

Academic Programme Review

Panel Report

Department of French and Spanish
Memorial University of Newfoundland
(April 8, 2014)

Table of Contents

Panel Members	1
Procedure	1
Preamble	1
Recommendations	2
Governance	2
Committee Structures	3
Undergraduate Curriculum Committee	4
Graduate Curriculum Committee	6
Search Committees	6
Coordinators	6
Programmes	7
Graduate Programmes	7
Undergraduate Programmes (French / Spanish / Italian)	8
Undergraduate (French)	9
Undergraduate (Spanish)	10
Undergraduate (Italian)	10
Terms Abroad / Field Schools	10
Research	11
Space	12
Support Staff	13
Department Identity	14
Appendix 1: Site Visit Itinerary	17
Appendix 2: Summary of Recommendations	19

Department of French and Spanish Academic Programme Review Panel Report

Panel Members

- Dr. Nancy Pedri, Department of English, Memorial University (chair)
- Dr. John Buffinga, Department of German and Russian, Memorial University
- Dr. Rita De Grandis, Department of French, Hispanic and Italian Studies, University of British Columbia
- Dr. Pierre-Yves Mocuais, Department of French, Italian and Spanish, University of Calgary

Procedure

The panel received a Self Study Report on January 30, 2014 that included 7 appendices. There was a welcome dinner on March 5, 2014 hosted by the Associate Vice President Academic which included the review panel, the Dean of Arts, the Dean of Graduate Studies and the APR coordinator. The site visit took place on March 6 and 7. During this time, the panel requested additional material, including course syllabi, promotional material and calendar course descriptions and programme requirements. The entire two days were spent in interviews with faculty, staff and students of the Department of French and Spanish (see attached meeting schedule). Each interviewee was given the opportunity to contact the chair of the panel via email with any additional information they would like to share. A total of 10 emails were collected during the two days. At the end of the day on March 7, 2014, the panel met with members of the Department to share with them some preliminary findings and to answer any questions from those in attendance. The panel met on March 8 to begin drafting the APR Report.

Preamble

The panel would like to thank the Department of French and Spanish and particularly the Department head Dr. Anne Thareau, support staff members Patricia Churchill and Heather O'Brien and the APR coordinator Kim Myrick for the superb organization of the APR.

The members of the panel were provided with a number of documents that included a Self Study Report by the Department as well as recommendations from the previous Academic Program Review Report. The panel noted that some important recommendations made in the previous Academic Program Review Report had not been carried out. The present report will therefore take this factor into account in the recommendations it formulates.

The panel considers that the Department has many strengths and much potential. Our intent is to focus on academic planning, innovation and improvement in the unit.

However, the panel was deeply concerned by what it perceived as an unhealthy work environment, one that impedes progress on several fronts. These include guidelines for governance; curriculum development; the Department's vision of itself and the general professional growth of each member of the unit, including staff members.

The issues that impede growth range from minor offences to intimidation and bullying. Although such behaviours are not necessarily perceived by those who practice them, the panel has reason to believe that this type of conduct promotes a culture of mistrust and fear. In such a culture, the rightful expression of academic freedom and freedom of expression end up taking the form of bullying tactics that can, in turn, lead to silence and deep resentment. This major concern, shared by all four of the panel members, informs part of our thinking and many of our recommendations.

In order to create a healthy, efficient and productive work environment where everyone independently of rank, including staff, develops to its fullest potential and efficiency, the APR panel makes the following recommendations.

Recommendations

Governance

As mentioned in the preamble to this report, the panel was gravely concerned about what seems to be a prevalent culture of intimidation in the Department. Not only did the panel perceive and experience this problematic behaviour first-hand, but it was mentioned or strongly suggested during the interviews by several members of the Department at all ranks. We have brought this issue to the attention of the Provost and the Dean of Arts and have mentioned it prominently during the exit meeting with faculty, staff and students, offering suggestions as to how to improve the general collegial culture of the Department. The remedying of this situation will increase not only the attractiveness of the work environment, but also provide the climate necessary for greater productivity, the open exchange of ideas and an even stronger teaching profile.

A further point of concern is the perceived lack of transparency in decision making and the lack of true collegial process. This, in turn, tends to foster a culture of intimidation where few people yield power outside the normal channels of governance. Indeed, the panel was surprised to note that the Self Study Report lacks information on the structure of governance of the Department. To ensure the collegial rights of members, we recommend that

1. the Department draft a *handbook of governance* with clearly defined roles for committees and all administrative duties that fall upon faculty members.

The handbook needs to address such issues as the terms of office (i.e., maximum three-year term), terms of appointment, structuring of committees and fair representation of different ranks on those committees, and other such matters so as to avoid potential conflicts of interest, ambiguity and secrecy or manipulation tactics.

In addition, it has been brought to our attention that the distribution of day-to-day tasks is not clearly defined for or understood by faculty members.

Hence, the panel recommends

1. establishing and disseminating to all members of the unit clear guidelines regarding operational procedures to assure transparency, fairness and efficiency of the unit's self-governance. The panel wishes to accentuate that this is the responsibility of Faculty members, and not of the unit's support staff members.
2. providing all departmental members with clear guidelines of support staff duties. In addition, appropriate training should be made available to Faculty members in order to ensure that they themselves can carry out the basic duties incumbent upon them, such as photocopying, typing, completion and submission of travel claims, etc.

