



University of Colorado **Boulder**

2016 Program Review

Department of Asian Languages &
Civilizations

Academic Review and Planning
Advisory Committee Report

Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Randall Weber', written over a horizontal line.

06/19/17

Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs: Date

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Process overview

The review of the Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations (ALC) was conducted in accordance with the 2016 review guidelines. The Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee (ARPAC) conducts and writes the final reviews of all academic units on the Boulder campus. The unit prepared a self-study, which was reviewed by an internal review committee (IRC) of two CU Boulder faculty members from outside the program. The IRC found the report thorough and fair, but made a recommendation to the unit to consider carefully how its disciplinary traditions may align successfully with evolving student interests and larger interdisciplinary conversations. An external review committee (ERC), consisting of two experts within the discipline from outside of the University of Colorado, visited the unit on April 11 and 12, 2016, reviewed the relevant documents, and met with faculty, students, staff, university administrators, and ARPAC members. The reviewers' comments and recommendations are cited at appropriate points throughout the report. This public document reflects the assessment of and recommendations for ALC as approved by ARPAC.

Academic Review
and Planning
Advisory
Committee
(ARPAC)

Marie Banich, Professor, Institute of Cognitive Science,

Sanjai Bhagat, Professor, Leeds School of Business

Adam Bradley, Associate Professor, Department of English

Erin Furtak, Associate Professor, School of Education

David Korevaar, Professor, College of Music

Clayton Lewis, Professor, Department of Computer Science

Jack Maness, Associate Professor, University Libraries

David Mapel, Associate Professor, Department of Political
Science

Susan Nevelow Mart, Associate Professor, School of Law

Academic year 2016-2017
voting members

Bryan Taylor, Professor, Department of Communication

Non-voting members

Jeff Cox, ARPAC Chair, Vice Provost and Associate Vice
Chancellor for Faculty Affairs and Professor of English and
Humanities

Bob Boswell, Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Community
Engagement and Professor of Molecular, Cellular, and
Developmental Biology

Katherine Eggert, Quality Initiative Leader and Professor of English

Bill Kaempfer, Senior Vice Provost and Associate Vice Chancellor
for Budget and Planning

Mary Kraus, Vice Provost and Associate Vice Chancellor for
Undergraduate Education and Professor of Geological Sciences

Ann Schmiesing, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School and
Professor of Germanic & Slavic Languages & Literatures

Staff

Andre Grothe, Office of Faculty Affairs

Unit overview

A standardized description of the Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations (ALC), and information regarding comparable units, can be found on the Office of Data Analytics' (ODA) website (<http://www.colorado.edu/oda/institutional-research/institutional-level-data/information-department/academic-review-and-0>). ODA updates the profile annually in the fall semester. This report cites the ODA data for ALC posted in October 2015; these figures reflect the state of the department as of academic year (AY) 2014-2015. More recent data from the ALC self-study are cited where appropriate.

Personnel and governance

As of October 8, 2015, the department had 12 tenured and tenure-track (TTT) faculty (five professors, three associate professors, and four assistant professors) plus nine instructors/senior instructors, seven lecturers, and two visiting assistant professors. An additional 20 student teaching assistants (TAs) and two graduate part-time instructors (GPTIs) teach for the department. Two staff provide administrative support.

The tenure-track faculty elect the department chair on a secret ballot for a four-year appointment, renewable once. The self-study notes, "Given the small size of the Department as well as the diversity of its programs, the Department will govern itself as a committee of the whole ([...] of all tenured and tenure-track faculty)." The non-tenure track faculty such as senior instructors, instructors, and lecturers do not have a vote. Other faculty governance committees include a merit evaluation committee, a merit grievance committee, and a graduate committee.

Research, scholarship, and creative work

Standard ODA data provided to ARPAC on research productivity includes the average number of publications and/or creative works produced per TTT faculty member (as rostered on November 1, 2014) from 2008-2014. For purposes of

comparison, these data are ranked with all academic units across campus and with those within this cycle (in this case, arts and humanities units). With respect to TTT productivity numbers, ALC ranks ninth of 16 units in its cycle. Average research productivity per faculty member during those seven years is based on self-reported publications in the annual Faculty Report of Professional Activity (FRPA) and includes: 1.1 refereed books and monographs per TTT (ranking third of 16 units); 6.4 refereed articles and chapters per TTT (ranking seventh of 16 units); and 27.9 conference presentations and papers per TTT (second of 16 units reporting these works).

The ALC self-study compares the department's accomplishments and reputation to units at AAU peer schools to demonstrate the standing of the department. Several ALC faculty have received prestigious fellowships, including from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton University, and the Fulbright-Hays. Such recognitions indicate the standing of ALC scholars in their national and international communities.

