



University of Colorado **Boulder**

2016 Program Review

Humanities Program

Academic Review and Planning
Advisory Committee Report

Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul M. ...".

05/02/2017

Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs: Date

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Process overview

The review of the Humanities Program (HUMN) was conducted in accordance with the 2016 program review guidelines. Self-study responses were prepared by the unit and checked by two unaffiliated CU Boulder faculty serving as internal reviewers. The internal reviewers certified that the unit had adequately responded to all questions and had supplied a copy of the unit's by-laws. In addition, the internal reviewers submitted a summary of findings derived from interviews and/or surveys with HUMN faculty, staff, and students. An external reviewer, an expert in the discipline from outside of the University of Colorado, visited the unit on March 31 and April 1, 2016 and conducted a follow-up telephone interview with the associate chair. The external reviewer examined the relevant documents, and met with faculty, students, staff, university administrators, and ARPAC members. The reviewer's comments and recommendations are cited at appropriate points throughout the report. This document also draws upon information included with the 2009 ARPAC HUMN Report, 2015 HUMN Self-Study, 2016 HUMN IRC Report, 2016 HUMN Student Survey, 2016 HUMN IRC Unit Reply, and 2016 HUMN ERC Report. This public document reflects the assessment of and recommendations for the Humanities Program as approved by the Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee.

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Unit overview

The campus' standardized description of the Humanities Program, and information regarding comparable units, may be found on the Office of Data Analytics (ODA) website, http://www.colorado.edu/oda/sites/default/files/attached-files/profile_humn.pdf. ODA updates the profile annually in the fall semester. This report cites data posted in October 2015, the most recent update available; these figures reflect the state of the unit in AY 2014-2015. More recent data is cited where relevant.

The Humanities Program has a tradition of more than fifty years of offering CU-Boulder students a broad yet rigorous interdisciplinary curriculum combining the study of music, literature, philosophy, history, and the arts. Students are happy with the program, as suggested by enrollments and the internal review committee's survey. Humanities also provides faculty across the university with opportunities to pursue interdisciplinary teaching and research projects. According to the external reviewer: "Faculty and students alike expressed great enthusiasm for the way in which the Humanities Program attracts excellent students, provides them with important skills in critical thinking and writing, and exposes them to a wide range of influential texts drawn from different disciplines, cultural traditions, and historical periods."

Personnel and governance

The Humanities Program has three rostered tenured faculty members, one of whom is assigned as vice provost and associate vice-chancellor for faculty affairs (for a total of 2.5 FTE). There are seven affiliated senior faculty (from as many different departments), each a voting member obligated to teach one HUMN course every four semesters and to rotate service on unit committees. According to the self-study, Humanities has two instructors on 50% appointments (according to ODA, there is

only one). One of these is a senior instructor, near retirement, who has served as associate chair and as a formal and informal student advisor for many years. Humanities also has four long-term lecturers.

Following the 2009 ARPAC report, the program's by-laws were rewritten to include provisions concerning the selection and responsibilities of a director, memoranda of understanding (MOUs) for affiliated faculty, and the role of rostered instructors. The by-laws give affiliated TTT faculty and instructors holding at least 50% appointments voting rights. The chair prepares the budget, the teaching schedule, oversees business affairs, and appoints the associate chair, who reviews new course proposals and oversees part-time instructors, teaching assistants and lecturers. Decisions at faculty meetings are made by simple majority vote, and in general Humanities governing procedures conform to campus standards. The self-study briefly mentions future discussion of the possibility of moving toward "a more Executive Committee-based decision process . . . along the lines of the governance of Jewish Studies."

Research, scholarship and
creative work

The self-study reports that the total publication record of HUMN faculty since the last review is 57 articles or book chapters, 14 books and two textbooks. Queried by the internal review committee (IRC), the unit explained that this tally counted all voting members. This unit response also reported three books, 16 articles, eight conference papers and numerous invited lectures among HUMN faculty "rostered in positions expecting research." In the last review cycle, HUMN faculty members were awarded two UK-based fellowships, as well as a \$450,000 grant for the work of establishing a European Union Center at CU Boulder. The external reviewer describes Humanities tenured

faculty as “highly productive, well-respected and well-known scholars.”

