

UCC Program Review Committee Summary of Review

Program: Linguistics

Date of last review: AY 2016-17

Date of this review: AY 2020-2021 (follow-up)

The program offers the following degrees, minors, and certificates:

- Master of Arts in Linguistics
- Master of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
- Graduate Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language
- Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics
- Minor in Linguistics
- Minor in Japanese
- Undergraduate Certificate in Forensic Studies

Recommendation: This program is found to be viable.

See report for commendations, concerns, and recommendations.

The report was forwarded to the chair of the department and the college dean. Their responses are attached.

The report was also sent to the Graduate Council. Their comments are attached.

**University Curriculum Committee
Academic Program Review¹
Three-Year Midterm Review**

Ohio University's Linguistics Department

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ohio University Linguistics Department is a **viable** program. The central mission of the department consists of engaging in linguistic theory and applied research, providing education and training to a broad array of language teachers, and offer language instruction in Arabic, Chinese, English, Japanese, and Swahili. Despite significant externally imposed challenges, including the separation of Ohio Program of Intensive English (OPIE) from the department and the inexplicable defunding of the English Language Improvement Program (ELIP, now the Academic and Global Communication Program (AGC)), the department continues to meet its broad overall mission.

The main purpose of this midterm review was to assess the progress made by the department during the three-year time period since the last full seven-year review. In the previous reviewers' opinion, "all programs offered by the department are conditionally viable," and had concerns that, "while the department is able to accomplish its academic mission, the programs offered by the department may face some serious difficulties in near future if appropriate steps are not taken soon." The previous review team then offered specific recommendations for the department. It is the opinion of the midterm reviewers that the department has done an admirable job of meeting or exceeding the recommended improvements.

Commendations

- Notable improvement in research output
- Successful restructuring of undergraduate advising
- Adaptation of graduate curriculum to meet graduate student demand
- Extraordinary accomplishments of ELIP and
- Increase in the impact of ELIP though expansion into the broader AGC Program

Concerns

- Program eliminations
- Faculty staffing levels
- Security, protection, and reasonable expectations of Instructional Faculty

¹ Prepared in Fall 2020 by two internal reviewers recruited by the UCC Program Review Committee — Dr. Candice Thomas-Maddox (School of Communication Studies) and Dr. Eric Stinaff (Department of Physics & Astronomy).

Recommendations

- The AGC Program (formerly ELIP) continues to be, an exemplary and essential program to the entire university. AGC is so well run and successful that the previous reviewers had “nothing but praise for this program.” They noted specifically that the program provides “a great service to students across campus.” In addition to significantly benefitting students, the program substantially benefits the university indirectly through aspects including international reputation, student recruiting and retention, and providing research faculty an invaluable resource to improve their students’ success. Having experts in academic, technical and discipline specific communication greatly improves the university’s research quality and productivity. While the reviewers understand the university faces serious fundamental economic challenges, if academic programs of this quality are being eliminated, then Ohio University is truly in jeopardy. We strongly recommend the decision to eliminate the AGC Program be reversed.

- We commend the university leadership for granting a Tenure Track line in response to faculty departures. However, it is embarrassing that the search ultimately failed over the request for a relatively minor salary adjustment. Despite the hiring freeze, we recommend the department be allowed to fill this vacancy as their numbers have been at a critically low level for too long.

- We have only praise for the Instructional Faculty in the department. They continue to be productive well beyond expectations. Our concern is with the expectations, security, and protections. The Instructional Faculty have not only met all expectations but often greatly exceeded them with many Instructional Faculty displaying productivity commensurate with a Tenure Track position. Again, while we understand the financial challenges the university has found itself in, to summarily dismiss so many faculty members of such extraordinary quality will not only do irreparable damage to the teaching and research mission of the university but will also tarnish the university’s reputation when trying to hire such quality faculty in the future. While the reinstatement of the AGC Program would be a necessary first step in avoiding such damage, we further recommend the University consider promotion to teaching intensive Tenure Track positions for outstanding instructional faculty.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Since the last 7-year review in 2017, the Linguistics Department has remained committed to its recruitment and retention efforts despite declining faculty resources and financial constraints. During the program review, notable aspects of faculty, undergraduate and graduate education were noted:

Faculty Resources

Over the past three years, elimination of positions and voluntary separations/retirements have resulted in a 55% decrease in the number of faculty members in the department. Despite the incredible demands placed on faculty with increased advising of graduate and undergraduate students and increased workloads, they have remained resilient. A variety of strategies have been implemented to compensate for the limited faculty resources (e.g., combining undergraduate and graduate sections, limiting the frequency of course offerings, and reducing course availability by offering a limited number of options for students). This points to the dedication and commitment of faculty to maintain the program. Their strategic planning and creative problem-solving (e.g., reassignment of faculty from language teaching to linguistic teaching, development of new certificate programs, and increased efforts for international outreach) have been instrumental in overcoming the barriers they have encountered in the past three years.