The panel was also surprised and troubled to learn that in many instances University Regulations are not observed, which results in a lack of consistency in relation to the number of contact hours with students, number of office hours and syllabi requirements.

We thus recommend that the unit

1. review University policy paying particular attention to contact hour requirements (3 hrs/wk = 3 credit hours), syllabi requirements (see Faculty of Arts template) and cancellation policies.
2. implement University policy through several review processes that can be administered by the various committees (see below).
3. report all University policy infractions to the head of the Department, who is responsible for rectifying the situation.

Committee Structures

The panel noted with concern that the Department seems to operate on the basis of individual or small group preferences, rather than on the basis of a formalized collegial structure. It is therefore recommended

1. that standing committees of the Department be created.
2. that the term of office of committee members stipulate adequate term limits in order to ensure a proper rotation of Department members on any given committee (for example, two year terms, renewable once).

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

The most important committee that needs to be created at this juncture is an *Undergraduate Curriculum Committee* that oversees all undergraduate programmes in the Department. The absence of a curriculum committee that oversees the ongoing curriculum development and academic coordination of the Department programmes seems to have allowed for individual biases and preferences to commandeer curriculum development. Therefore, the panel recommends that once curriculum issues have been discussed at the level of each section (French and Spanish), they be placed in the hands of an Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) whose responsibility it will be to ensure the coherence of the programmes as well as their ongoing development.

The UCC should also be responsible for recommending the approval of course content, the choice of course manuals in multi-section courses, the monitoring of overall enrolments, the monitoring of trends in individual course enrolments, the recommendation of possible remedial actions and other pertinent matters. This will ensure that the programme answers to the needs of students and the priorities of the Department and of the University, rather than to the preferences of faculty members.

The panel was also quite surprised to see the very broad lack of consistency in course syllabi, which do not follow University regulations as stipulated in the University calendar. One of the roles of the UCC would be to review course syllabi to ensure that they abide by University regulations.

Similarly, it appears that over the years, the very valuable international activities of the Department have become the private domain - if not fiefdom - of individual Faculty members. The panel was sympathetic to the idea that it may be difficult for one individual to handle all residence abroad initiatives. However, it is concerned that the coordination of each programme may have become an overly personalized and strictly individualized matter. The panel therefore recommends that a *Study Abroad Committee* be struck that would oversee and coordinate all international activities of the Department (see below under Study Abroad / Field Schools)

The panel further recommends that the *Steering Committee*, that at present seems to have much executive, decision-making authority, be essentially an advisory committee to the Head and only decide on recommendations made by other committees of the Department in exceptional circumstances (such as the absence of quorum at a Department meeting). The current composition of the Steering Committee (two elected members, two appointed

members and the Head) seems adequate provided that the appointed members balance the membership rather than increase imbalance.

The panel thus recommend that the Unit

1. establish very clear guidelines for all of its committees that specify the committee's responsibilities; the make-up of the committee, including specifications for French and Spanish representation; the number of members on the committee; the term of their appointment and the conditions of their appointment (elected, appointed, ex officio).
2. that elected members of committees be elected by secret ballot upon nomination and conditional upon the nominee(s) having accepted the nomination.
3. that an Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) be created, chaired by the Head or a designate and composed of 1) the first-year coordinator, 2) two undergraduate advisors, one for French and one for Spanish, 3) two elected members and that the responsibilities of the UCC be as described in the narrative above.
4. that, as per recommendation 1, clear terms of office be created such as two years renewable once or three years non-renewable except under exceptional circumstances.
5. that these committees meet regularly and report to the Department with recommendations to be voted upon by the Department council.
6. that sections (French and Spanish) not have authority to make independent changes to programmes, but that such changes be brought to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, which in turn will make appropriate recommendations to the Department.
7. that when standing committees of the Department make recommendations, these be considered only once moved and seconded at Department meetings.
8. that the positions of section coordinators (French and Spanish) be abolished; instead sections can meet, decide on recommendations for curriculum development they want to make, present these recommendations to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, which in turn will make appropriate recommendations to the Department.

Graduate Curriculum Committee

The panel believes that with nearly 300 majors in French, there should be more students in the graduate programme. In order to strengthen the graduate programme, the panel recommends a number of measures, the first being a reinforcement of the membership and functions of the *Graduate Curriculum Committee*.

The Graduate Curriculum Committee is currently comprised of three members (the Department Head, the Graduate Advisor and one Faculty member). The panel recommends

1. that the committee be renamed *Graduate Studies Committee (GSC)*.
2. that the committee consist of five members : the Departmental Head, (ex-officio) or his/her designate, the Graduate Advisor (as chair), three members elected by the Department and representing each rank and a graduate student representative appointed by the Head.
3. that the responsibilities of the GSC be similar to those of the UCC (see above) including the approval of syllabi for all graduate courses offered by the Unit to ensure that syllabi requirements as per the Faculty of Arts template and University calendar regulations are followed.

