



Memorial

University of Newfoundland

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

11 October 2007

Dr. Stephen Riggins
Head
Department of Sociology
Memorial University

Dear Dr. Riggins:

The Planning and Budget Committee of Senate considered the self-study, review panel report, and the departmental response and action plan that resulted from the Academic Program Review for the Department of Sociology at its June 27th, 2007 meeting. 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 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 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.

While the committee was somewhat concerned by the lack of clear direction of the unit in the Self Study document it was noted that curriculum review has started, a good case for space has been made by the unit (and now provided in part because of the APR process), and overall the department is more communicative.

During the course of discussion the committee noted the following points:

- Committee members noted the issue surrounding the effectiveness of distance courses. It was questioned if the unit was working with DELT and, if not, it should consider doing so.
- The unit's concern over having access to more of their research overheads warrants further discussion with the V.P. (Research).
- Apparent communication issues with respect to the Police Studies program were noted. The committee encourages the unit to continue effective communications for the benefit of all involved in this program.

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 June 2008.

Sincerely yours,



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

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