Undergraduate education

Majors complete 30 core course credit hours offered by Humanities Program faculty, another 18 credits in a primary area of concentration, plus an additional 12 in a secondary area, selected from an approved list of disciplines. With the associate chair’s approval, students may define their secondary study area. In 2013-14, HUMN instituted a minor for students who could not fit 60 credit hours with their primary major. The minor aims to provide historical grounding in the humanities from an interdisciplinary perspective. It requires six credits from the introduction-to-humanities sequence, three credits in a methods course, and six credits selected from upper-division interdisciplinary seminars taught by rostered or affiliated faculty.

The Humanities Program has averaged 80-90 majors for the past several years, with an increase as of December 2015 to 120 registered majors (104 single and 16 double majors). Over AY 2015-16, 8 – 10% completed an honors thesis (5% in 2014 -15, according to ODA). Although the program offers four courses at the 1000-level and three courses at the 2000-level, most courses are at the 3000/4000-level. Since the last ARPAC review, Humanities has expanded its offerings, which now includes courses focused on the Middle East and Asia, as well as areas such as Ethnic Studies and Disability Studies. Humanities has numerous cross-listings, e.g., with the departments of Asian Languages and Civilizations, Classics, Ethnic Studies, French and Italian, Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures, and the Film Studies Program. Humanities faculty members are recognized as excellent teachers and have received teaching awards from residential programs, the Boulder Faculty Assembly, and alumni and parent groups.

Graduate education	Humanities does not have a graduate program, but would like to create new BA/MA and MA programs.
Space and staffing	When Ketchum was renovated, the Humanities Program was moved to temporary quarters on the edge of the central campus. A Program Assistant II staffs the program.
Inclusive excellence	The Office of Data Analytics reports that 70% of Humanities Program majors are female and that 20% identify as belonging to underrepresented minority groups. Following recommendations stemming from the 2009 review, the program has tried to broaden its multi-cultural work and to increase faculty diversity. The program now has material in its introductory courses that contextualizes western art and music to non-western traditions, as well as material in its methods course that deals with issues arising in gender studies. It also now has an affiliated Ethnic Studies faculty member. Previously, Humanities made an offer to a diversity candidate but there was no funding for the candidate's partner, who would have been a diversity appointment as well. The self-study notes that its budget is too small to enable the development of outreach programs and special initiatives for under-represented students.
Outreach and online initiatives	The Humanities Program has not initiated any outreach activities due to a limited budget, but faculty members have responded to outreach invitations; for example, to organize "Spring into Shakespeare" events. A faculty member has volunteered as a Denver Art Museum docent and another has been involved in local theatre company presentations. Majors have been encouraged to pursue internships with local cultural institutions. The external reviewer praised these efforts to connect students with external opportunities using alumni and faculty contacts.

The reviewer also encourages outreach to residential academic programs, especially as a means to make freshman aware of the major. Likewise, they suggested expanded social media outreach. Humanities is also preparing an online course, Psychoanalysis and the Arts, and exploring the possibility of other internet offerings.

Budget

The Humanities self-study describes an operating budget that is quickly exhausted by ordinary office expenditures and support for live performance visits to its introductory courses, although funds from summer school teaching reimbursement offset some of these costs. The program does not have a fund-raising plan. The internal reviewers characterize the budget as extremely small and clearly insufficient for increasing unit visibility. The external reviewer also notes limited financial resources.

Past reviews

Over several past program reviews, there were a number of attempts to resolve problems with what was then the Department of Comparative Literature and Humanities, which offered a combined MA and PhD in Comparative Literature and a Humanities BA. A 2006 review, for example, found that the combination of a comparative literature graduate program with a humanities undergraduate program did not work and resulted in widespread graduate student disaffection, little in the way of a department identity, and a complex mix of faculty personalities. Following the 2006 and 2009 ARPAC reports and subsequent discussions with the dean and associate dean, the two components were eventually separated and Humanities restructured as a program. Humanities established MOUs with affiliated faculty, implemented formal by-laws stating faculty member rights and responsibilities and gave voting rights to all affiliated faculty and instructors with a 50% appointment. Since the 2009 review, the program has instituted a minor and changed its two introductory six-credit core courses into two separate three-credit courses.

