

Executive Summary - Academic Program Review 2018
Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies
University of Victoria

The program review committee consisting of Drs. O. Mladenova (U Calgary), M. Boehringer (U Waterloo), C. Harding (U Victoria) visited the University campus over two days.

The external assessors were particularly impressed by the high level of recognition and appreciation at all administrative levels of the innovation, dedication, and commitment to teaching and research excellence by the department's faculty and staff, appreciation that was widely echoed by undergraduate and graduate students. The committee also recognized that the department has had a series of exemplary chairs who were proactive in creating new opportunities and fostering a departmental culture that enables all department members to work collegially and creatively together, even when faced with significant challenges in a changing university environment.

Upon conducting an evidence-based review of the information, the committee found the Department and its programs in German, Slavic and Holocaust Studies of very high quality and in clear alignment with the University's and Faculty's respective visions and missions. The programs are innovative, their structure, academic quality and implementation exemplary, and in the case of the new MA in Holocaust Studies with the potential to be world leading, given some modest incremental resources.

The innovative graduate programming and the addition of a Master's Program in Slavic studies will position the department as a leader for both Germanic and Slavic Studies in Western Canada, and, with respect to the Holocaust Studies program, worldwide. In terms of undergraduate programs, the department has successfully streamlined its program offerings, and formulated precise learning outcomes which are tied to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, providing a rigorous measure of the program's instructional quality and success. Teaching quality and engagement are outstanding, and far exceed the university norm, as student evaluations and personal statements richly attest.

One outstanding feature of the department's program offerings is the focus on experiential learning, be it through internships, community service, or the nationally acclaimed field school experience. The department's strong community outreach focus is reflected in its ability to support its activities through community engagement and succeed in raising external funds far in excess to its small size, including a net increase in ongoing teaching capacity through external funding sources.

The new graduate streams in Slavic Studies and Holocaust Studies provide the exciting prospect of growth and respond to the university's goal of internationalization.