Search Committees

The panel was alarmed to learn that serious conflicts, both personal conflicts of interest and Departmental conflicts, have found their way into the management and decision-making processes of search committees over the past several years.

The panel makes the following recommendations

1. that a new search committee be struck for each position sought.
2. that the composition of a search committee follow University regulations as stated in the Collective Agreement (7.06).

Coordinators

To further facilitate the open exchange of ideas and avoid procedures that enable individual Faculty members to become the sole voice governing decisions, the panel recommends

1. that section coordinator positions be eliminated (see above).

2. that the position of *First Year Coordinator* be strengthened to include a scholarly expectation in the field of second-language acquisition, computer assisted language learning (CALL) and other such issues.
3. that all first-year courses whether in French, Spanish or Italian be ultimately the overall coordinating responsibility of the UCC and that the First Year Coordinator for French report to the UCC.
4. that the position of Graduate Coordinator be rotated regularly (for instance, every three years).

Programmes

Graduate Programmes

The panel perceived a great disparity between the academic levels of the two MA programmes offered by the Department in terms of competence in the target language. The panel considered the possibility of recommending that MA/MEd courses NOT be counted toward the MA in French. It realized, however, that this may present serious logistical issues. The panel is therefore recommending that the number of MA/MEd courses used toward completion of the MA in French degree be strictly regulated.

The panel was also interested by the idea of an interdisciplinary graduate programme that would capitalize on some of the present strengths in the Department, including the cross appointment in Folklore and in Linguistics. If such a programme were to be considered, it could act as a bridge between the MA in French and the MA/MEd programmes. However, the panel felt that the creation of such a programme should not be to the detriment of the established MA and MA/MEd programmes.

We thus recommend

1. that the two MA programmes be clearly distinct: MA French and MA/MEd.
2. that the MA/MEd stream be separate with courses that prepare students to advance in their teaching careers with solid preparation in French competency. To raise the competency in French, the panel suggests an exit component for all students at the end of each academic year. We strongly suggest that this exit component be a DELF/DALF testing. Other options include a mock French teaching class for the teaching level of the particular student (elementary, intermediate) or additional French language courses.
3. that the Honors requirement be removed for the MA in French, as per procedures followed by most Masters programmes in French across Canada. This, in turn, would require that the preparation of students at all

levels be strengthened, particularly in writing and oral French skills. To achieve a strengthening in these competencies, the panel suggests revising the undergraduate curriculum (see below).

4. that students who choose (and are encouraged) to prepare an Honors BA in French have their course load reduced in the MA programme in French.
5. that the number of courses in the MA/MEd programme that can be taken toward the MA in French be strictly limited, such as no more than 25% of the total course load.
6. for the MA/MEd programme, that all applicants to this programme be tested for French efficiency at the beginning of their programme. This testing can be conducted via skype, professor interviews, or video-taped presentation. If the student's proficiency does not satisfy the minimum language expectation / requirement, we suggest that students be counseled as to how to increase their language proficiency (extra language courses, Frecker summer programme (see Self Study Report 3.3.1) or tutoring) and be advised that this is an essential, and not secondary, component of their MA/MEd degree.
7. that, for the possible creation of an interdisciplinary MA programme, further investigation be carried out with a view to avoiding weakening existing programmes.

Undergraduate Programmes (French / Spanish/ Italian)

The panel felt very strongly that the programme in Spanish needs to be strengthened and to that effect suggests that the unit promote a double major in French and Spanish. This promotion can extend beyond the MUN campus and the Unit's course offerings to include a combined France / Spain / Italy field trip. Notwithstanding some of the concerns expressed earlier as well as associated recommendations about the coordination of Study Abroad Opportunities, the panel was impressed by the overwhelmingly positive feedback it received about all terms abroad experiences. This is why the panel recommends strongly that a combined effort be implemented that would further encourage students to pursue those fields of study. At the same time, with the creation of a Study Abroad Committee, it would encourage further collaborative efforts among the various languages and instructors in the Department.

In addition, the panel strongly supports the continuation of Italian offerings and would like to see it integrated in the more comprehensive term abroad model.

The planning and announcement of courses should be communicated one year before their offerings to allow students to plan, progress and complete their requirements in a timely fashion. This would also allow Faculty members to plan courses in advance and promote

them to students (via class announcements, poster creation, hall monitors, etc). By the end of the fall semester, consultation should have taken place between the Department head and individual Faculty members in order to assess course requirements and teaching preferences. Courses should be prominently advertised in the department and on all of their social electronic media venues. This planning recommendation is particularly crucial for assuring enrollment in the higher-level Spanish courses.

Undergraduate (French)

The panel was quite interested by the evident interest in translation by a significant number of students. It noted that the previous Academic Program Review report had recommended that a certificate in translation be created. Although the panel wishes to renew this recommendation, it notes that the Self Study Report clarifies that this is not a viable option given that the Faculty members who teach translation are retiring.

The panel also felt very strongly that the sort of dichotomies and resulting tensions between so-called “traditionalists” who seem to favour the study of canonical forms of literature and those who seem to favour “cultural studies” are counterproductive.

