

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan

1 Review Summary

Program(s) Reviewed:	German Studies (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor German Studies in English: Minor Al and Malka Green Yiddish Program: Minor Business German: Minor Certificate in Global German Studies (U of T Global Scholar) Germanic Languages and Literatures, MA: Fields: • German Literature, Culture and Theory • Yiddish Studies Germanic Literature, Culture and Theory, PhD
Unit Reviewed:	Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	• Professor David Gramling, Department of Central, Eastern, and Northern European Studies, University of British Columbia • Professor Carrie Smith, Modern Languages and Cultural Studies Department, University of Alberta • Professor Kathryn Starkey, Department of German Studies, Stanford University
Date of Review Visit:	March 9-10, 2022 (conducted remotely)
Review Report Received by VPAP:	July 28, 2022
Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:	September 21, 2023
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 24, 2023

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: February 6-7, 2014

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- Excellent range of undergraduate course offerings and well-structured curriculum
- Premier graduate program ranked among the top in North America
- Increase in undergraduate and graduate enrolment over the past eight years
- Outstanding faculty with diverse areas of expertise
- Remarkable faculty research output, funding, publication record, and citation frequency

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Strengthening graduate student training as future language teachers
- Reviewing best practices for graduate comprehensive examinations
- Exploring the provision of increased support for conference participation and mentoring of graduate students
- Examining graduate student funding and time to completion rates
- Assessing the availability and cost of undergraduate study abroad programs and evening courses
- Expanding the use of technology for language instruction and addressing classroom space concerns

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Terms of reference; Self-study; Appendices; Previous review report including the administrative response; Access to all course descriptions; Access to the curricula vitae of faculty.

Consultation Process

Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science, Acting Vice-Dean, Academic Planning; department chair; associate chair, graduate; associate chair, undergraduate; faculty; undergraduate and graduate students; administrative staff and senior program administrators as well as members of relevant cognate units: Centre for Medieval Studies; Cinema Studies Institute; Department of History; Department for the Study of Religion.

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Undergraduate program is “a gem” of the highest quality, and “should be protected and promoted as a model program in language and culture”
 - ▶ Program is unique in Canada in providing intensive and rigorous training in the target language
- Objectives
 - ▶ Programs appear consistent with the University’s emphasis on academic excellence and with the Department’s and University’s desire to maintain international pre-eminence
 - ▶ Undergraduate program requirements align with Degree Level expectations
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Admission requirements to all programs appear appropriate; quality of admitted students is excellent
 - ▶ Robust number of majors in 2020-21 (36) far exceeds the number of German majors in most departments across North America
 - ▶ Unclear from documentation how many students are enrolled in each of the four Minor programs, but total number (113) is impressive, despite a drop since 2013
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Undergraduate curriculum is thorough and in line with proficiency goals
- Innovation
 - ▶ Teaching stream faculty should be commended for their innovative courses and clear dedication to the undergraduate program
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students spoke positively about the “Kaffeestunde” and the “iPraktikum” co- and extra-curricular opportunities
 - ▶ Teaching stream faculty are very engaged and energetic; and the Chair’s efforts to generate student involvement in the iPraktikum program are much appreciated
 - ▶ Department ranks very highly in student surveys; undergraduate majors note an excellent sense of community
 - ▶ The heft of research opportunities for undergraduate students is an impressive departmental strength
 - ▶ The “iPraktikum” is a signature program, and is leading the way in providing important applied research and professional development opportunities
 - ▶ Undergraduate colloquium is a unique feature of the research environment
 - ▶ Students note that opportunities to work on faculty research projects, such as the “Critical Zones” Environmental Humanities Research Network are highly valuable

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Lack of clarity noted around enrolment numbers in the Certificate in Global German Studies
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students reported disappointment in the lack of faculty and graduate student participation in the “Kaffeestunde”
 - ▶ Undergraduate students reported some tension in fourth year, when heritage speakers and more recent language learners are together in the same classes; nonheritage speakers report feeling disadvantaged, while heritage speakers felt that they had missed out on the bonding experience of years 1–3
 - ▶ Student feedback indicates that undergraduates do not necessarily find the dedicated co-curricular research opportunities useful
 - ▶ Participation in experiential learning research and professional development opportunities appears low

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Department should consider developing an annual large enrolment, English-language lecture course to draw students from across U of T into the Minor
 - ▶ Consider promoting one of the 200-level English-language seminars as an entry-level lecture course
 - ▶ Consider developing topics that could speak broadly to the current interests of Canadian students
 - ▶ “[T]here could be more engagement by the research faculty in the undergraduate program”
 - ▶ Students expressed a desire for an accelerated language class that would combine two semesters into one

2. Graduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Department has a large and healthy graduate student population; graduate program is the largest of its kind in Canada, and one of the largest in North America
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Admission requirements appear reasonable; quality of admitted students is excellent
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Enviable size of graduate program offers tremendous potential for developing a lively intellectual community

- ▶ Research faculty are very successful and active in scholarship; provide excellent research models to graduate students
- ▶ Faculty seminars expose graduate students to their research, and provide opportunities for students to engage deeply in their own research
- ▶ Department has worked to place collaboration and community in graduate student research environment front and centre with two new initiatives: the fledgling Collaborative Research and Creativity initiative, and the Graduate Research Colloquium
- ▶ Department offers additional funding to students who participate in available research opportunities, to encourage greater uptake
- ▶ Graduate students appreciate the support they receive from faculty
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ Graduate students have been very successful at receiving competitive fellowships
- Student funding
 - ▶ Department has been very successful in building its reputation and attracting graduate students, in part because it has secured external fellowships that fund international graduate students

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Graduate program “seems to be training students for the kind of academic jobs that no longer exist, and places undue pressures on students while not providing them with adequate funding or curricular support to complete the program as it is currently designed”
- Objectives
 - ▶ Department appears focused on the idea that all graduate students are aiming for and will achieve a tenure track position at a research institution
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Proficiency Exam is based on an extremely long list of primary texts, which appears to have no correlation with the seminars offered; reviewers “unanimous in deeming such an extensive reading list and series of exams as both counterproductive to the intellectual goals of the Department, and unreasonable given the funding situation”
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Graduate seminars are focused on faculty research interests and don’t seem to offer adequate coverage, although coverage is a requirement for the program
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Reviewers note it would have been useful to meet separately with the MA students, to get a sense of their experience in the program
 - ▶ Graduate students note frustration with the PhD exam structure, and feel that faculty “were disengaged and could do more to contribute to the intellectual climate of the Department”
 - ▶ Evidence suggests that it is unrealistic to expect students to complete the PhD within the five years allotted

- ▶ Though some faculty suggested that student teaching commitments is the reason for the longer time to PhD completion, reviewers observe that the year-long Qualifying Examination is likely a major contributing factor
- ▶ Reviewers note a lack of clarity around faculty commitment to student mentoring
- ▶ Graduate students note concerns that non-academic career paths are not a topic of discussion in the Department, and the onus is also placed on students to seek out University workshops on alternative careers
- ▶ Graduate student research opportunities beyond coursework and the thesis are fairly traditional, with more innovative opportunities seeing limited student participation
- Student funding
 - ▶ While funding is guaranteed for five years, few students are currently able to graduate by the end of their fifth year