These, and many other achievements included in the self-study, are contributions to ARPAC's deliberations and are further discussed in the analysis section.

Undergraduate education

The Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations offers a Bachelor of Arts in Chinese and Japanese and a joint BA/MA in Chinese or Japanese. Recently, the department has introduced the Certificate in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, and the Certificate in South Asian Languages and Civilizations. During AY 2014-2015, ALC awarded 52 bachelor's degrees (seventh of 16 units in review cycle); this reflects an 18 percent increase over the past five years. It is important to note that the department has a

fine record of helping its students move towards graduation in a timely fashion; the average time to degree for students entering as new freshmen is four years. ALC had 133 undergraduate majors as of fall 2014. Mirroring national trends in the humanities, the number of majors has declined significantly in five years (a 25 percent decrease), including an 11 percent decline in international students; however, there has been a 46 percent increase in underrepresented students (African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Native American). The percentage of students who are female (49 percent) has held steady over five years. Student credit hour (SCH) production was 7,180 for AY 2014-2015 (11th of 17 units) a three percent decrease over five years. While TTT SCH production increased by 45 percent over the past five years, the TTT share of the department's SCH production is only 17 percent (ranking the department 14th of 17 units in this measure). By contrast, ALC instructors and senior instructors taught 70 percent of SCH over the past five years; ALC ranks highest of 17 units in this measure. Language courses, which comprise a significant portion of the department's effort, usually are taught by non-TTT faculty, which has an impact on these numbers.

In spring 2015, the Office of Data Analytics conducted surveys of ALC seniors. The survey (with 13 respondents) noted that 69 percent of seniors planned to attain full-time employment after graduation, ranking second of 10 units in this review cycle. Sixty-one percent of seniors were satisfied with the major (13th of 13 units in this review cycle). Sixty-eight percent of seniors were satisfied with ALC course effectiveness (11th of 13 units in the review cycle). Only 44 percent of ALC students were satisfied with how well CU Boulder prepared them for the job market (13th of 13 units in the review cycle). The above negative student feedback stands in contrast to high faculty course questionnaire (FCQ) ratings (first of 15 in the TTT course rating and second of

15 in instructor rating for units in this review cycle). While the self study was surprised to see the survey results, given their high FCQs, they recognize that these measures include different student populations. They are planning to study specific student comments and, based on a better understanding of these numbers, take measures to improve student satisfaction.

ALC offers MAs in East Asian Languages and Literature (Chinese and Japanese), dual MAs with the departments of History and of Religious Studies, and an Asian Languages and Civilizations PhD. The Office of Data Analytics reports eight master's degrees awarded in AY 2014-2015, a 38 percent decrease over five years, with a median time to degree of 2.7 years (ranking ninth of 13 units). The fall census for 2014 indicated 27 students enrolled in these programs (a decrease of seven percent in five years). Graduate student body diversity is similar to that of ALC undergraduates, with 56 percent women (a 15 percent five-year decrease), 25 percent minorities (29 percent five-year decrease), and six percent underrepresented minorities (down 38 percent in five years). Thirty-three percent were international students (first of 13 units in the review cycle, a 38 percent increase over five years)

Space While the department's home office is in Eaton Humanities, with three other humanities departments, ALC faculty are spread out over four buildings. The unit requests additional space and more contiguous space.

Staff The department also notes the need for an additional staff position.

Budget The department budget is managed by the chair in consultation with the program assistant and faculty members as needed. The

self study does not indicate the level of its operating budget. The unit notes that most of its additional funding comes from grant support that is targeted for particular purposes. They request additional discretionary funds. They note in particular the costs involved in supplying visas to incoming faculty.

Past reviews

The Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee last reviewed the Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations in 2009. At the time, ARPAC described a unit with multiple strengths but also recognized a number of avenues for improvement. ALC was encouraged to (1) continue to foster open communications, transparency, and inclusiveness among faculty, especially regarding decision-making and strategic planning; (2) establish a formal junior faculty mentoring program; (3) find ways to provide instructors and graduate students with additional instructional, professional, and financial support; and (4) improve the academic and professional advising for ALC undergraduate majors. The department notes the progress it has made in meeting these goals: it has worked to improve communications, for example, and established an informal mentoring process. The department continues to have concerns about advising, and it needs to create a formal mentoring process. Also, funding for graduate students and instructors remains a pressing issue.