Campus context

The Humanities Program provides undergraduates with opportunities to explore interdisciplinary topics and approaches. Students taking introductory HUMN courses are introduced to the breadth of the arts and humanities at CU Boulder. Critical thinking skills are honed in the required methods course and upper division offerings. Non-majors who take program courses are introduced to interdisciplinary approaches in a focused way. HUMN also serves as a venue for conversations among CU faculty across disciplines. The program helps faculty to pursue research interests that may not fit neatly within their own departments. In this respect, the program serves as an “incubator” for novel projects.

National context

The self-study points out that the Humanities Program is unique within Colorado, although many versions of this kind of program can be found across the country, both at large institutions, for example, at the University of Chicago, New York University, University of Oregon, and Yale University, and at some liberal arts colleges like Reed College. Interdisciplinary undergraduate degrees in humanities are rare, as the 2009 ARPAC report noted. The Humanities Program faculty are active, respected researchers who have received invitations to speak at prestigious national universities and colleges, such as Duke University, the University of Michigan, Princeton University, and Yale University.

Analysis

The Humanities Program undergraduate curriculum is broad, rigorous, and innovative, offering students exciting opportunities to work across different humanities disciplines and related social science areas. The evidence shows that Humanities students are generally satisfied. The self-study also includes a number of laudable goals, such as establishing a “capstone” requirement (either a senior seminar or a thesis), increasing student credit hour (SCH) production by developing more 2000-level courses, and building the number of majors back to its high point of around 180. It is also crucial to pursue steadily another goal identified in the 2009 ARPAC report and mentioned although not emphasized in the program’s most recent self-study, namely, expanding the number of HUMN-affiliated faculty, courses, and disciplines. ARPAC believes that this is the most feasible way to preserve, strengthen, and develop the unit. The Humanities Program is uniquely positioned for this kind of expansion given the myriad connections that might be established with other departments.

Enrollments across humanities units have been declining, as the external reviewer notes. The program’s total student credit hour totals for the last five years reflects this general decline through 2012-13. Yet in 2014-15, HUMN had a 6.8% increase in SCH to 2,061 for the fall semester (ODA reports 3,402 SCH for FY 2014 - 15). As of December 2015, the number of majors had grown to 120, an almost 50% increase over the previous two year average. The self-study observes, “The HUMN ratio of majors to TTT [tenure and tenure-track] faculty is significantly higher than other programs whose total number of majors is comparable to HUMN but which have 3- 4 times more FTE [full-time equivalence] assigned to them.” Humanities also does a lot of service teaching: the percentage of SCH taken by non-majors is 76%,

according to ODA. In summary, even with scant resources HUMN is doing a good job of teaching undergraduates. This conclusion is supported by the 2014 academic prioritization review, which scored the program highly on teaching effectiveness and resource efficiency.

Hiring goals

The Humanities strategic plan asks for two new instructor lines and an assistant professor line. Longer-term, the program requests another instructor line (for a total of three new instructorships over the next six years) and two more tenured or tenure-track (TTT) lines (three additional TTT over six years). The internal and external reviewers agree that the most important need is replacing the retiring associate chair. That position's role in advising students and preserving curriculum continuity has proved critical. The external reviewer suggests that when this retirement occurs one of the current lecturers might be available to take on the associate chair role. In addition, it should be noted that academic advising recently has been centralized within the college. ARPAC agrees that HUMN majors require a great deal of individualized advising in constructing their courses of study. This suggests two options. First, move one of the current lecturers into the current associate chair's instructor line when she retires, with a service component attached to the position. Second, assign someone from the college advising office to the unit full-time, which may avoid some problems associated with a split teaching/service appointment.

If the first, "promotion option" is chosen, that leaves the Humanities Program minus one lecturer, which would provide some justification for a new instructor line in order to preserve current teaching capacity (although hiring a new lecturer would largely accomplish the same thing). This rationale doesn't support a second new instructor line, as the promotion of a

lecturer to instructor and associate chair merely maintains overall teaching capacity). In any case, the main justification for instructor lines must lie elsewhere. The self-study argues, and the internal and external reviewers agree, that current lecturers have shown “extraordinary dedication” to their students over many years (including directing honors theses, serving on honors committees, and supervising independent studies and internships), yet their work has not been sufficiently recognized or compensated. The reviewers concur that promoting two lecturers to continuing rostered instructorships would not only reward this dedication but would also help ensure curricular continuity and stability. ARPAC agrees that the program should be provided two new instructor lines.