Consequently, the panel recommends

1. that new courses be created that give a historically-based overview of French literature and ideas/thought. Such overview courses may attract students from other Departments.
2. that, as strongly suggested by various students and faculty members, an advanced writing course be created at the 3000 level that all majors in French would need to take.
3. that a greater emphasis be placed on academic writing assignments in the target language in all courses at all levels. Standards should be established for every level so as to guarantee progressive learning or what is often referred to as a scaffolding effect. In order to promote the importance of writing, the panel suggests that these assignments comprise a significant component of the final grade.
4. that the oral proficiency of students in French be tested and, when necessary, improved. We suggest implementing a policy that the target language be the language of instruction starting at the very least at the 2000 level courses. Further encouragement of oral French skills may take the form of an undergraduate student symposium, conversation classes, extracurricular conversation classes, film/book clubs, etc.
5. that considering the available expertise in French translation and the interest in the field among students, translation courses be created at all levels starting with the 2000 level.

Undergraduate (Spanish)

The panel applauds the initiative to raise the profile of Spanish at MUN and the wider community through such initiatives as the Hispanic film series and in terms of curriculum renewal by way of film courses. The La Coruña study abroad programme also contributes to the promotion of Spanish Studies at MUN.

The panel encourages continued efforts to renew the programme through its rotation of courses and the creation of courses devoted to Latin America.

Our recommendations are

1. that, in the aim of ensuring the timely completion of a Major in Spanish, the requirements for the Major in Spanish be reduced from 36 to 33 credit hours as suggested in the Self Study Report (see 3.3.5.2).
2. that the Department seriously consider the implementation of a double major in French and Spanish.

Undergraduate (Italian)

The panel believes that the study of Italian has the potential to grow, especially given its relevance for students in the School of Music.

Therefore, the panel recommends:

1. That the Department examine the possibility, over time and depending on demand, of moving toward the creation of a Minor in Italian.
2. That new courses in Italian, taught in English, be offered in order to attract a greater proportion of the University students' population

Terms Abroad / Field Schools

The panel is satisfied with the administration and success of the terms abroad programmes. The panel was particularly impressed by the unique Frecker programme, but feels that serious adjustments to the programme are needed if it is to maintain its record of excellence. If the Department pursues the recommendation to build bridges between the various languages offered in the Department, it may wish to consider a number of appropriate measures. Therefore, the panel recommends

1. that a Study Abroad Committee comprised of representatives from each of the target languages be struck with three members elected by the

Department plus one member appointed by the Head. The Department may also wish to consider students representation. This committee would ensure the appropriate level of coordination between the various study abroad programmes and would coordinate a joint field school/programme between the three languages (see 3. below).

2. that a more permanent arrangement be devised for the director of the Frecker programme. The appointment of the director should be accompanied by clear specifications as to what the position entails and a steady continuity in these obligations. In addition, a stronger commitment to provide support for this position is required.
3. that the position of director of the Frecker programme be, at the very least, a three-year contract appointment so as to ensure the commitment of the Unit and the continued success of the programme.
4. that, with a view to build bridges between the three languages offered in the Department and ensure stronger collaboration as well as attract a greater number of students, the Department consider implementing a joint study abroad program/field school between French, Spanish and Italian.

Research

Upon review of the *curriculum vitae* included in the Self Study Report, the panel discovered that the perceived research output of the Department does not reflect the actual research output of Faculty members. Despite perceptions of a healthy research output, the panel strongly feels that according to the standard of academic research (peer reviewed publications, books, edited academic journals) Faculty members are not sufficiently engaging in the type of research productivity that is practiced or expected within the University.

Although many internal travel grants have been secured for conference presentations, this work is not necessarily translated into peer-reviewed articles, refereed book chapters, larger research projects, collections of essays, or monographs. Given the many initiatives put into place by the Faculty of Arts to promote and increase research activity, the panel feels that the conference papers and the funds granted for their delivery should more frequently translate into the dissemination of scholarly work through publication.

We thus recommend

1. a greater initiative on the part of all Faculty members to publish their research in venues where peer review is practiced.

2. a larger number of applications to all types of internal and external grant opportunities, with the view to publish research findings. We would like to encourage Faculty members to avail of the services provided by the Faculty of Arts Grant Facilitator.

Space

The issue of space was raised by Faculty members, students and staff in all interviews with the panel, as well as in the Self Study Report. The problem is twofold: there is not enough space and, in some cases, the space is inappropriate.

The lack of space is especially noticeable in terms of office accommodation for per course instructors (13 in 2013-2014), most of whom share an office with up to four per room. The logistics of setting up schedules for meetings with students are enormous, and add to the workload of already overburdened administrative staff. Moreover, meeting with students in such tight quarters is unprofessional and sends a signal to both instructors and students that their work is not really valued. In many departments, the seminar room is used for such purposes, but this does not work in this case, since the room houses costly and sensitive audio visual equipment.

The panel also notes that there is no dedicated space for students of French and Spanish to meet and socialize. Such spaces are crucial for the formation of discussion groups and contributing to the cohesiveness of a group of students with common interests.