Campus context

CU Boulder accrues significant benefits from the work of the the Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations. As a center for instruction in non-Western and non-European societies, the department's work has the potential to expand the framework for those studying urgent contemporary political, economic, and cultural questions. This said, ARPAC highlights the following concern that the internal reviewers note: "Specifically, we were struck by statements from some ALC faculty expressing the belief that their intellectual identity was not (and perhaps might never be) compatible with other campus units whose missions seem more pragmatic and instrumental (e.g., professional training and certification). Our concern here is that a rigid commitment to this belief [...] may prevent ALC from collaborating successfully with other potentially affiliated units. Examples here include: Political Science, Geography, History, Religious Studies, Anthropology, Sociology, Linguistics, the Business School, and units in the new CMCI [the College of Media, Communication and Information] (e.g., the Center for Media, Religion, and Culture)."

National context

Asian Languages and Civilizations faculty have received prestigious fellowships, including from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton University, and Fulbright-Hays. In recent years, several of their MA graduates have been admitted to prestigious PhD programs (including Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, and Yale). The external reviewers speak to the international stature of the most senior faculty members, to the growing reputation of mid-career faculty, and to the promise of junior faculty. The self-study does express concern about levels of support for ALC in comparison to peers; for example, they note that fewer resources are expended at CU on library materials in ALC fields than at other universities. The ERC speaks to the high regard in which the department is held: “both reviewers were aware of the high quality of the ALC faculty before the review, but the material provided in advance, along with the interviews conducted in Boulder, underscored the strengths of the department.” The faculty in ALC have established a strong reputation as scholars in the range of fields with which they engage; the department includes some of the best scholars in their areas.

There are concerns expressed in the reporting about some aspects of the undergraduate program and about the viability of the CU ALC doctoral program. In moving forward, ALC needs to think carefully about its pedagogical mission.

The college and the campus need to work with ALC to make sure its mission is aligned with more general goals. Campus leaders also need to supply the unit with sufficient support. Inadequate space for instructors and limited library resources are two examples of areas that need to be addressed beyond the department.

Analysis

Personnel and governance

The internal reviewers note that ALC chairs have made an effort to include faculty in departmental decision-making and strategic planning. However, the same does not appear to apply to instructors and senior instructors. These two groups taught 70 percent of student credit hours over the past five years (ranking ALC highest of 17 units in this measure), yet they have no say in electing chairs or in department governance.

Salaries for instructors have also been a concern (as has support for graduate students). On the other hand, the tenure track faculty seem to be compensated at an acceptable rate. An assessment of faculty salaries shows that full, associate, and assistant ALC professors earn salaries equal to 99 percent of the average of faculty in their field within the group of public American Association of Universities (AAU) institutions.

ALC frequently hires native speakers from abroad and takes on the considerable workload of obtaining work visas for them. Currently, ALC staff members do the administrative work related to these visas. Given that other campus units also hire faculty and instructors from abroad, there appears to be an unmet efficiency that a centralization of efforts might best address. Centralization would mean that staff with specialized training could offload this work from unit staff already stretched thin from addressing routine human resource and accounting needs. ARPAC advises that the campus consider centralizing visa-related work in the Office of International Student and Scholar Services.

Research, scholarship, and creative work

The external reviewers described the reputational excellence of ALC faculty, citing their publications and fellowships (previously mentioned), and outstanding MA programs.

Undergraduate and
graduate education and
support

Among student populations in this review cohort, ALC seniors are the least satisfied with their major as a whole (13th of 13 units in the review group) and with how well CU Boulder prepared them for employment opportunities after graduation. The last undergraduate outcomes assessment for the Chinese program was conducted in 1999 with the conclusion that no curricular changes were necessary. The last undergraduate outcomes assessment for the Japanese program was conducted in AY 2004-2005, also with the conclusion that no curricular changes were necessary. The external reviewers did not meet with ALC undergraduate students during their visit to campus.

One of CU Boulder's the three central goals is student success. ALC might investigate if greater collaboration with affiliated units like Anthropology, Business, Geography, History, Linguistics, Political Science, Religious Studies, Sociology, and units in the new College of Media, Communication and Information (CMCI; e.g., the Center for Media, Religion, and Culture), might enhance undergraduate student success and satisfaction.

The MA program is ALC's crown jewel. The external reviewers note, "We met with over 20 graduate students in Chinese and Japanese for about one hour [...]. They all expressed satisfaction with the rigor of their programs, the degree of interaction with their faculty mentors, and with their own intellectual development [...]. ALC can maintain its excellent work in preparing MA students for further literary study, but it can also meet market changes by designing a graduate program that provides advanced study of Asian languages, cultures, and texts for students who will seek further training and employment in non-academic fields." ALC might also be advised to focus on improving its doctoral program and show results of this

improvement by AY 2020-21. ARPAC has two suggestions: first, ALC could recruit some of its excellent MA graduates to its doctoral program where appropriate; given the strength of our own faculty a case can be made for students in particular areas to continue their degree work here. Second, it should participate in the Center for the Humanities and the Arts' (CHA) consortium for doctoral programs which will provide stronger financial support for its students. This should improve recruitment.