The second part of the Humanities personnel strategy involves a request for an assistant professor hire. The self-study argues that a new faculty line will help handle a recent increase in majors and attract even more students, although it remains to be seen whether this growth in student demand will be sustained. Another consideration offered by the self-study in favor of a new faculty line is that affiliated faculty teaching tends to concentrate among upper-division courses making the staffing of lower-division offerings more challenging. One solution to this problem is for current TTT faculty rostered in or affiliated with the program to do more lower level course teaching. Of course, such teaching duties must be shared equally between current TTT faculty and any new TTT hire. The self-study also points out that an assistant professor hire will help rebalance the faculty contingent that is now comprised of only full professors and instructors. Finally, an assistant professor hire with a tenure home in another department, but co-rostered in HUMN, would integrate new research into the unit’s curriculum, giving it new

energy. Ideally, this new hire also would increase faculty diversity.

Given these considerations, the external reviewer recommends approval of a new assistant professor line, although the reviewer did not commit to recommending two additional tenure-track lines over the next six years. The internal reviewers “share the Program’s assessment that new TTT hires are critical to the long-term viability of the Program.” However, the reviewers ask, “which program/departments Humanities has in mind, whether these departments have been informally contacted, and if any formal requests have been put in place.” We agree with the internal reviewers that HUMN, in conjunction with another humanities or arts department, should develop a more concrete and detailed hiring proposal. This proposal should locate a new faculty member’s tenure home in a department while co-rostering the line in the program. One reason for clearly locating the tenure home in an academic department is that personnel decisions can become problematic in small units. There also is a potential problem about clearly defining norms for what constitutes research excellence when both disciplinary and interdisciplinary units are involved. In addition, this hiring proposal should specify in detail the teaching and service obligations that a new faculty member would have in each unit. Finally, before considering whether to approve a new co-rostered TTT line, the college should assess whether the recent increase in HUMN majors is temporary or represents the beginning of sustained growth. Obviously, the same issue is crucial with respect to whatever humanities or arts department that decides to collaborate with the Humanities Program in requesting a new assistant professor line. ARPAC encourages HUMN to recruit undergraduates in multiple ways, including working with the residential academic programs to familiarize students with the major.

This brings us back to the request for two new instructor lines. As the self-study notes, the case for promoting some of the current lecturers to instructors is strengthened if a new assistant professor hire is not made. In this light, we agree with the internal and external reviewers that there is a stronger case for promoting two current lecturers into instructorships.

Creation of a Humanities MA

According to the external reviewer, a new Humanities MA would enable HUMN students to be more competitive for doctoral programs. It is also argued that this new MA would serve graduate students in other humanities departments and would facilitate new collaborations. In addition, the proposed MA would help the Humanities Program to staff its own undergraduate classes with qualified teaching assistants (TAs), as well as provide TAs to other units. The internal reviewers were more cautious than the external reviewer in assessing the proposal's merits. The internal reviewers ask HUMN to make a more convincing case by distinguishing this new MA from the MA in Comparative Literature, which is being phased out. The internal reviewers also ask whether HUMN is trying to reactivate the BA/MA degree approved in 2008 when the Humanities Program administrated a Comparative Literature graduate degree. Finally, the internal reviewers ask HUMN to explain the proposed MA program's interdisciplinary configuration, as well as to specify which 4000/5000 courses would be developed and when.

In response, the Humanities Program apparently has dropped its initial suggestion of developing professional MAs in arts administration and literary translation. Humanities also has clarified that it does intend to offer a BA/MA,, and should do so in accordance with changing Graduate School policies Unlike a Comparative Literature degree focused on foreign language work

in two or more languages, the unit intends to structure the new BA/MA and MA programs on the existing undergraduate humanities degree, but with more critical methods training. It would be implemented using agreements guaranteeing that Humanities Program graduate students would have access to courses in other units. There would also be guarantees by other units to share the faculty time necessary to offer interdisciplinary courses regularly through the Humanities Program. As with the faculty lines request, this proposal has to be made more concrete before its merits can be assessed.