In terms of inappropriate space, the general office is the most conspicuous example. The office houses the work stations of two staff members, access to the office of the Head of the Department, mailboxes for faculty and per course instructors, a coffee machine available to all, numerous filing cabinets, the Unit's photocopying machine, and other office equipment. While the Administrative Staff Specialist has a dedicated space within the general office that can be locked, the work station of the Intermediate Secretary is merely defined by movable dividers; it is not a separate, lockable space. This poses a serious problem since the Intermediate Secretary works for the Head and handles confidential files. Indeed, whenever the secretary leaves the general office, she has to lock away all files since all faculty members and per course instructors have a key to the general office. The office can thus be accessed by all Faculty members at all times, including evenings and weekends when there are no staff members present.

Moreover, the way the general office is currently configured, staff members do not have a clear view of who enters or leaves the general office or who has access to the office of the Head. The office layout also has a negative impact on the work environment in the sense that Faculty members and per course instructors who currently have unfettered access to the general office do not always appreciate the need for privacy and confidentiality that the optimal functioning of a general office requires.

Given these space issues, we recommend that

1. the number of per course instructors currently sharing one office be reduced to a maximum of two instructors per office. This will make it easier for instructors to meet with students and to prepare for their teaching assignments, thereby contributing to a more positive work environment. It will also alleviate some of the current scheduling burdens.
2. students be given a dedicated room near the general office for the purpose of socializing and meeting between classes. This will contribute to the bonding between students and increase interest in their chosen areas of study.
3. the general office be reconfigured to include private, lockable work spaces for the two staff members, while also allowing them to have a greater overview of the office in general.
4. an office space consultant be hired to work with the Department on the reconfiguration of the general office so as to optimize the space and contribute to a professional and pleasant work environment. We support the purchasing of new furniture as per the recommendations of the office space consultant.
5. the photocopying machine be moved out of the general office.
6. access by Faculty members and per course instructors to the general office outside of office hours should be limited to the mailboxes.

Support Staff

The review panel was impressed by the support staff's dedication and loyalty to the Department in spite of the space problems and the stresses associated with a working environment that is far from ideal. We applaud their devotion and ability to diffuse tensions and manage issues that often fall outside of their job description or responsibilities.

We do, however, strongly support the hiring of another staff member that is either bilingual or has at least a basic knowledge of French and/or Spanish, as was already called for in recommendation 38 of the previous APR Report and which is referenced on pages 24 and 25 of the current Self Study Report. As a first point of contact for people coming into the main office, this person would be able to address people in French and/or Spanish, which would have an immense impact on the day- to-day running of the Department in terms of

setting the tone and creating an environment for both Faculty and students to use the target language outside of the classroom as well. In addition, such a person would manage some of the administrative duties that have had to be passed on to the Head, who has the required language proficiency.

We thus recommend

1. that a staff member that is either bilingual or has at least a basic knowledge of French and/or Spanish be hired.

Department Identity

It became very clear to the review panel in both the interviews with Faculty members and in the written submissions that the Department of French and Spanish is in a state of transition and is asking itself what it is and what it wants to be as it moves forward. Similar debates are happening in language and literature departments across the country and beyond in response to a rapidly changing world, a shift in administrative priorities and student demands, shrinking faculty complements and - should a department be fortunate enough to secure a new position - new hires replacing senior Faculty members. Language and literature departments are especially vulnerable in this regard, and, one might argue, particularly in this province with its small and largely monolingual population. Although French is an official language in Canada, and is a heritage language for some Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, the French section of the Department nevertheless faces problems such as those referenced above that are experienced by many foreign language and literature departments in Canadian universities. This applies even more to the Spanish unit in the Department, of course, which does not have official language status.

The Department is also grappling with a perceived waning interest on the part of students in literature, but cannot agree on how the existing programme, which has its roots in canonical approaches, may be adapted to meet current student demands. This issue was repeatedly brought to the panel's attention and was prominently raised in the Self Study Report in relation to French specifically. However, it is also clear to the panel that the Department is divided as to whether it should continue promoting a programme of study that highlights founding literary texts of Francophone civilization or replace such a programme of study with one that focuses more strongly on culturally and communication oriented texts. Discussions have become so polarized on the French side that one group is suggesting that the Department do away with the canon in favour of a cultural studies model, while another advocates that it be maintained.

While the review panel is sympathetic to these very real challenges, we have come to the conclusion after much discussion amongst ourselves that we strongly encourage Faculty members to avoid dichotomous or black and white thinking, thereby not only ignoring the complexities of their situation but also overlooking possible new ways of finding solutions. We would like the Department to embrace a model that sees the more traditional and the

cultural studies approach as complementary, rather than mutually exclusive. Given the modest size of the Department, we feel that it needs to protect the foundations of its discipline, while acknowledging at the same time that there are areas beyond the canon that are rapidly attracting academic attention. However, throwing out the canon while branching out into what appear to be rather specific and topical areas of study more typically associated with cultural or political studies puts the Department at risk of recreating precisely the kind of narrow specialties that it was trying to avoid in the first place.