Undergraduate Students

As OHIO prepares for its transition to the revised general education curriculum (BRICKS), the Linguistics faculty have proposed courses to assist students in meeting requirements in three (3) of the GenEd areas. These include the following:

FOUNDATIONS	LING 1000 – Intro to Non-Indo-European Languages
PILLARS	LING 2700 – The Nature of Languages
ARCHES	LING 2750 - Introduction to Language & Culture (Connected World: Global connections) LING 2800 - Language in America (Connected World: Society and Justice) LING 2850 - Sustaining the Mother Tongue (Connected World: Sustainability) LING 2860 - Language and Technology (Connected World: Science, Technology, and Society)

In addition, the department supports OHIO's mission for providing students with opportunities to explore topics and to expose them to courses that enhance their understanding of the role of diversity and inclusion through its offering of minors and certificate programs. Since the review in 2017, the department has created a Certificate in Forensic Studies (in addition to the existing TEFL and CALL certificates). Student enrollment in the first course in the new FS certificate

was 46, with representation from at least eight different majors. In its inaugural semester, 20+ students officially declared that they intend to complete the certificate.

Graduate Students

Trends in graduate enrollments seem to indicate that there is a continued interest and demand for the programs offered by the department. However, limited financial resources have resulted in a decline in enrollments since assistantship opportunities are limited. Despite a slight decline in international student enrollments, the department continues to support OHIO's mission for promoting international partnerships and opportunities.

	# of students	International	Domestic
AY 2017-2018	28	17	11
AY 2018-2019	20	12	8
AY 2019-2020	19	13	6

Overall, comments shared by current graduate students in the program were very positive. They indicated that they are challenged by the rigor of the program and commended the faculty for their focus on preparing them for teaching careers and instructional opportunities. In particular, graduate students noted that the diversity of the department is what makes it special, and their ability to learn and interact with classmates from across cultures adds a layer of peer learning and networking that is unique from other graduate programs. Two students highlighted the value of the existing certificate programs offered by Linguistics in boosting recruitment efforts. Both of the students had completed certificates as undergraduates that prompted them to pursue the M.A. degree.

Graduate students expressed concerns about the transition of faculty and indicated that the high number of departures has caused them to question their ability to fulfill their programs of study on the timeline initially agreed upon with their original committees. One recommendation that graduate students would like to see implemented is an increase in opportunities for collaborative research with faculty – however, they noted that they understand that resources are currently limited given the multiple demands on faculty time as they cover gaps left by the departures in the past few years.

Curricular Changes

In response to feedback received during the 2017 review, the faculty have been responsive to implementing changes to meet the needs of students. Self-study efforts have involved comparisons with peer institutions to ensure that OHIO's Linguistics Department remains competitive in its efforts to recruit quality students and address knowledge and skills that will ensure their success in an evolving career field. Specifically:

- The B.A. in Linguistics and the M.A. in Applied Linguistics curriculum have been revised
- A new one-year applied master's program (Master of Teaching English to Other Speakers – MTEOS) was approved in May 2020
- The K-12 ESL endorsement program was expanded as an online e-Campus program

PROGRAM REVIEW

Since the review

- Notable improvement in research output
- Successful restructuring of undergraduate advising
- Adaptation of graduate curriculum to meet graduate student demand
- Extraordinary accomplishments of ELIP and
- Increase in the impact of ELIP through expansion into the broader AGC Program
- Focus on integration of technology to expand program offerings

Notable Improvement in Research Output

Research Faculty have made a concerted effort to address the concerns raised in 2017 regarding scholarly output. Research productivity is evaluated based on a detailed and thorough departmental scoring system (see Appendix 4 in the Self-Study). Based on these metrics the Research Faculty Output showed substantial increases of 50% from 2017 to 2019, and an additional 30% from 2018 to 2019. This corresponds to roughly a doubling of Research Faculty Output during the past three years.

The review team noted that the increase in scholarly productivity was achieved during a time when faculty faced increased teaching demands due to limited faculty resources. This increased productivity has also led to the promotion of one faculty member (Dr. Liang Tao) to the rank of Full Professor. Presentations were made at state, national, and international conferences, with faculty collaborating with graduate students and mentoring them through the scholarly research process.

The review team would also note the impressive productivity of Instructional Faculty in the department. While not obliged to do research many do, with some demonstrating productivity rivaling many Research Faculty. Such productivity is well beyond all expectations it is certain the summary dismissal of so many Instructional Faculty would have a profoundly negative impact on the scholarly profile of the university as well as student research experiences.