Budget Humanities makes do with a small budget. We agree with the internal reviewers that it would be helpful to expand the budget in order to better assist the unit in recruiting students, support faculty, and expand program visibility, including additional outreach activities.

Space We concur with the self-study and the internal and external reviewers that the unit's current location should be temporary. The Humanities Program should be moved back to the central campus.

Staff The Humanities Program considers the current staff allocation adequate; ARPAC concurs.

Outreach The external reviewer encourages program efforts to create student internships (using alumni and faculty contacts as means of outreach) and also to make more use of social media. These are helpful suggestions. ARPAC also suggests that instructors might be employed to a greater extent in outreach activities as part of their service commitments.

Outcomes assessment

We agree with the internal reviewers that Humanities can do more to improve student outcomes assessments by using annual and/or exit electronic surveys and by following up with in-person discussions.

Recommendations

The members of the Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee (ARPAC) address the following recommendations to the Humanities Program, to the deans of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Graduate School, and the senior vice provost and associate vice-chancellor for budget and planning. It is the committee's intention that the recommendations serve to benefit program improvement and development and to further the mission of the University of Colorado Boulder.

To the unit:

1. Explore options for dealing with the associate chair's imminent retirement. First, consider asking the deans to move one of the current program lecturers into this instructor line.
2. Develop a proposal to replace lecturers with rostered instructors.
3. Follow the 2009 ARPAC recommendation to expand the number of Humanities Program faculty affiliates.
4. If the unit decides to pursue a new hire, develop a hiring proposal for an assistant professor line. This proposal should be developed in conjunction with a humanities, arts, or social science department. The faculty member's tenure home should be located in the disciplinary department and co-rostered in the Humanities Program. The proposal should explain in detail the teaching and service obligations that a new faculty member would have in each unit.
5. If the unit decides to pursue the creation of Humanities BA/MA and MA degrees, then develop a new proposal consistent with changing Graduate School policies. This

proposal should indicate which humanities units have agreed to participate in the BA/MA and MA programs and should specify the guarantees those units have made concerning Humanities graduate student course access. The proposal should also specify the guarantees made by participating units to staff required courses on a regular basis. Finally, the proposal should specify which 4000/5000 courses would be developed beyond a new 4000/5000 level critical methods course.

6. Work on new ways to recruit undergraduates, such as working with the residential academic programs to familiarize students with the Humanities major.
7. Use alumni and faculty contacts as well as social media as means of outreach. Consider using instructors in outreach activities as part of their service commitments.
8. Develop an internship program for majors.
9. Employ annual exit interviews or online surveys to assess student outcomes.
10. When the current Humanities Program associate chair retires, consider moving one of the current HUMN lecturers into this line. Alternatively, consider assigning someone from the college advising office full-time to the unit.
11. Consider funding two new Humanities Program instructor lines, both to reward current HUMN lecturers for their teaching excellence as well as to stabilize the curriculum and to ensure its continuity.

To the dean of the
College of Arts and
Sciences:

12. Consider increasing the Humanities Program budget in order to help with student recruitment, faculty support, and visibility, including additional outreach activities.

To the dean of the
Graduate School:

13. Once a degree proposal has been developed, consider a new Humanities MA in conjunction with the dean of the College of Arts Sciences. The proposal should identify which humanities units have agreed to participate and should specify what guarantees those units have offered with respect to Humanities MA students course access. The proposal also should specify what guarantees participating units are willing to offer to faculty members teaching Humanities MA courses. Finally, the proposal should be specific about the 4000/5000 courses being offered beyond a new 4000/5000 level critical methods class.

To the senior vice
provost:

14. Endeavor to find the Humanities Program permanent quarters located on the central campus.

Required follow-up

The Humanities Program director shall report annually on the first of April for a period of three years following the year of the receipt of this report (i.e., April 1st of 2018, 2019, and 2020) to the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and to the provost on the implementation of these recommendations. Likewise, the deans of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Graduate School shall report annually on the first of May to the provost on the implementation of recommendations addressed to the college. The provost, as part of the review reforms, has agreed to respond annually to all outstanding matters under her/his purview arising from this review year. All official responses will be posted online.