The panel thus also warns against the type of appointment that creates a large polarization in the Department. Instead of advertising in niche areas, we recommend the model adopted by most departments in the Faculty of Arts at MUN, which comprises a broader, general search that attracts a large number of applicants and that will necessarily include either specializations or secondary research areas. These areas may well complement the niche areas that have attracted the Department's attention as a way of adapting to the times, while remaining true to the discipline. Moreover, this type of hiring will avoid the very real risk of diluting the emphasis on – and possible undermining of – the rightful integrity of French Studies within the Department, which we envision with regard to the Political Science, or the Social Sciences recommendation on page 21, paragraph 3 and 4 of the Self Study Report.

Doing away with polarized thinking would also benefit the Spanish component of the Department. Rather than working at cross purposes by favouring either a European or a Latin American centered approach, which came out of the interviews with Faculty members, we would like to encourage faculty to pursue the model that they themselves call for on pages 15 and 23 of the Self Study Report: a double major in French and Spanish, linked with a study-abroad component of six weeks in both France and Spain. It might even rotate to include the Caribbean. Such an initiative would go a long way in bridging the two solitudes. Further integration may be achieved through the creation of new theme courses and research clusters, thereby turning an imbalance in terms of numbers of Faculty members and student registrations in the two units into something positive and productive.

On the graduate studies front, the Department has put considerable effort into building joint initiatives with the Faculty of Education in order to provide French teachers already in the school system with the opportunity to raise their qualifications. The Department rightfully views the MA/MEd programme as a positive contribution. Raising the standards and the French proficiency levels of the programme will strengthen teachers too, which will pay dividends in future generations of students.

The panel would like to encourage the Department to continue its efforts to build up and expand its numbers in the French MA. We acknowledge the difficulties that (second) language and literature departments in general have in attracting graduate students. Unlike other units, in which the majority of students can function in their mother tongue, most students of French – and particularly in this province – first have to learn the language, the medium, before they can proceed to advanced French language or literary and cultural

studies. While it is also true that by the time they have their BA in French many MUN students decide to do graduate studies elsewhere or in a French speaking environment, the Department has a sizable pool of approximately 300 Majors from which it could draw a higher number of graduate students than the current 3 or 4. The panel sees considerable merit in the multi-disciplinary Masters programme surrounding the concept of “Les mondes francophones sur les cinq continents” referenced on page 10 of the Self Study Report, precisely because of its multifaceted target areas: dialectology, creoles, language evolution, the *francophonie*, cultural studies, and comparative literature. This would represent a significant broadening of scope for graduate students whose main interest may not be French literature in the canonical sense. Broadening the graduate programme is also in line, of course, with Memorial University of Newfoundland’s mandate.

Appendix 1: Site Visit Itinerary



DEPARTMENT OF FRENCH AND SPANISH

Academic Program Review
Site Visit Itinerary March 5 - 8, 2014

Wednesday, March 5th, 7:00 PM,
Dinner meeting - Panel Members meet with Associate V.P. (Academic), Dean of Graduate Studies and Dean of Record

Thursday, March 6 th Room: SN-4035		Friday, March 7 th Room: SN-4035		Saturday March 8 th
9:00 AM	Organizational meeting: Panel & APR Coordinator	9:00 AM	Organizational meeting: Panel & APR Coordinator	Panel: Draft Report Room: SN-4035
9:30 AM	Dr. A. Thureau, Department Head	9:30 AM	Dr. A. Thureau, Department Head	
10:00 AM	Sean Kennedy, Erin Rockwood and Rachel Rideout (Undergraduate Student Representatives)	10:00 AM	Dr. P. Basabose, Faculty (Graduate Studies Officer)	
10:30 AM	Prof. C. Jordaan Director, Frecker Program (via Skype)	10:30 AM	Angela Manuel Spanish Undergraduate Representative	
11:00 AM	Dr. V. Harger-Grinling, Faculty	11:00 AM	Prof. A. Pelta (Nice Study Abroad Coordinator)	
11:30 AM	Departmental Tour	11:30 AM	Dr. Barbara Thistle (First-Year Coordinator French and Per- course Appointees Representative)	
12:00 PM	Panel Lunch with Department Head and Two Invited Guests: (Dr. P. Basabose and Dr. M. O'Reilly)	12:00 PM	Panel working lunch	
1:30 PM	Flex time	1:30 PM	Dr. J. MacLean, Faculty (Université de Bretagne-Sud Study Abroad Officer)	
2:00 PM	Dr. Myriam Osorio, Faculty	2:00 PM	Cristina Fabretto, Per-course Appointee (Italian) and Francesca Boshcetti	
2:30 PM	Dr. Anne Graham, Faculty (via Skype)	2:30 PM	Patricia Churchill Heather O'Brien (Administrative Staff)	
3:00 PM	Dr. D.R. Gamble, Faculty	3:00 PM	Panel confers for exit meetings	
3:30 PM	Dr. M. O'Reilly (Undergraduate Student Advisor)	3:30 PM	Exit Meeting with Dean of Record Panel shares preliminary findings	
4:00 PM	Dr. M. Salama, Faculty (Spanish Coordinator and La Coruña Study Abroad Officer)	4:00 PM	Exit Meeting with Unit Head Panel shares preliminary findings	
4:30 PM	Sarah Martin (Graduate Student Representative) (via Skype)	4:30 PM	Exit Meeting with Unit Head, Faculty, Students, Staff Panel shares preliminary findings	
5:00 PM	Suggested time for panel to confer	5:00 PM	Suggested time for panel to confer	
7:00 PM	Working dinner for panel to discuss meetings and report writing	7:00 PM	Working dinner for panel to discuss meetings and report writing	