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ PhD program requires major updates to improve the quality of training, experience, and to decrease time to completion
 - ▶ Maintain a stand-alone MA program as a means of recruiting PhD students, and an option for students not continuing on to a PhD
 - ▶ Yiddish program has significant growth potential, and could become a top-tier program in its own right (if given necessary resources)
- Objectives
 - ▶ Graduate program could align better with the goal of training graduate students for academic and non-academic careers
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ “The curriculum of the graduate program could benefit from revision”
 - ▶ Graduate curriculum could be better and more cohesively designed, to ensure adequate coverage and help students prepare for qualifying exams
 - ▶ PhD program milestones would benefit from rethinking, to make it more feasible for students to complete in five (or six) years
 - ▶ Department should consider whether the number of required courses is necessary, or whether courses could be redesigned or developed to help students accomplish the required canonical breadth, and keep abreast of important conversations across the field, particularly related to race and gender
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Reviewers assert it is imperative for the unit to review and radically update the current exam requirement, to ensure that students can complete the program in a timely manner; they observe that teaching is an important transferable skill and should not be dropped as a requirement
 - ▶ Reviewers suggest several potential alternatives to the current exam structure for consideration, including: tailoring the exam to seminar topics and reading lists; allowing students to develop shorter, tailored reading lists from the larger canonical one; eliminating the Proficiency Exam in favour of offering students seminars that

- survey German literary history; and replacing the “Comprehensive List” with the “Research Field List”; exploring other, creative exam formats
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Graduate students note desire for additional professional training that recognizes the diversity of career options for PhDs beyond academic tenure-track positions
 - ▶ More attention could be paid to developing discourse around transferable skills in the PhD and MA programs
 - ▶ Department urged to connect with alumni, and perhaps invite some back to discuss career paths with current students
 - ▶ Need identified for faculty to become more aware of and engaged in the current job market, and offer support to current graduate students to pursue non-academic career paths
 - ▶ Department might consider spearheading a graduate consortium of German Studies across Canada; graduate students would benefit from peer support and collaboration this might offer
 - ▶ Department might also benefit from collaborating to develop all-Canada graduate program outcomes, opportunities for preparation for comprehensive exams, syllabi, etc.
 - ▶ Consider integrating experiential learning opportunities into the curriculum, to allow for better time management among graduate students already stretched thin
 - ▶ Graduate students note desire for more faculty-led intellectual and scholarly events
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ Information on post-graduate employment is limited; department urged to track alumni trajectories and develop a database on post-graduation employment
- Student funding
 - ▶ “Essential to the continued success of the program will be reliable funding for Canadian and international graduate students in both German and Yiddish”
 - ▶ “It is imperative that Arts & Sciences commit to graduate funding for both Canadian and international students, and to maintain a consistent and reliable cohort size, which will allow the Department to plan an appropriate curriculum and build an intellectual community”

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Research
 - ▶ Department has the broadest scope of faculty research profile of any such unit or program in Canada, and among North American institutions more generally
 - ▶ Established and emerging expertise ranging from medieval literature to digital humanities; and Yiddish Studies to environmental humanities
 - ▶ Strengths in literature, film, cultural studies, critical theory, and second language acquisition
 - ▶ Range of research interests complemented by those of DAAD visiting scholars

- ▶ True strength in interdisciplinarity and literary criticism, with Yiddish and Medieval Studies particularly noteworthy
- ▶ Research high quality and high impact, with extensive output in top peer-reviewed journals, and great award success
- ▶ Participation in SSHRC competitions is impressively high compared to other U of T Humanities Departments; faculty have received many SSHRC Connections Grants and Insight Grants
- ▶ Strong research activity brings national and international visibility, and informs and financially supports graduate training and mentorship
- ▶ Combined funding is strong, and has remained steady since the last review period; Department is “leading the way in research dollars”
- ▶ Department has addressed small decline in funding applications by developing bridge funding to encourage applications
- ▶ “In short: this Department is a research powerhouse”
- Faculty
 - ▶ Teaching stream faculty very impressive; exhibit high-energy and are clearly deeply engaged in the Department
 - ▶ Department should be lauded for hiring a Language Coordinator (a previous review recommendation), which has had a lasting impact on undergraduate teaching, and TA and instructor training
 - ▶ Faculty cross-appointments can be beneficial in terms of interdisciplinarity and collaboration
 - ▶ Highly skilled CLTA recently hired at assistant professor level, which has had a major positive impact

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Research
 - ▶ Relatively light offerings in contemporary studies; need identified to grow coverage in gender, race, and sexuality
 - ▶ Research outputs overall “tip toward the traditional, single-scholar model”
 - ▶ Small decline in faculty funding applications in recent years
 - ▶ Given challenges with respect to service-related work-load imbalances and the weight that each faculty members must carry in such a small unit, research challenges likely to be exacerbated by anticipated retirements
- Faculty
 - ▶ Department is small and the tenure stream faculty face unique challenges, including a “stark gender imbalance and lack of racialized diversity” (though reviewers note the latter concern is shared broadly across the discipline)
 - ▶ The last tenure stream research hire dates to 2008, and potential retirements will impact the Department’s ability to continue high level productivity in all research areas, as well as the delivery of the graduate program
 - ▶ Recent requests for a hire combined with Environmental Studies have been rejected

- ▶ Repeated concerns noted by cross-appointed faculty regarding unequal service expectations, leading to challenges related to promotion and other career opportunities
- ▶ Faculty indicate a lack of clarity regarding requirements to advance to Full professor, and some faculty (particular those who have been heavily involved in administration) have remained at Associate rank for a long time

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
 - ▶ Consider growing coverage in contemporary studies, gender, race, and sexuality
 - ▶ Consider leveraging burgeoning research with graduate students into more creative research applications with a wider range of community impacts, and to support undergraduate and graduate research initiatives
 - ▶ Research will need cultivation and support from the Department and Dean's office to continue at its current high level
 - ▶ Consider conducting a review of service responsibilities, particularly for cross-appointed faculty, to help support continued research productivity and high impact output
 - ▶ Consider incentivizing grant work through Faculty-funded course releases and funds for grant writers, to potentially help ensure continued success
- Faculty
 - ▶ CLTA position noted as crucial to the continued success of the undergraduate program; their appointment is precarious and reviewers strongly urge the Dean's Office to convert it into a permanent teaching stream position
 - ▶ In light of potential retirements in the coming years, the Department will need to engage in strategic complement planning
 - ▶ Noting the two-time failure of a proposed joint appointment with the School of the Environment, reviewers recommend against pursuing such a position
 - ▶ "The Committee strongly recommends that a future hire in the Department be given a full FTE, ideally in contemporary studies, a key place students wish to see more emphasis"
 - ▶ Reviewers recommend considering a new 100% appointment, advertised as open field and prioritizing equity-denied candidates, especially racialized and/or women identified scholars, building on departmental strengths, and taking an active role in shaping the field for the future
 - ▶ "[M]ore emphasis must be placed on gender parity and inclusion of scholars from equity-denied groups in hiring practices"
 - ▶ Department and Faculty strongly encouraged to begin robust conversations around promotion eligibility, and how to support mid-career colleagues in their career goals; clear requirements for promotion should be established, documented and communicated to all faculty groups
 - ▶ "[T]he Committee also strongly recommends that the Dean's Office undertake a workload analysis with particular focus on cross-appointments, identifying structural and infrastructural needs to support that interdisciplinary work, in order to ensure

