council had voted to suspend graduate admissions. Had I known of the possibility during the visit, I would have reacted on the spot with the arguments against it I raise in my letter and perhaps a few more:...

[What is Michael Heim saying here? If he, as he writes here, "was told three times during the site visit that 'suspension of graduate admissions was being considered.'", then how could he have been "stunned" when he read that graduate admissions had indeed been suspended?](#)

...the waste of resources, the curtailment of the literature program because of problems in the linguistics program,...

[We have already commented above on the tendency of those enabling members of the literature faculty to highlight the division of the department into literature and linguistics sections rather than to take the hard steps needed to confront those members of the linguistics faculty who regularly abuse students, including literature students.](#)

...the punitive rather than curative nature of the "solution,"...

[Frankly, we don't see these steps in the least as punitive. In our opinion, those who abused students and wrecked lives and careers are getting off very easily, much to the discredit of the University, which, even in the face of](#)

overwhelming evidence of wrong-doing, has yet to launch an official fact-finding investigation into the abuse which has occurred in the Slavic Department.

...its unforeseeable aftermath, etc. As a result, I phoned Professor Timberlake and asked him whether he remembered the suspension issue coming up during the site-visit interviews with me. His response was that he remembered the issue being mentioned only in closed session, that is, when I was not present.

7. Many additional issues regarding procedure and interpretation are raised by the Chair. (Three are listed.)

Let me address each of the three issues separately.

First, the review team objects to my use of the word "aberrations" to refer to "issues of long standing" and "of fundamental importance." By using the word "aberrations," I do not mean or even imply that the issues are not of long standing or of fundamental importance; they are clearly that. What I mean is that they are a "departure from the norm" (the standard definition),...

We can only hope that the events which have taken place within the UCLA Slavic Department are indeed a "departure from the norm" for Slavic departments in general, although the revisionist letter penned by Professors Timberlake and Bethea does give us pause.

...that is, they affect a minority of the students and that learning goes on even among that minority. I do not condone the aberrations; I qualify them in my letter as "regretful," but - as I try to show by citing the rate of success in MA and PhD examinations this year and the number of PhD's granted and teaching positions secured in the past five years - aberrations they are.

We are pleased to know that Michael Heim finds these "aberrations" to be regretful. As to the placement record of the department, that has been discussed in detail above.

Second, the review team demands "immediate and decisive action." Besides the suggestion to consult the Ombuds Office, it has given no advice as to what form that action should take. I have however taken action on my own and in conjunction with various colleagues. Immediate results are easy to demand, but - and here we have no argument with the report - the problem is a recalcitrant one and far from easy to repair, especially in a department as small as ours.

Once again, we ask why there is no evidence of cognitive dissonance on the part of Michael Heim. If indeed this "problem is a recalcitrant one and far from easy to repair", then how can this square with his earlier assessment of the department as one "where office doors are open and graduate students and faculty are constantly discussing scholarly issues, that is, one in which first-rate training is the order of the day."

In larger departments students have many faculty members to choose from and

can move from one to another should problems arise. The linguistics students in our Department work with only three and a half faculty members. I do not intend this as an excuse (the literature students work with only two more and do not experience the linguistics students' problems); I intend it as a partial explanation of why the problem has proved so difficult to solve. Which brings me to the final point.

I resent the review team's insistence that the Department "has had no will to correct" the situation.

We resent Michael Heim for appeasing and enabling, for years and years, those who perpetrated the very worst sort of abuse upon graduate students in the Slavic Department. Perhaps the righteous indignation he shows here originates from the school of thought which states that the best defense is a good offense. We would assert, however, that in the case of Michael Heim, there is no possible defense of his failure to act, and no possible defense for his constant attempts to downplay the abuse within the department.

I say "insistence" because its report made a similar accusation in similar terms. I cannot claim we have been as successful as we might have liked, but we have not ignored the problems by any means. Professor Vroon, who was chair for most of the period under review, tried any number of strategies. I know this from the innumerable conversations we have had on the subject over the years and from the progress, intermittent as it was, that was in fact made.

For the umpteenth time, we ask: Why no cognitive dissonance on Michael Heim's part? If the department is indeed wonderfully nurturing place he claims it to be, then how can it be that the previous chair was involved in "any number of strategies" engendering "innumerable conversations...on the subject over the years [our emphasis]".

Let me conclude by reiterating my strong belief that suspending admissions will harm rather than help the graduate program, that it is a punitive rather curative measure. I plan to go before the Graduate Council at its first fall meeting and demonstrate why the efforts towards a permanent resolution of the problems during the months since the site visit warrant a vote to lift the suspension.