Review Panel Members:

- Dr. Nancy Pedri, Department of English, Memorial University
- Dr. John Buffinga, Department of German and Russian, Memorial University
- Dr. Rita De Grandis, Professor, Department of French, Hispanic and Italian Studies, University of British Columbia
- Dr. Pierre-Yves Mocquais, Department of French, Italian and Spanish, University of Calgary

Appendix 2: Summary of Recommendations

Summary of Recommendations

1. Drafting of a Handbook of Governance

That the Department draft a *handbook of governance* with clearly defined roles for committees and all administrative duties that fall upon faculty members. The handbook needs to address such issues as the terms of office (i.e., maximum three-year term), terms of appointment, structuring of committees and fair representation of different ranks on those committees, and other such matters so as to avoid potential conflicts of interest, ambiguity and secrecy or manipulation tactics.

2. Defining Day-to-day Tasks and Guidelines

- a. That the Department establish and disseminate to all members of the unit clear guidelines regarding operational procedures to assure transparency, fairness and efficiency of the unit's self-governance. The panel wishes to accentuate that this is the responsibility of Faculty members, and not of the unit's support staff members.
- b. That the Department provide all departmental members with clear guidelines of support staff duties. In addition, appropriate training should be made available to Faculty members in order to ensure that they themselves can carry out the basic duties incumbent upon them, such as photocopying, typing, completion and submission of travel claims, etc.

3. Implementing University Policies

- a. That the Department review University policy paying particular attention to contact hour requirements (3 hrs/wk = 3 credit hours), syllabi requirements (see Faculty of Arts template) and cancellation policies.
- b. That the Department implement University policy through several review processes that can be administered by the various committees (see below).
- c. That the Department report all University policy infractions to the head of the Department, who is responsible for rectifying the situation.

4. Creating an Appropriate Committee Structure: Undergraduate Curriculum Committee; Graduate Studies Committee; Search Committees

- a. That the Department establish very clear guidelines for all of its committees that specify the committee's responsibilities; the make-up of the committee, including specifications for French and Spanish representation; the number

of members on the committee; the term of their appointment and the conditions of their appointment (elected, appointed, ex officio).

- b. That elected members of committees be elected by secret ballot upon nomination and conditional upon the nominee(s) having accepted the nomination.
- c. That an ***Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC)*** be created, chaired by the Head or a designate and composed of 1) the first-year coordinator, 2) two undergraduate advisors, one for French and one for Spanish, 3) two elected members and that the responsibilities of the UCC be as described in the narrative above.
- d. That, as per recommendation 1, clear terms of office be created such as two years renewable once or three years non-renewable except under exceptional circumstances.
- e. That these committees meet regularly and report to the Department with recommendations to be voted upon by the Department council.
- f. That sections (French and Spanish) not have authority to make independent changes to programmes, but that such changes be brought to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, which in turn will make appropriate recommendations to the Department.
- g. That when standing committees of the Department make recommendations, these be considered only once moved and seconded at Department meetings.
- h. That the positions of section coordinators (French and Spanish) be abolished; instead sections can meet, decide on recommendations for curriculum development they want to make, present these recommendations to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, which in turn will make appropriate recommendations to the Department.
- i. That the Graduate Curriculum Committee be renamed ***Graduate Studies Committee (GSC)***.
- j. That the GSC consist of five members : the Departmental Head, (ex-officio) or his/her designate, the Graduate Advisor (as chair), three members elected by the Department and representing each rank and a graduate student representative appointed by the Head.
- k. That the responsibilities of the GSC be similar to those of the UCC (see above) including the approval of syllabi for all graduate courses offered by the Unit to ensure that syllabi requirements as per the Faculty of Arts template and University calendar regulations are followed.
- l. That new ***Search Committees*** be struck for each position sought and that the composition of a search committee be as follows: the Department Head or his/her designate, two Faculty members elected by the Department and one external Faculty member to the Department appointed by the Dean of Arts.

5. Redefining the Roles of Coordinators

- a. That section coordinator positions be eliminated (see above).
- b. That the position of *First Year Coordinator* be strengthened to include a scholarly expectation in the field of second-language acquisition, computer assisted language learning (CALL) and other such issues.
- c. That all first-year courses whether in French, Spanish or Italian be ultimately the overall coordinating responsibility of the UCC and that the First Year Coordinator for French report to the UCC.
- d. That the position of Graduate Coordinator be rotated regularly (for instance, every three years).

