



Memorial

University of Newfoundland

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

15 February 2007

Dr. Martin Lovelace
Head
Department of Folklore
Memorial University

Dear Dr. Lovelace:

The Planning and Budget Committee of Senate considered the self-study, review panel report, departmental response, and final action plan that resulted from the Academic Program Review for the Department of Folklore at its 13 December 2006 meeting. The PBC wishes to express its appreciation to the Department 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 of the University an opportunity to engage in formative self-assessment and to obtain the advantages of commentary and advice from experts from the discipline in question. The role of 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 Department'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 discussion the committee noted the following points:

- It was generally felt that research productivity should be further investigated in the unit's strategic plan. The committee questioned the rationale behind increasing the faculty complement to increase research productivity within the department. The department is certainly well positioned to acquire external funding.

- The committee felt that the undergraduate student body within the unit could still grow. Efforts should be made to strengthen recruiting and retention of undergraduate students. Attracting the highest quality graduate students to the program should remain a priority of the unit as well.
- The committee generally felt that four years was a reasonable time to complete a Ph.D. program. The responsibility for timely completion of graduate degrees should be shared and students should not be overburdened.
- The issues with respect to the archives were duly noted by PBC members. Preliminary plans to consider a university-wide archives building may serve the needs of the department in the long term. However, it was generally felt that the department is not pursuing its interests aggressively enough.

The committee is of the opinion that the Department of Folklore has distinguished itself within the university. The department has made an enviable name for itself through strong research and graduate teaching and is, therefore, to be commended. Committee members encourage the unit to make stronger arguments in requesting resources, working closely with the Dean of Arts.

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

Sincerely yours,



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

- c. Dr. R. Tremblay, Dean of Arts
Mr. Paul Chancey, CIAP