- that those collaborations are fruitful without unduly burdening those faculty members serving two or more Departments, programs, or units”
- ▶ Conduct a service audit to clarify who is doing how much work in particular areas, and whether it is compensated, assigned, scheduled, and/or voluntary; ask faculty what service they wish to do before it is assigned
 - ▶ Reduce or remove service obligations for which there isn’t adequate time or personnel
 - ▶ Explore approaches to encouraging the active participation of associate professors in departmental administration and operations

4. Administration

Note: Issues that are addressed through specific University processes and therefore considered out of scope for UTQAP reviews (e.g., individual Human Resources issues, specific health and safety concerns) are routed to proper University offices to be addressed, and are therefore not included in the Review Summary component of the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Undergraduate course enrolment numbers demonstrate that the Department serves the University in a significant way
 - ▶ The iPraktikum program appears to be popular, and provides students with real-life experience and opportunities to liaise with community
 - ▶ Department has done a very good job with outreach to attract graduate applications and high-quality students
 - ▶ Strongest ‘esprit de corps’ found among undergraduate students, who are eager, diverse, ambitious, and inspired
 - ▶ Full-time faculty are passionate, ambitious and driven, with strong ideas for future directions
 - ▶ Department did admirable job of simulating physical community during pandemic disruptions
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Department is in good financial standing and has the support of the Faculty
 - ▶ Chair has created new lounge space, which appears very well-received
 - ▶ Department took advantage of opportunity during the pandemic to renovate for lower carbon-impact and ecological sustainability
 - ▶ Department is “fortunate” to not have funding directly tied to enrolments
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ “The Review Committee found much to praise about the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures: the large and robust graduate and undergraduate programs, the energetic teaching faculty, innovative efforts within the Department (particularly Yiddish Studies), efforts across the University, and beyond the

- University (iPraktikum), and the manifold intellectual contributions by faculty and graduate students to the University and the field of German Studies”
- ▶ Department has made some very innovative efforts to generate interest in German Studies and in the study of language and culture more generally, which are recognized and valued by peer Humanities departments
 - ▶ Rich undergraduate and graduate curricula cover a broad historical time span and many different aspects of German and Yiddish language, literature, and culture
 - ▶ Yiddish Studies offerings at all levels are particularly impressive; this is an area of growth and appears to be flourishing
 - ▶ The language-learning, multilingualism, and critical engagement with cultures and literatures offered by the Department noted by FAS leadership as critically important to the future of the institution
 - ▶ Department is positioned to lead on innovative solutions and future-oriented responses to key challenges facing the discipline of German Studies, as well as language and culture teaching and research more broadly
 - ▶ “the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Toronto finds itself within a very challenging context—and it is rising to the challenge”
 - International comparators
 - ▶ Robust size of the graduate and undergraduate programs is impressive, especially as German and Humanities enrolments have been declining across North America
 - ▶ “[F]ew departments boast as many majors and minors as Toronto, and the graduate program is also one of the largest in North America”
 - ▶ “U of T boasts the flagship Department in German Studies in Canada and one of the best in North America. A major asset is the Department’s status as a stand-alone and multi-lateral academic unit”
 - ▶ Graduate program has maintained its high standing through faculty research activities of the faculty, breadth of coverage, the combination of international and Canadian students, and its placement record
 - ▶ The Department “is on par with the top departments in the US, including Princeton, Washington University, and UC Berkeley”, and offers some of the most respected programs in North America

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Students note dissatisfaction in the way extra-curricular opportunities are communicated, and departmental communications more broadly
 - ▶ Lack of clarity around how the unit is promoting itself at the undergraduate level
 - ▶ Lack of solidarity and connectedness among faculty members observed
 - ▶ A number of faculty expressed feelings of alienation and detachment with regard to core departmental activities; reviewers observe that some of this detachment appears “voluntary and opportunistic”

- ▶ Some faculty appear skeptical of programming around diversity, Indigeneity, and climate emergency that leadership has pursued recently, “seeing in these initiatives as window-dressing or superficial gestures”
- ▶ Reviewers observed longstanding strained relationships within the Department, noting that this is particularly detrimental for a unit struggling to meet enrolment benchmarks, as many North American German departments are. "There is a bit of elite reclining and cynical resignation afoot, which makes the call for a new tenure-track hire less credible"
- ▶ Departmental leadership appears to be mainly at Associate rank, with limited engagement from more senior faculty
- ▶ Senior faculty appear somewhat distanced from Chair’s leadership efforts, which may undermine the Department’s ability to work strategically and cohesively
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Administrative staffing presents some major challenges to the Department; office staff noted a need for more office space, and additional support in handling media and communications, and alumni outreach
 - ▶ Department is supported by a three-team administrative staff, only one of whom has a full-time appointment
 - ▶ Staff take on numerous responsibilities off the side of their desks (alumni developments, web presence, support for social events), and reviewers note concerns around long term sustainability of support for these activities
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ “Department has a very traditional structure and an aging faculty, some of whom seem resistant to change and/or have disengaged from the Department. This is particularly palpable among the tenured research faculty and is most obvious in the design and goals of the graduate program.”
 - ▶ “Harsh as it may sound, the efforts and innovations the Department has hatched since 2010 [to grow undergraduate enrolment] are ultimately not enough to get it through the next decade”
 - ▶ Reviewers emphasize challenging context for the Department, with a radical decline in availability of and enrolment in language programs across North American institutions (and beyond) in recent years;
 - ▶ Reviewers note limited overall departmental engagement with matters pertaining to equity, diversity and inclusion; “there’s very little going on, it seems, as regards EDI in the German graduate program, and EDI has taken a backseat in the self-study generally”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Reviewers note enthusiasm and ‘esprit de corps’ of undergraduate students, and encourage the Department to grow the number of undergraduate community members

- ▶ Engaged participation of faculty and graduate students in extra-curricular activities noted as essential to their success; unit urged to ensure multilateral participation to build Departmental cohesion and engagement and attract students
- ▶ Engage in efforts to enhance faculty connections across ranks, streams, and fields
- ▶ Enhance strategic collaboration with cognate language departments, to jointly explore creating approaches to encouraging growth in language majors
- ▶ Chair of the Department encouraged to meet regularly with each faculty member to discuss service obligations and promotion planning
- ▶ Consider engaging in a curriculum consortium with other Canadian institutions to develop common graduate and undergraduate outcomes, assessments, and potential for shared courses, eliminate competitive structures and share the service burden to create adequate, effective and attractive curricula
- ▶ Consider ways to design a post-COVID in-person community experience that leverages pandemic-era innovations
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Staff note desire for the Undergraduate Assistant position to be full-time
 - ▶ Ensure adequate staffing support for media and communications, undergraduate support and alumni relations
 - ▶ Desire noted for graduate student office- and workspace
 - ▶ Reviewers unable to comment on current space since the site visit was conducted remotely; however, they generally endorse efforts to create physical spaces that would help to foster intellectual community in the department
 - ▶ Consider developing a position specific to digital and communications activities that might potentially be shared with other Humanities and/or language units, to distribute costs and increase communications among units experiencing similar challenges and needs
 - ▶ Explore ways to provide more support for Chair's initiatives; consider changing administrative culture to prefer Chairs be at Full rank before taking on positions
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Encourage more efficient and effective connectivity across the department in curriculum development, program coordination, and program objectives
 - ▶ Consider (in consultation with cognate units) creative long-term approaches to addressing significant funding growth and structural challenges, considering institutional context
 - ▶ "Support from the administration will be essential to the continued success of the Department"
 - ▶ Reviewers advise against having the language program split off from the Department and combined with other language programs
 - ▶ Consider striking a working group among allied Departments to put forward strategic recommendations for potential future directions
 - ▶ Unit will need "aggressive set of enrolment strategies" to increase its Majors and Minors in the coming years
 - ▶ Consider offering more 75–100 student classes, with professional recruitment and advertising