Summary of Main Recommendations:

1. At the very least this department should be placed into receivership. If it seems as though receivership will not suffice to bring about change, some of us would recommend that the University consider the possibility of closing the department. (This is a minority opinion among us.) Under no circumstances should this department be given back the power to govern itself. Michael Heim will soon be coming before you with all sorts of superficial changes (different course requirements, new reading lists, a decision to grant graduate

students open access to the reading room, and no doubt a slew of others). He will present these as evidence that the department has indeed fundamentally changed. We hope we have presented to you here more than enough evidence to know that this is not, and cannot, be so. Until at a very minimum the two problem faculty are removed from the department, fundamental change cannot take place. These faculty members still have the power to threaten students, and can still do harm outside of the UCLA environment.

2. Maintain the ban on incoming graduate students. It would be unconscionable for the University to knowingly allow potential graduate students into a program such as this one.
3. Conduct an *official* inquiry and fact-finding investigation designed to bring to light wrongdoing by the faculty and irregularities in the administration of the program. This investigation should include a complete financial audit of all funding directed towards the department and a comprehensive examination of the manner in which financial aid was dispersed to students. This investigation should also include interviews with all graduate students, especially past graduate students, in an effort to get a complete picture of the actions of the Slavic Department both during and when possible before the review period.
4. Provide an official explanation as to why the University was unable/unwilling to rein in Slavic Department faculty members who insisted on speaking with graduate students about the results of the 8-year review.
5. Take steps to right the wrongs done to UCLA graduate students in the Slavic Department, to make amends for the financial, professional, and academic damage done to graduate students in this program, both past and present. In addition, graduate students who either left the program of their own accord or who were forced out because of the testing procedure in place in the Slavic Department should be given the option (should they still want it) to re-enter the program and finish the degree. We do not imagine that many would want to avail themselves of this option, but as a matter of principle it should nonetheless be offered.
6. The system in place for departmental reviews needs to be completely revised:
 - a. A review once every eight years is not nearly often enough. Reviews should take place at least every three years, if not more often. When reviews are done with so much time in between them, what happens is that many of the students who were hurt/abused (assuming there are any abuse) have already left the program and have no opportunity to tell their story. Those students still remaining are of course reluctant to come forth as openly as they should, since they are completely dependent on the faculty being reviewed. Failure to do this results in what you see today in the Slavic Department. The previous 8-year review in the Slavic Department was worse than having no review

whatsoever, because it barely scratched the surface of all the abuse going on at that time. What this does, then, is provide the department with cover, in that it can claim that, while it might have a few problems now and again (and after all, what program doesn't?) things are by and large all right, and in support of this assertion, they can simply point to the 8-year review.

b. The department being reviewed should not be allowed to suggest a list of possible external reviewers. Before the external reviewers are finally selected, their names should be run past the graduate students of that department to prevent situations which happened with this most recent review when we discovered that Alan Timberlake was going to be on the external review committee.

c. Provisions should be made not only for external *faculty* reviewers, but for external *graduate student* reviewers as well.

d. Both internal and external reviewers should be given the time and administrative support they need to do a through review, including, if necessary, personnel qualified to do financial accounting. As it stands with this most recent review of the Slavic Department, as bad as the results appear to be, there is much more that was never ever touched upon.

7. A system for disciplining and censuring faculty members which does not require graduate students to identify themselves must be implemented by the University, otherwise it will never be possible to punish faculty for wrongdoing. Since graduate students, for obvious reasons, cannot come right out and accuse their own faculty, this will involve markedly increased oversight of the faculty from those above them administratively. If the University comes to the conclusion that it cannot provide such increased oversight authority with an eye towards enabling it to discipline, when needed, faculty members, then the University should be prepared to explain why it is unable to ensure a proper standard of behavior from its faculty and why it is unable to punish its own faculty.

8. Exit interviews should be done for all graduate students. In instances where graduate students have simply stopped attending, UCLA should take the initiative in contacting these graduate students to ascertain why it is they have chosen to leave their program.

9. The University, in future review sessions, should be absolutely clear what it can and cannot do in terms of protecting graduate students and in keeping them from being questioned by their own faculty members as to the content of the departmental review in which the students participated.

10. The University needs to take a long, hard look at what should fall under the rubric of academic freedom and what should not. Anytime anyone ever tries to bring the problem faculty members in the Slavic Department in line (or at least to get them to stay within the

norms of expected behavior), they immediately cry out that their freedom as scholars is being violated and that this is an unspeakable affront not only to them, but to the University as a whole. Academic freedom and academic tenure are hallmarks of the American system of higher education. While we realize that there are pluses and minuses to these two institutions, as is the case with any institution, we in general have no problem with them per se, realizing they are important to the educational and intellectual process. This does not mean, however, that we think they can or should be interpreted as a license to act arbitrarily. When the situation is such that these two concepts are equated with complete freedom from University oversight and authority, at this point we feel that these institutions are being abused, to the detriment both of students and the public at large who support institutions of higher learning.

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