6. Refocusing Graduate Programmes

- a. That the two MA programmes be clearly distinct: MA French and MA/MEd.
- b. That the MA/MEd stream be separate with courses that prepare students to advance in their teaching careers with solid preparation in French competency. To raise the competency in French, the panel suggests an exit component for all students at the end of each academic year. We strongly suggest that this exit component be a DELF/DALF testing. Other options include a mock French teaching class for the teaching level of the particular student (elementary, intermediate) or additional French language courses.
- c. That the Honors requirement be removed for the MA in French, as per procedures followed by most Masters programmes in French across Canada. This, in turn, would require that the preparation of students at all levels be strengthened, particularly in writing and oral French skills. To achieve a strengthening in these competencies, the panel suggests revising the undergraduate curriculum (see below).
- d. That students who choose (and are encouraged) to prepare an Honors BA in French have their course load reduced in the MA programme in French.
- e. That the number of courses in the MA/MEd programme that can be taken toward the MA in French be strictly limited, such as no more than 25% of the total course load.
- f. That, for the MA/MEd programme, all applicants to this programme be tested for French efficiency at the beginning of their programme. This testing can be conducted via skype, professor interviews, or video-taped presentation. If the student's proficiency does not satisfy the minimum language expectation / requirement, we suggest that students be counseled as to how to increase their language proficiency (extra language courses, Frecker summer programme (see Self Study Report 3.3.1) or tutoring) and be advised that this is an essential, and not secondary, component of their MA/MEd degree.
- g. That, for the possible creation of an interdisciplinary MA programme, further investigation be carried out with a view to avoiding weakening existing programmes

7. Refocusing Undergraduate Programmes

- a. That new courses be created that give a historically-based overview of French literature and ideas/thought. Such overview courses may attract students from other Departments.
- b. That, as strongly suggested by various students and faculty members, an advanced writing course be created at the 3000 level that all majors in French would need to take.
- c. That a greater emphasis be placed on academic writing assignments in the target language in all courses at all levels. Standards should be established for every level so as to guarantee progressive learning or what is often referred to as a scaffolding effect. In order to promote the importance of writing, the panel suggests that these assignments comprise a significant component of the final grade.
- d. That the oral proficiency of students in French be tested and, when necessary, improved. We suggest implementing a policy that the target language be the language of instruction starting at the very least at the 2000 level courses. Further encouragement of oral French skills may take the form of an undergraduate student symposium, conversation classes, extracurricular conversation classes, film/book clubs, etc.
- e. That considering the available expertise in French translation and the interest in the field among students, translation courses be created at all levels starting with the 2000 level. That, in the aim of ensuring the timely completion of a Major in Spanish, the requirements for the Major in Spanish be reduced from 36 to 33 credit hours as suggested in the Self Study Report (see 3.3.5.2).
- f. That the Department seriously consider the implementation of a double major in French and Spanish.
- g. That the Department examine the possibility, over time and depending on demand, of moving toward the creation of a Minor in Italian.
- h. That new courses in Italian, taught in English, be offered in order to attract a greater proportion of the University students' population

8. Strengthening Terms Abroad and Field Schools

- a. That a Study Abroad Committee comprised of representatives from each of the target languages be struck with three members elected by the Department plus one member appointed by the Head. The Department may also wish to consider students representation. This committee would ensure the appropriate level of coordination between the various study abroad programmes and would coordinate a joint field school/programme between the three languages (see 3. below).

- b. That a more permanent arrangement be devised for the director of the Frecker programme. The appointment of the director should be accompanied by clear specifications as to what the position entails and a steady continuity in these obligations. In addition, a stronger commitment to provide support for this position is required.
- c. That the position of director of the Frecker programme be, at the very least, a three-year contract appointment so as to ensure the commitment of the Unit and the continued success of the programme.
- d. That, with a view to build bridges between the three languages offered in the Department and ensure stronger collaboration as well as attract a greater number of students, the Department consider implementing a joint study abroad program/field school between French, Spanish and Italian.

9. Increasing Research Output

- a. That there be a greater initiative on the part of all Faculty members to publish their research in venues where peer review is practiced.
- b. That a larger number of applications to all types of internal and external grant opportunities be made, with the view to publish research findings. We would like to encourage Faculty members to avail of the services provided by the Faculty of Arts Grant Facilitator.

10. Improving the Use of Space

- a. That the number of per course instructors currently sharing one office be reduced to a maximum of two instructors per office. This will make it easier for instructors to meet with students and to prepare for their teaching assignments, thereby contributing to a more positive work environment. It will also alleviate some of the current scheduling burdens.
- b. That students be given a dedicated room near the general office for the purpose of socializing and meeting between classes. This will contribute to the bonding between students and increase interest in their chosen areas of study.
- c. That the general office be reconfigured to include private, lockable work spaces for the two staff members, while also allowing them to have a greater overview of the office in general.
- d. That an office space consultant be hired to work with the Department on the reconfiguration of the general office so as to optimize the space and contribute to a professional and pleasant work environment. We support the purchasing of new furniture as per the recommendations of the office space consultant.
- e. That the photocopying machine be moved out of the general office.
- f. That access by Faculty members and per course instructors to the general office outside of office hours should be limited to the mailboxes.

11. Hiring of Support Staff

- a.** That a staff member that is either bilingual or has at least a basic knowledge of French and/or Spanish be hired.