- ▶ “Building the undergraduate program will require a disciplined and vigorous team approach; no one ought to be able to exempt themselves from the responsibility of growing the program”
- ▶ Expand curricular and community commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion and develop “a more robust and substantive conception of diversity, equity, and inclusion” for both the undergraduate and graduate programs
- ▶ “A conversation as to what counts as high impact research beyond the ‘public humanities’ formulation might encourage greater diversity in the graduate applicant pool and in future tenure-line hires as well as tap into the importance of community-engaged and/or industry aligned research partnerships”
- ▶ Develop “a more interwoven account of the Department’s history and of Toronto’s Indigenous history”

2 Administrative Response & Implementation Plan



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

September 21, 2023

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
University of Toronto

RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures and its programs

Dear Prof. McCahan,

I write in response to your June 5, 2023 letter of regarding the March 9-10, 2022 UTQAP cyclical review, held remotely, of the Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures and its undergraduate and graduate programs: German Studies, HBA (Specialist, Major, Minor); German Studies in English (Minor); Al and Malka Green Yiddish Program (Minor); Business German (Minor); Certificate in Global German Studies (U of T Global Scholar); Germanic Languages and Literatures, MA (Fields: German Literature, Culture and Theory; Yiddish Studies); Germanic Literature, Culture and Theory, PhD, and requesting our Administrative Responses.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers, David Gramling, University of British Columbia, Carrie Smith, University of Alberta, and Kathryn Starkey, Stanford University, for their very comprehensive review of the Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures. We would also like to thank the Chair, Prof. Stefan Soldovieri, and faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study. We also want to thank the many staff, students, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided thoughtful feedback. The UTQAP cyclical review process is an invaluable exercise that affords us the opportunity to take stock of our academic units and programs, to recognize achievement and identify areas for improvement.

The review report was finalized on July 28, 2022, after which Acting Chair, Prof. Anjelica Fenner, shared it widely with faculty, staff, and students in the Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures. We are extremely pleased with the reviewers' positive assessment of the overall strength of the Department, its continued evolution in the undergraduate and graduate programs, and its outstanding, productive faculty. The reviewers noted the "robust size" of the programs, "energetic" teaching, curricular innovation, and intellectual contributions to the field. The review report also raised several issues and challenges and identified areas for enhancement, including

addressing its traditional program structure, faculty disengagement, and unequal and overly demanding administrative responsibilities.

Each of these recommendations has been addressed in the attached Review Recommendations Table that outlines the Program's response, the Dean's response, and an Implementation Plan identifying action items and timelines for each recommendation. My Administrative Response and Implementation Plan was developed in consultation with the Chair and with senior leadership within my office. The Implementation Plan provided identifies timeframes of short- (six months), medium- (one to two years), and long- (three to five years) term actions and who (Faculty, Dean, unit) will take the lead in each area. I also identified any necessary changes in organization, policy, or governance where appropriate, as well as any resources, financial or otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.

The next UTQAP cyclical review of Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures will take place no later than the 2029-30 review cycle. My office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with the Chair and through the department's five-year unit-level academic planning process, which will begin at the conclusion of the cyclical review. I also acknowledge that your office will request a brief Interim Monitoring Report midway between the March 2022 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2029-30 to report on progress made on the Implementation Plan as outlined in the accompanying Review Recommendations Table.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to respond to the review report. The reviewers' comments and recommendations will help inform the future priorities of the Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures and its undergraduate and graduate programs.

Sincerely,



Melanie Woodin
Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Professor, Department of Cell & Systems Biology

cc.

Stefan Soldovieri, Chair, Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures, Faculty of Arts & Science

Gillian Hamilton, Associate Dean, Unit-Level Reviews, Faculty of Arts & Science

Suzanne Wood, Special Advisor to the Dean on Unit-Level Reviews, Faculty of Arts & Science

Daniella Mallinick, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Andrea Benoit, Academic Review Officer, Academic Planning, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science

2021-22 UTQAP Review of the FAS Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures - Review Recommendations

Please do the following for each recommendation in the table:

- If you **intend** to act on a recommendation, please provide an **Implementation Plan** identifying actions to be taken, the time frame (short, medium, long term) for each, and who will take the lead in each area. If appropriate, please identify any necessary changes in organization, policy or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.
- If you **do not** intend to act on a recommendation, please briefly explain why the actions recommended have not been prioritized.
- In accordance with the UTQAP and Ontario's Quality Assurance Framework, “it is important to note that, while the external reviewers’ report may include **commentary** on issues such as faculty complement and/or space requirements when related to the quality of the program under review, **recommendations** on these or any other elements that are within the purview of the university’s internal budgetary decision-making processes must be tied directly to issues of program quality or sustainability” (emphasis added)
- You may wish to refer to the [sample table](#) provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Program Response	Dean’s Response
The reviewers highlighted the excellence of the undergraduate program, as a “model program in language and culture”, and the very strong “esprit de corps” among undergraduate students. They urged the department to explore approaches to promoting the program, and growing the number of undergraduate community members where opportunities permit.	1	“Beloved as its undergraduate courses may be, this unit is going to need an aggressive set of enrolment strategies that increases its Majors/Minors in the coming decade.”	We have already embarked on a comprehensive review of the undergraduate program with an eye toward building enrolment in our programs, certificates and other initiatives and further developing our vibrant student community. Discussions on boosting enrolment continued at a first-ever Departmental retreat held in April 2023. We are developing a set of English-language courses designed to draw students from across FAS. Conversations are ongoing with the Principal of Victoria College to forge connections with the new Creativity and Society minor program. Cross-listed courses with Victoria College have been successful in the past, and we intend to be more intentional and consistent in mounting course collaborations. We will also re-engage with the Book and Media program at St. Michael’s College. We are identifying existing courses that can be reconfigured for a larger lecture format and developing ideas for new, prerequisiteless courses on the 200 level. Finally, we are in conversation with Victoria	Short- to medium-term: The Dean’s Office is happy to work with the Department to address enrolment issues. The Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, will work with the Department on any curriculum or course changes that require governance approval. The Department is encouraged to consult early with the Vice-Deans, Academic Planning and Undergraduate regarding any proposed collaborative initiatives, such as those described in the unit’s response.
	2	“The strongest esprit de corps was to be found among undergraduate students, and all we can say there is: grow the number of undergraduate community members. They’re eager, diverse, ambitious, and inspired”		
	3	“[We suggest] more 75–100 student classes, with professional recruitment and advertising”		
	4	“The Department might consider developing an annual large enrolment, English-language, lecture course that draws students from across the University to boost these numbers and draw students into the Minor.”		

