



Memorial

University of Newfoundland

Office of the Vice-President (Academic)
and Pro Vice-Chancellor

20 November 2007

Dr. Peter Trnka
Interim Head
Department of Philosophy
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Dear Dr. ^{Peter}Trnka:

At its 10 October 2007 meeting, the Planning and Budget Committee (PBC) of Senate considered the self-study, review panel report, and the action plan that resulted from the Academic Program Review for the Department of Philosophy. The PBC wishes to express its appreciation to the faculty for its participation in the APR process and for undertaking the work that this process requires.

The primary purpose of formal academic program reviews is to give units an opportunity to engage in formative self-assessment and to obtain the advantages of commentary and advice from experts in the discipline. The role of the PBC is to monitor the process and develop a body of knowledge that is useful in making broad strategic recommendations and providing sound budgetary advice to the University. It is not the role of the Committee to determine allocations to individual units, but we can sometimes offer advice or make potentially useful observations.

An anticipated outcome of the process is a plan that clarifies how best to achieve the unit's objectives with the resources available to it. From the standpoint of the University, the process also provides a measure of accountability to the whole institution and the public that supports us.

During the course of our discussion the Committee noted the following points:

- That this review was very well done. The department should be complimented on how you conducted the review process and the goals you have set
- That the unit should be commended for linking the self study report with the

university strategic plan

- Development of a PhD program: PBC would encourage the Dean of Arts to keep this on the agenda and support the development of the PhD program, even though her letter mentions funding restrictions.
- There was concern whether it is reasonable to reintroduce a two-year MA program or whether those efforts should be put into the PhD program. There was discussion on the optimal time to complete a MA program: Other departments have a similar problem whether it is one year plus thesis, or three semesters to complete, and how to fit that within SGS regulations.
- The Committee agrees that more emphasis should be placed on research and efforts to increase research should be supported.
- One of the recommendations is that a review should be conducted of the undergraduate curriculum. The Committee supports this through the A.P.R. process and would welcome hearing from the Dean of Arts on which plans are in place to conclude that: a two-person review panel is one suggestion.
- The unit and the Dean are to be applauded on the new format for the action plan report. The Committee favors it be used as a standard template.

I offer my support and that of the Committee as you continue the important work outlined in your action plan and the points noted above. We look forward to seeing your one-year update in July 2008.

Sincerely yours,



H.E.A. Campbell
Vice-President (Academic)

- c. Dr. R. Tremblay, Dean of Arts and A.P.R. Dean of Record
Mr. Paul Chancey, CIAP
Ms. J. Bessey, A.P.R. Coordinator