Space

The ALC self-study and the internal and external reviewers' reports all note serious space concerns. The internal reviewers say, "The Department is perfectly right in assessing the space situation as 'dire'." The external reviewers add, "We visited the offices in the stadium and in a smaller, older building (OB1). Both were far from the central ALC offices [...]. Even if all faculty cannot be housed in the main ALC building, more welcoming space that [is] more centrally located would make for more effective teaching and class preparation."

Inclusive excellence

As a department focused on language, literature, and culture, ALC makes important contributions to the campus's efforts on diversity. The department has made good strides in insuring student and faculty diversity. ALC should continue to move forward with these efforts as part of the campus' drive for inclusive excellence.

Budget

While the main budget concern that arises in the reporting relates to inadequate library resources (see below), the department does note the need for additional staff. This request is supported by the ERC. All levels note needs for funding for graduate students, including travel support.

Library resources

The self-study notes that the Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations' library budget has experienced a decline from about \$139,000 in AY 2009-2010 to about \$48,000 in AY 2015-2016. The dean and the provost might consider requesting the library to provide further context to this decline in ALC's library budget. The library suggests loss of Title VI funds as a partial explanation for this decline. Also, the library suggests ALC faculty use some of their start-up funds for book acquisitions. The external reviewers recommend augmenting the library staff with a bibliographer to serve the Chinese program and a consultant to develop the collection in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies. The libraries has already recruited a Japanese bibliographer.

Recommendations

The members of the Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee (ARPAC) address the following recommendations to the Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations and to the offices of the dean and the provost. 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. Submit an annual report to the dean of Arts & Sciences indicating efforts taken and progress achieved in enhancing undergraduate student success and satisfaction:
 - a. Review the ALC pedagogical mission. Pursue collaborations that might enhance undergraduate student success and satisfaction, including with Anthropology, Business, the Center for Asian Studies, Geography, History, Linguistics, Political Science, Religious Studies, Sociology, and units in the College of Media, Communication, and Information (e.g., the Center for Media, Religion, and Culture);
 - b. To continue to successfully recruit students, consider how ALC's current disciplinary traditions may successfully align with evolving student interests and larger interdisciplinary conversations;
 - c. Focus on placement and career mentoring advice for ALC undergraduates (perhaps consider the example of the Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures);
 - d. Partner with CAS for creating programming beyond the classroom that will add to student enrichment;

- e. Focus on summer (or academic-year) internships for ALC undergraduates that can provide them with valuable experience and perhaps suggest career paths;
 - f. Advise students considering ALC as a major about the placement record of the (three or four) most recent ALC undergraduate classes;
2. Work with the Office of the Senior Vice Provost and the quality initiative leader to develop formal mechanisms for measuring student success;
 3. Continue the excellent work in preparing MA students for further literary study. Think creatively (counseling students as they are admitted, arranging internships, etc.) to train MA students for employment in non-academic fields;
 - a. Appoint a faculty member responsible for advising MA students toward the timely completion of their degrees. This should reduce the average time to complete the MA degree, which is currently 2.7 years;
 4. Consider why ALC's success in the MA program is not translating into success in their PhD program;
 - a. Consider working with the Center for Asian Studies to improve the doctoral program;
 - b. Work with the Consortium of Doctoral Studies in Literatures and Cultures so as to improve funding for doctoral students.

5. Provide more descriptive data about undergraduate SCH production in the unit's two BA programs, its joint BA/MA program, its three certificate programs, and its non-degree-area offerings;
6. Consider recruiting TTT faculty who are native speakers of the languages they teach and/or belong to the cultures about which they are researching;
7. Focus on modern Chinese language training for undergraduates, instead of only traditional Mandarin Chinese;
8. Make the case that space for ALC faculty and instructors is inadequate and apply for available funding to remedy the shortfall;
9. Further involve instructors and senior instructors in department governance;
10. Consider metrics that compare ALC faculty research and scholarship measures with that of ALC faculty in peer or aspirational schools.
11. Monitor ALC's efforts to enhance undergraduate student success;
12. Consider metrics that compare ALC research and scholarship measures with those of faculty at peer public AAU schools;
13. Support ALC's efforts to work with the Consortium of Doctoral Studies in Literatures and Cultures ;

To the dean of the College of
Arts and Sciences

14. Support the unit's efforts in obtaining additional and more functional work space for faculty and instructors.

To the provost

15. Ensure sufficient resources to support campus needs for work visas for faculty in ALC (and other units);

16. Encourage the library to hire a bibliographer for the Chinese program and a consultant to develop the collection in Middle Eastern and Islamic studies.

Required follow-up

The chair of the Department of Asian Languages & Civilizations 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 dean 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.