			College regarding the possibility of creating a new living learning community – potentially in the form of a One Program in Languages and Cultures. Ideally, we envision a linked residence space (World Languages House) where students will commit to practicing their language skills. We see this as both a recruitment strategy and a way of fostering a close-knit learning community.	
	5	“We urge the Department to ensure multilateral participation [in extra-curricular activities] in order to build Departmental cohesion and engagement and attract majors and minors.”	Departmental culture was a focus of the April 2023 departmental retreat where there was consensus on the need to improve communication and foster community. In a collaborative process assisted by the facilitator, we identified a set of principles and best practices that will guide our future work together. In addition to encouraging participation in existing opportunities implemented just before the pandemic, we will create new extra-curriculars to build on activities such as the bi-weekly coffee hour and Student Appreciation event. We also see a role for our increasingly impactful social media channels.	Short-term: The Dean’s Office supports the Department’s efforts to engage with students and build community.
	6	“The committee advises against having the language program split off from the Department and combined with other language programs in a kind of “Language Learning Centre” as it would remove an essential core part of the Departmental foundation.”	We agree that separating language and culture contradicts an essential part of our mission. Still, we see opportunities for working together more closely with other places where languages are taught at the U of T. The Department spearheaded in 2019 the creation of a Global Languages Initiative (GLI) that brings together stakeholders in language instruction across programs and units. The GLI is providing an increasingly active forum for collaboration and exchange (lectures, roundtables, student events) that preserves the identity of Departments like ours.	Short-term: The Dean supports the Department’s efforts to build collaborations within A&S. The Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, would be pleased to discuss any future proposals for initiatives with the Department.
The reviewers highlighted the critical need for significant updates to the graduate programs, and made a number of observations and	7	“the PhD program needs some major changes...to improve the quality of training, experience, and to decrease the standard time to degree”	Although we have launched several graduate initiatives over the course of the past few years (graduate teaching and research	Medium-term: The Vice-Dean, Graduate Education supports and encourages such curricular renewal, and is strongly supportive

recommendations related to enhancing their quality: - The reviewers emphasized that the PhD program requires significant updates to enhance the quality of training and student experience, and to address student time to completion. - As in the 2013-14 UTQAP review, the PhD qualifying exam process was highlighted as an area particularly in need of major revisions. - The reviewers emphasized graduate student desire “for additional professional training that recognizes the diversity of career options for PhDs beyond academic tenure-track positions.” - The reviewers observed that reliable funding for both Canadian and international graduate students will be essential to the continued success of the program, and highlighted the importance of establishing a cohort size that is aligned with available student funding.	8	“The Committee felt that the PhD program milestones need rethinking to make it more feasible for students to complete the program in five (or even six) years.”	awards, forums for collaborative research, writing groups, etc.), we have embarked on a comprehensive review of the graduate program, including course and other requirements, program learning outcomes, milestones and mentoring practices. These discussions continued at a Departmental retreat held in April 2023. The Graduate Program Committee has already crafted a first draft of a new scheme for the Qualifying Examination, which was revised following the 2013-14 UTQAP review but has not produced the desired effects. We are researching innovative programs across humanities disciplines to find strategies that we can adapt to our particular context.	of changes that will update the program to reflect developments in the field of study while also helping students to complete their PhD in a timely manner. The Vice-Dean, Graduate Education will work with the Department on the proposed changes to the graduate program, including the new format for the Qualifying Examination.
	9	“The Department should consider whether the number of required courses is really necessary, or whether courses could be redesigned (or new courses could be developed) to help students accomplish some of the canonical breadth that the Department requires while also keeping abreast of the important conversations across the field, particularly where race and gender is concerned.”		
	10	“The Proficiency Exam is based on an overwhelmingly long list of primary texts (100 texts)...The Committee was unanimous in deeming such an extensive reading list and series of exams as both counterproductive to the intellectual goals of the Department, and unreasonable given the funding situation.”	The Graduate Program Committee has already crafted a first draft of a new scheme for the Qualifying Examination that reflects our own concerns as well as those of the reviewers. The new, streamlined format will be more transparent and manageable and lead to shorter completion times.	Short-term: The A&S Office of Graduate Professional Development & Student Success can be consulted for guidance on ways to incorporate a pedagogical element into comprehensive exams. The Dean’s Office will facilitate an introduction between the unit and the Coordinator, Graduate Professional Development, who would be pleased to work with the unit on developing these initiatives. The Vice-Dean, Graduate Education will also work with the unit to determine whether and how any proposed changes to comprehensive exams align with ongoing program changes and curricular governance.
	11	“... the Committee thinks it imperative for them to review and radically change this [exam] requirement (possibly dropping one component or combining the two), if the goal remains to offer a program in which students are able to complete the PhD in five years. Teaching is an important transferable skill and should not be dropped as a requirement.”	The Department is adjusting to the new formula for allotting domestic PhD spots and the reality of a significant decrease in the domestic cohort. We also note a 50% decrease in our Graduate Program Fund, which is already impacting our ability to make attractive offers. In accommodating the new financial situation, it will be important to ensure that the cohort size remains conducive to creating an environment where it is possible to nurture a community of scholars and teachers. Of particular concern is the ability to maintain parity in admissions given the diverse research profiles of applicants (modern Germanophone literature and culture, Medieval and Yiddish).	

			Teaching is not a program requirement, as appears to be suggested, but rather a core feature of graduate training and, of course, graduate funding in our Department. We are considering ways of incorporating a pedagogical dimension into the Qualifying Exam to reflect and honor the extensive teacher training that students receive.	
	12	“The graduate curriculum ... could be better and more cohesively designed to help students prepare for qualifying exams. Graduate students would like additional professional training that recognizes the diversity of career options for PhDs beyond academic tenure-track positions.”	We are embarking on a comprehensive review of the graduate program, including course requirements. We recognize a degree of disconnect between the learning outcomes of many of our courses and the assessments contained in the Qualifying Examination. We will be looking to innovative graduate programs in the discipline and beyond.	Medium-term: The Vice-Dean, Graduate Education, will work with the Department on any curricular changes arising from this curricular review, including any changes that incorporate professional training activities into degree requirements.
	13	“One of the ways in which [activities beyond coursework and thesis] might be better encouraged would be to integrate these into the curriculum proper, allowing for better time management among graduate students already stretched thin.”	We have piloted initiatives that are up for review this year. These include the Collaborative Research and Creativity Fund, which supports interdisciplinary groups of students and faculty, as well as the Graduate Teaching and Learning Forum and Graduate Research Colloquium. We will explore which activities have been effective and can potentially be reconceived and integrated into the requirements for the MA and PhD programs.	Short- to medium-term: The Faculty offers professional skills training and support for doctoral students through its Office of Graduate Professional Development & Student Success. In addition to sector-based programming, the office can provide unit-tailored support for alternative or non-academic career pathways, such as career development workshops that draw on unit-specific data for PhD career outcomes. These workshops offer doctoral candidates the opportunity to explore and develop job materials for careers beyond the academic job market. Funding is also available through the Milestones & Pathways program to support professional development activities in individual units.
	14	“More attention could be paid to developing a discourse around transferable skills in the PhD and MA programs. Students are certainly acquiring transferable skills—through teaching, research, writing, and other aspects of the program—and, as was revealed in our meeting with them, are interested in exploring a multitude of career paths.”		
	15	“We urge the Department to find out what their alumni are doing and perhaps invite some of them back to talk about their career paths. There may be other ways too, in which the faculty can become more aware and engaged in the current job market and offer support to current graduate students who are facing a challenging academic job market, but who have deep skills and should be able to find other attractive career paths.”	Graduate students have not been the primary focus groups for iPRAKTIKUM, our experiential learning and internationalization initiative. We will explore the possibility of expanding iPRAKTIKUM as a way of creating additional, non-tenure track internship and training opportunities.	
			A project to track our alumni was initiated following the previous review but proved	

