

ACADEMIC UNIT PLANNING (AUP) LAY SUMMARY DOCUMENT: DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS

Timeline

Launch semester: Winter 2021.

Action Plan approval: Fall 2022.

1. Self-Study Process

The self-study process began in March 2021. It was agreed that faculty members would contribute components of the self-study document and that faculty, administrative staff, and undergraduate and graduate students would be involved in the Academic Unit Planning (AUP) process. Work on the self-study continued throughout Fall 2021 and Winter 2022. A student survey was designed with guidance from the Centre for Institutional Analysis and Planning (CIAP). The survey was delivered to current and former Classics students, both graduate and undergraduate, including majors and minors, in October 2021. In addition, consultations were held with staff and students. The input received from the survey and consultations informed the self-study.

The self-study report highlights the Department's overall success in maintaining enrolments and numbers of majors, delivering a varied, stimulating, and innovative Classics curriculum, maintaining a modest-sized but successful MA program, producing innovative and distinctive research, organizing events and developing projects in support of the goals of equity, diversity, inclusivity, and anti-racism (EDI-AR), and carrying out a range of public engagement activities. At the same time, the report notes the difficulty of continuing to maintain such efforts and activities with reduced faculty complement and constrained space resources. The report also explores the possibility of developing an MA stream in Classical Reception Studies (the study of the later influence and appropriation of aspects of Greco-Roman-antiquity). Such a program-stream would potentially both increase accessibility and provide a unique path of graduate study in Canada.

2. Panel Review

The panel review took place in May 2022. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the panel meetings were conducted virtually via Webex. In addition to reviewing the Department's self-study documents, the panel met with the Department Head, Academic Staff Members (ASM's), instructors, staff, undergraduate students, and graduate students. In their report, the panel describes Classics as "a fiercely good Department" that consistently goes "above and beyond expectations," noting the Department's strength in teaching, research, and public engagement. They offer particular praise for the Department's collegiality, interdisciplinarity, and ongoing projects in relation to EDI-AR. At the same time, the panel expresses concern that this high level of performance might not be sustainable given reduced faculty complement and high workload. The panel's recommendations include the continuation of the Department's work in EDI-AR, the pursuit of a tenure-track hire in the area of classical reception studies, the creation of needed office space and departmental social space, and the exploration of options and opportunities to increase graduate funding and support, especially for international students.

3. Unit Response and Action Plan

The Department submitted their response to the panel report in September 2022. The Department noted its agreement with the panel's core recommendations, and drafted an action plan to address them, which was submitted in October 2022. The plan outlines ten specific action items, which include pursuing a tenure-track position in Classical Reception Studies, continuing and extending ongoing projects related to EDI-AR and public engagement, exploring options and opportunities to increase graduate funding and support, and advocating for student work spaces and a departmental social space. Responsibility for implementing these action items is assigned to the Department Head, the Classics Graduate Officer, and the Department as a whole. As of Winter 2023, several of these action items have been completed or are in progress.