			difficult to sustain due to staff capacity. We are looking for ways to develop and maintain better connections to our graduates and to create mentorship opportunities for current students. We are engaged in a study of the current job market in the field and will draw conclusions for our programs. We see opportunities for enhancing academic employability through new collaborative programs and will also develop and make students aware of supports and resources for students embarking on non-tenure-stream and non-academic careers.	
	16	“It is imperative that Arts & Sciences commit to graduate funding for both Canadian and international students, and to maintain a consistent and reliable cohort size, which will allow the Department to plan an appropriate curriculum and build an intellectual community.”	We concur and would welcome the opportunity to work with the administration to develop a strategic plan to support graduate study in the Humanities. The Department is adjusting to the new formula for allotting domestic PhD spots and the reality of a significant decrease in the domestic cohort. We also note a 50% decrease in our Graduate Program Fund, which is already impacting our ability to make attractive offers. In accommodating the new financial situation, it will be important to ensure that the cohort size remains conducive to creating an environment where it is possible to nurture a community of scholars and teachers. Of particular concern is the ability to maintain parity in admissions given the diverse research profiles of applicants (modern Germanophone literature and culture, Medieval and Yiddish).	Graduate funding is a priority for the Dean. The Faculty funds students within a broader U of T graduate student funding model that guarantees a minimum level of support to students in the funded cohort to fund their graduate studies. Graduate units may provide graduate students with stipends above the Faculty’s minimum support amount; indeed, many units have specific minimum levels of support that are higher than the Faculty minimum. Short-term: The Vice-Dean, Graduate Education would be pleased to work with the unit on exploring options for additional sources of funding, including stipends from tri-council grants. Since 2018-19, the Faculty has increased the minimum level of support by \$500 per year. Going forward, the Faculty will increase the minimum level of support by another \$1,000 in 2023-24 and \$500 in 2024-25. This translates to a minimum funding package of

				\$20,500 in 2024-25. We continue to introduce regular increases to enhance graduate student support.
The reviewers observed limited departmental engagement with matters relating to equity, diversity and inclusion. They strongly recommended engaging with a more robust and substantive conception of EDI for both the undergraduate and graduate programs, and exploring approaches to expanding curricular and community commitment to EDI.	17	“[We suggest] a more robust and substantive conception of diversity, equity, and inclusion for both the undergraduate and graduate program;”	We agree that we could better articulate our commitment to EDI and the diversity of our students. We will build on the Multilingual German Lab that is engaging our international undergraduates – this is a highly racialized group. We will also continue to leverage our social media channels to foster an inclusive community. We will explore ways of integrating EDI into our Graduate program. We are in conversation with the Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education to create a U of T Summer Languages Camp that would combine playful language learning and various sports and creative activities. We see the potential for engagement with disadvantaged and racialized communities through targeted promotion and bursaries.	Short- to medium-term: The A&S Director, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion will work with the Department on developing a plan for enhancing EDI within the unit. We would encourage the Department to create an EDI committee. Unit-level EDI committees have been very successful in working towards improving equity, accessibility, diversity, and inclusion within their units by seeking to address both current and future student, faculty, and staff experience through a wide variety of initiatives including attention to scholarships, curricular (and course) reform, seminars, and mentoring.
	18	“[We suggest] expanded curricular and community commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion; there’s very little going on, it seems, as regards EDI in the German graduate program, and EDI has taken a backseat in the self-study generally”		
	19	“a more interwoven account of the Department’s history and of Toronto’s Indigenous history; these are not stories that can be told separately in a self-study of this nature”		
The reviewers highlighted a “stark gender imbalance and lack of racialized diversity” among tenure stream faculty (though acknowledged that this is a concern across the	20	“the Committee recommends that the Department be given one 100% faculty position in the next two years, but that this not be defined as a position in Environmental Humanities, nor designed as a cross-appointment. Instead, we recommend that the	We agree that a 100% appointment in a contemporary area would be highly desirable. The ratio of men to women-identified scholars is 6:4. Through a CLTA and targeted DAAD Visiting Professor, we have	Medium-term: All requests for new positions across the Faculty are submitted to the Faculty Appointments Committee (FAC), which includes representation across its sectors (Humanities, Social Sciences and

discipline). They encouraged the department and Dean's office to engage in strategic complement planning, prioritizing growing the diversity of their faculty, and enhancing coverage in gender, race, sexuality, and contemporary studies when opportunities permit.		position be advertised as open field, thus enabling the Department to select the best candidate with a strong consideration for targeting equity-denied candidates, especially racialized and/or women identified scholars, who are not well-represented in the unit"	been able to achieve a degree of gender parity in the absence of the approval for a permanent position. We note that it will be important to increase the percentage of full professors among our women-identified faculty. We concur that attracting racialized and women-identified candidates should be a priority with the next hire.	Sciences) and from the Colleges. All FAC requests must include discussion of how EDI principles will be addressed in the proposed search.
	21	"given the Department's leading position among German programs in North America and world-wide, more emphasis must be placed on gender parity and inclusion of scholars from equity-denied groups in hiring practices."		The FAC reviews all requests for new positions and makes recommendations to the Dean regarding which requests should be granted. In a given year, there are many more requests than available positions. Following a UTQAP review, each unit is asked to create a 5-year plan. The Unit-Level Academic Planning process will include faculty complement planning as a key feature and will facilitate clear articulation of the Department's complement plan over the five years of the plan.
	22	"The Committee strongly recommends that a future hire in the Department be given a full FTE, ideally in contemporary studies, a key place students wish to see more emphasis. Further, the Committee also strongly recommends that the Dean's Office undertake a workload analysis with particular focus on cross-appointments, identifying structural and infrastructural needs to support that interdisciplinary work, in order to ensure that those collaborations are fruitful without unduly burdening those faculty members serving two or more Departments, programs, or units."	We agree that our curriculum would benefit from a full FTE hire in contemporary studies. The impact of cross-appointments on faculty and participating departments varies considerably. Secondments to decanal and other outside administrative positions also present a challenge to smaller Departments. We would welcome supports for faculty and the Department given the high percentage of cross-appointed (4) and seconded (2) faculty currently among our ranks. We would also appreciate a degree of consultation with the administration on the latter going forward.	Medium-term: Please see Dean's response to #20-21 above.
	23	"The counterpoint to this [disciplinary] breadth is a relatively light offering in contemporary studies, and there is a particular need to grow the work in gender, race, and sexuality."	The Department has long recognized the deficit in contemporary studies. We have been unsuccessful in two previous submissions to the Faculty Appointments Committee (2020-21, 2021-22) to hire in contemporary studies. We concur that it is essential to recruit a new colleague to	Medium-term: Please see Dean's response to #20-21 above.

			address this issue, which also impacts our ability to attract and retain students on both the undergraduate and graduate levels. We note that we possess some capacity in work on gender and race and need to work to make this more legible to students in our courses and communications.	
	24	“Crucial to the continued success of the undergraduate programs is the position of the CLTA. Their appointment is precarious and the Committee strongly urges the Dean’s Office to convert it into a permanent teaching stream position as soon as possible.”	We agree. The Department submitted in 2022-23 a request to the Faculty Appointments Committee that would have ‘converted’ the CLTA to a teaching stream position. The submission was not successful.	Short-term: As noted in our response to #20-21 above, faculty lines are allocated by the Faculty Appointments Committee, which takes into consideration the need for faculty lines across the breadth of A&S. The Department is encouraged to discuss the CLTA appointment with the Vice-Dean, Faculty and Academic Life, and the Director, Academic HR.
The reviewers observed some apparent disconnect and strained relations among the department’s faculty members. They recommended strengthening the overall cohesiveness of the department, enhancing departmental communications and career supports for faculty, and exploring approaches to encourage the equitable participation of faculty in departmental activities and administration. (In developing your response, you may wish to consult with the Office of the Vice-Provost, Faculty and Academic Life)	25	“The Committee suggests that a review of service responsibilities, particularly for those individuals with cross-appointments, may help support continued research productivity and high impact research output. Further, incentivizing such grant work through the provision of Faculty-funded course releases and funds for grant writers may help bolster the numbers and secure continued success.”	The Departmental Workload Policy is up for review this year, and we will examine service activities in this context. Cross-appointments do not appear to be a barrier to research productivity, but rather to participation in service activities and contributions to the Departmental community. Grant-funded course releases are unevenly distributed among faculty. We will explore ways of supporting research among faculty who would benefit from more research time. The professionally facilitated, first-ever Departmental Retreat held over the course of two days in April 2023 was focussed largely on addressing faculty relations and communication. We believe that this is an important first step. With the help of the materials and recommendations of the facilitator, we will build on initiatives implemented before the pandemic and develop additional measures to improve cohesiveness and faculty engagement and inclusiveness.	Short- to medium-term: The Dean recognizes the steps that the Department has been taking to work toward strengthening cohesiveness and dealing with workload and service concerns, including reviewing the departmental workload policy, instituting regular meetings between the Chair and individual faculty members, and running a departmental retreat. The Vice-Dean, Faculty and Academic Life, will work with the Department on addressing these issues.
	26	“a service audit and self-audit would help clarify who is doing how much work in which areas, and how much of that is compensated, assigned, scheduled, and/or voluntary. Ask people what service they want to do, before assigning it.”		

			We believe that the more pressing issue is to better distribute service obligations and promote faculty engagement in Departmental service.	
	27	“a commitment to reduce or remove service obligations for which there isn’t adequate time or personnel”	We believe that the more pressing issue is to better distribute service obligations and promote faculty engagement in Departmental service.	
	28	“Although promotion guidelines are set at the Provostial level, it is essential that these mid-career colleagues at Associate rank receive the support and encouragement they deserve within the department and faculty. It is strongly recommended that the Department and along with them the Faculty begin robust conversations around promotion eligibility to Full and how to support midcareer colleagues in their career goals.”	We recognize that promotion discussions have been ad hoc – as has the mentorship of junior and mid-career colleagues. This is due in part to the skewed demographics of our faculty. Most of our faculty were hired during a very short period, creating somewhat of a mentorship vacuum. We will engage in regular conversations to support midcareer colleagues.	Medium- to long-term: The Faculty is engaged in developing support for mid-career faculty members across the division. The Faculty is committed to ensuring that all eligible candidates are supported in their professional development. The University's Promotion Policy in respect of tenure-stream faculty members provides as follows: "Promotion to Professor is not automatic, but it is expected that the majority of full-time tenured faculty at this University will continue to attain this rank." The teaching stream promotions policy is similarly worded.
	29	“We suggest that the Chair of the Department meet regularly (annually) with each faculty member with the goal of discussing service obligations and promotion planning”	We will institute regular career development meetings with the Chair and senior faculty.	
	30	“more ways to draw associate professors into the business of running the department without immediately promoting them to Chair”	As indicated in #28 above, the majority of our faculty were hired during a very short period several years ago. Until recently, we had a disproportionate number of associate faculty as compared to full professors. Demographic anomalies of this sort are not uncommon in smaller Departments and are not always easy to manage.	Short-term: The Vice-Dean, Faculty and Academic Life, is available to consult with the Chair regarding options for engaging faculty at different levels in the Department. There are options for including faculty members in committees that do not involve major leadership roles.
	31	“more support for the Chair’s initiatives, including changing the administrative culture to prefer Chairs be at Full rank before taking on the position”	It is not clear that rank has played the major role in a certain lack of engagement on the part of some faculty with Departmental – not just Chair’s – initiatives. The results of the Departmental Retreat bear this out. Still, we see the drawbacks to burdening mid-rank faculty with senior positions.	Short-term: The Vice-Dean, Faculty and Academic Life, is available to support the Chair in addressing this issue.

	32	“Though not all obstacles to good relations can be removed, we think there’s plenty more work that’s possible in this area to connect colleagues across ranks, streams, and fields.”	We concur and believe that we have made good initial strides in convening a first-ever Departmental Retreat in April 2023 that produced actionable items.	Short-term: We recognize the work that the Chair has been engaged in to develop greater Department cohesion. The A&S Coordinator, Faculty Development, is available as a resource to the Chair.
	33	“Given that the Dean’s Office appears to want Departments to come forth with ambitious structural changes that will help language majors grow, we think that an important form of communication that could be strengthened is strategic collaboration across language departments.”	We see opportunities for working together more closely with other units and programs in which languages are taught at the U of T. The Department has spearheaded the creation in 2019 of a Global Languages Initiative (GLI) that brings together stakeholders in language instruction across FAS. In the form of symposia, lectures and other events, the GLI is providing a forum for collaboration and exchange that engages faculty and students across language-teaching units and programs. As indicated in #4 above, we are already collaborating on the creation of a living and learning community and, as noted in #18 above, are working to create a summer languages camp for youths.	Short- to medium-term: The Dean’s Office will work with the Department on initiatives aimed at strengthening strategic collaborations across language units.
	34	“The Committee would suggest a working group be struck among allied Departments to put forward recommendations for consideration, beginning not in the challenges but with answers to the key questions that speak instead to possibilities: What makes you unique? For what do you wish to be known? How can you better prepare students for an unimaginable future?”		
The reviewers broadly recommended exploring approaches to encourage more efficient and effective connectivity across the department in matters of curriculum development, program coordination, and program objectives.	35	“[We suggest] more efficient and effective connectivity across the department in matters of curriculum development, program coordination, and program objectives;”	We are rethinking Departmental structures in order to achieve better planning outcomes and expect our efforts to improve departmental communication to lead to a new quality and intensity of collaborative work.	Short-term: The Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, will support the Department’s efforts to improve coordination in curriculum and program development in the Department.
	36	“We suggest this Department engage in an all-Canada curriculum consortium that would develop common a) graduate and undergraduate	We agree that collaboration with peer Canadian programs is highly desirable. We see the greatest potential on the graduate level. German Studies Canada has hosted	Medium-term: The Dean’s Office will support the Department in the development of new partnerships, and maintenance of existing partnerships, as appropriate.

		outcomes, b) assessments, and c) potential for shared courses.”	initial roundtables in which we will continue to participate.	
The reviewers observed that “[a] conversation as to what counts as high impact research beyond the ‘public humanities’ formulation might encourage greater diversity in the graduate applicant pool and in future tenure-line hires as well as tap into the importance of community-engaged and/or industry aligned research partnerships.”	37	“A conversation as to what counts as high impact research beyond the ‘public humanities’ formulation might encourage greater diversity in the graduate applicant pool and in future tenure-line hires as well as tap into the importance of community-engaged and/or industry aligned research partnerships.”	It is difficult to anticipate whether the research specialization of a future hire might result in ‘industry-aligned’ partnerships and a diversification of the graduate applicant pool, although this would potentially be welcome. Our community and work-engaged activities in the context of iPRAKTIKUM have focussed on enhancing the undergraduate learning experience, but we welcome the opportunity for initiatives on the graduate level.	Short-term: The A&S Experiential Learning and Outreach Support (ELOS) Office is available to work with the Department on community-engaged and industry-aligned partnerships.
Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response	38	“... there are real challenges facing the Department with respect to funding growth, and the Department—along with allied Departments in the Humanities—will need to consider creative approaches to their structural challenges long term.”	We will explore forward-looking strategies being implemented internationally and would welcome the opportunity to engage the administration in developing a strategic plan for the Humanities. We feel this is lacking and negatively impacting the perceived importance of the humanistic enterprise at the U of T and beyond.	Short-term: The Dean’s Office holds regular meetings with the Chairs/Directors of the Humanities sector; sectoral meetings take place 2-3 times each semester during the academic year. The Vice-Dean, Academic Planning would be pleased to support a sectoral discussion on strategic planning.
	39	“It is important that the Department maintain a stand-alone MA as a means of recruiting PhD students, and also as an option for professional development for students not continuing on to the PhD.”	MA enrolment has evolved in recent years. We are admitting more MAs with better skills and training. We will improve MA training generally through peer-to-peer and more effective faculty mentoring and seek out opportunities beyond the PhD stream.	Short-term: The Dean’s Office recognizes the Department’s efforts to support graduate training at the MA and PhD levels. The Department is encouraged to engage with the A&S Office of Graduate Professional Development & Student Success and/or the Office of Experiential Learning and Outreach Support for further guidance on professional development at the graduate level.
	40	“Since we did not visit the campus, we cannot comment on the current space, but we do wish to promote efforts to create such physical spaces that would help to foster intellectual community in the department.”	Our comprehensive renovation of community spaces in the Department beginning in 2019 is well-documented in the Self Study. We have completed a complete renovation of our lounge area, graduate student room and seminar room and have made upgrades to administrative offices.	Short-term: The Vice-Dean, Research and Infrastructure, is available to meet with the Chair should space issues arise. The Faculty’s Infrastructure Planning Office has been and will continue to be involved in providing design services and support to the Department.

	41	“The review team would recommend a position specific to digital and communications activities be developed and potentially shared among Humanities and/or language Departments to not only share the cost but better increase communications among units with similar challenges and needs.”	We concur that it is essential that we increase our capacity in this area. We are currently supporting communications activities with part-time, casual help. This is cumbersome and unsustainable. We prefer an internal solution to this staffing deficit.	Short-term: The Dean’s Office, through Administrative HR Services, will work with the Department to review the unit’s staffing level and ensure that the organizational structure reflects operational needs.
	42	“[We suggest] a more robust staff role for undergraduate services and communications”	We would welcome additional capacity in the administration of undergraduate services. As indicated in #41, our digital communications currently rely on casual contract help. We agree that permanent support would greatly enhance our internal and external communications.	Please see response to #41 above.

3 Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

The spokesperson for the reading group reported that the review summary had accurately reflected the full review and that the administrative response fully addressed the issues identified. However, the spokesperson noted that the issue of staffing, space capacity, communications and alumni outreach was not directly addressed. The spokesperson highlighted that the Dean's response for converting the Contractually Limited Term Appointment (CLTA) undergraduate assistant to 100% FTE was noncommittal and lacking alternate solutions. The reading group asked for the clarification regarding the CLTA staffing issues, alumni engagement and mentorship opportunities for current students, and the PhD exam structure which had been cited as problematic in previous reviews.

Poppy Lockwood, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning responded that:

Concerns about staffing at all levels was a challenge for the department, and that the Dean's office and Administrative HR had been working closely with the department on these staffing issues. The Dean was supportive of the department's needs in this area and that there would be a solution in place by the end of the calendar year.

Regarding the CLTA positions, faculty positions in FAS were allocated through the faculty appointment committee that meets on an annual basis. The committee considered the full range of needs across Arts and Science, and there were more positions requested than allocated on an annual basis. In the past year, enrollment decreased to 25 students, thus not feasible to allocate new positions.

The department was working with HR on this issue and would submit a request to the faculty appointment committee in 2024. The department was taking a number of specific steps regarding alumni engagement which included renewing the alumni ambassador role, planning a global career event about the career benefits of having a second or third language, a career roundtable for graduate students and alumni in the spring, and working with the dean's office to boost staff capacity.

Regarding the PhD exam structure, the previous reconfiguration of the qualifying exam following the last external review had not had the intended impact on time to completion and other areas. They were currently working on a draft of a new model that derived from the input of the external reviewers and graduate students. The department will have preliminary data of the impact of the new exam format via the interim monitoring report in 3 years. No follow-up report was requested.

4 Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers observed that the University of Toronto boasts the flagship Department in German Studies in Canada and one of the best in North America; they noted its large and

robust undergraduate and graduate programs, and large course enrolment numbers, demonstrating the Department's significant service to the University; they highlighted the undergraduate program as "a gem" and a "model program in language and culture", with enthusiastic students who have access to impressive research and experiential learning opportunities; they emphasized the enviable size of the graduate program and its significant potential for developing a lively intellectual community; the reviewers described the department as a "research powerhouse" with faculty research spanning impressive breadth, and particular strengths in Yiddish and Medieval Studies; they also commended the energetic teaching-stream faculty; they observed that the department has made some very innovative efforts to generate interest in German Studies and the study of language and culture; finally, the reviewers praised the "manifold intellectual contributions by faculty and graduate students to the University and the field of German Studies".

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: exploring approaches to promoting and growing the undergraduate program; addressing the critical need for significant updates to the graduate programs, including updating the PhD program to the quality of training and student experience and address time to completion; revising the qualifying exam process; providing additional professional training that recognizes the diversity of career options for PhDs; and establishing a cohort size that is aligned with available student funding; engaging with a more robust and substantive conception of EDI for both the undergraduate and graduate programs, and exploring approaches to expanding curricular and community commitment to EDI; engaging in strategic complement planning, and prioritizing growing the diversity of faculty, and enhancing coverage in gender, race, sexuality, and contemporary studies; strengthening the overall cohesiveness of the department, enhancing departmental communications and career supports for faculty, and exploring approaches to encourage the equitable participation of faculty in departmental activities and administration; exploring approaches to encourage more efficient and effective connectivity across the department in matters of curriculum development, program coordination, and program objectives; and engaging in conversation regarding what counts as high impact research beyond the 'public humanities' formulation, to encourage greater diversity in the graduate applicant pool and in future tenure-line hires, and to tap into the importance of community-engaged and/or industry aligned research partnerships.

The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty, and unit's responses to the reviewers' recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5 Monitoring and Date of Next Review

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than midway between the March 2022 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit on the status of the implementation plans.

The next review will be commissioned in no later than the 2029-30 review cycle.

6 Distribution

On June 30th, 2024 the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to unit/program leadership.