Successful Restructuring of Undergraduate Advising

Based on feedback received in 2017, a task force was created to address issues with advising and outreach. Efforts have been made to educate students from a variety of majors/disciplines (e.g., speech pathology, political science, communication studies, modern languages) about language science and its value in their respective fields. Informational materials have been created to inform students and parents of certificate and minor options. Collaborations across campus have been formed through TOEFL and CALL and have resulted in the recruitment of students from other social sciences to pursue minors and certificates. Results of undergraduate advising

evaluations indicate that students are very satisfied with the assistance they receive from faculty, with scores of 4 or higher (on a 5-point scale) for all items.

Additional efforts to promote the department include the promotion of colloquium series and presentations. An experimental course in Language Construction was created to focus on how new languages are created. Students from this class presented class projects at the OHIO Student Expo. Outreach efforts include the “English for All” program to promote community engagement.

Adaptation of Graduate Curriculum to Meet Student Needs

In addition to the curricular changes and certificate programs discussed in the previous section of this report, the Linguistics department has made a concerted effort over the past three years to adapt to changing needs of its graduate student population. These changes include adopting a more applied approach in the curriculum to prepare students for teaching/language training careers. This change prompted a change in the title of the degree from M.A. in Linguistics to an M.A. in Applied Linguistics. In addition, the department reactivated the option for students to earn an endorsement in TESOL.

Upon receiving feedback from the reviewers in 2017, faculty began exploring options for reorganizing and strengthening the existing M.A. program. Research methods classes were introduced, along with new courses and an ePortfolio option. An exit interview process was introduced to gather data from graduating students. Feedback indicated that students feel a strength of the program is its mix of theory and practice. In an attempt to increase revenue-generating program options, the M.A. task force on developing a second track to provide students with the option of selecting a “track” that best meets their career goals. Program requirements were restructured to include fewer core requirements and allow students to choose electives that more closely align with their desires to focus on research versus pedagogy.

AGC Program (formerly ELIP) Accomplishments & Impact

As mentioned above, the nationally recognized AGC Program (formerly ELIP) continues to be, an exemplary and essential program to the entire university. A SWOT analysis of the AGC Program (Appendix 3 in the Self-Study) is included as an appendix to this report, and it is clear, even from the highly abridged summary of this analysis presented here, the immense positive impact of the AGC Program. AGC enrollment figures have been robust with over 400 students enrolled in AGC courses for AY 19-20. While the impact on international students’ education has been significant, it is important to note that AGC has also been serving domestic students, providing critical assistance in writing academically for a specific audience in their major fields of study. The faculty in the Linguistics department remain committed to serving the needs of students from across a variety of majors. Services offered through the program assist international and native English-speaking graduate students in writing for their disciplines.

Often this involves conversing with students about their dissertation plans. Support provided by the Linguistics department assists international students in strengthening their English skills and enhancing their adaptation to the Athens community.

The AGC Program maintains a notable research output which not only adds to the profile of the University but directly enhances the student experience. Specifically, graduate students were able to gain hands on experience with research active faculty. It was clear from conversations with graduate students that the loss of the AGC Program would have a profoundly negative impact on their, and future students', experience.

The AGC Program has also been successful in securing external funding for international collaborations. Faculty associated with the AGC Program (formerly ELIP) secured two American English (AE) E-Teacher U.S. State Departments grants in 2019-20 totaling over \$500,000, while online certificate programs with international partners enrolled over 3000 students and generated nearly \$300,000 from 2017-18 to 2019-20. Considering the decision to eliminate the AGC Program, both the handling of this, and the loss of potential future revenue streams to the University is deeply concerning for the midterm review committee.

Focus on Integration of Technology to Expand Program Offerings

To meet the growing demands for online options, faculty have demonstrated a commitment to integrating and diversifying technology in their language teaching. Efforts include AGC online course delivery, the additional of partnerships in East Asia, and the adaptation of online certificate programs in TESOL and the TEFL.

The ability of the faculty in being able to adapt and teach online is commendable. Faculty have produced a package of online courses and worked with foreign institutions to assist them in preparing their students for teaching English. There are exploring opportunities to expand operations in other countries.

In terms of international outreach, the department's outreach in East Asia has resulted in the creation of partnerships with two Korean universities, one in China, and one in Indonesia. Five (5) online courses were developed to offer overseas, with more than 1,000 students enrolled in these classes.

Overall Summary

The Ohio University Linguistics Department is a **viable** program. Despite significant externally imposed challenges, the department continues to meet its broad overall mission of engaging in linguistic theory and applied research, providing education and training to a broad array of language teachers, and offer language instruction in Arabic, Chinese, English, Japanese, and Swahili. It is the opinion of the midterm reviewers that the department has done an admirable job of meeting or exceeding the recommended improvements suggested in the previous seven year review. The three urgent recommendations of the midterm review committee are:

- 1) Reinstate the AGC Program
- 2) Allow the department to complete its Tenure Track hire
- 3) Rehiring and selective promotion of Instructional Faculty

APPENDIX 3: SWOT ANALYSIS OF AGC/ELIP

SWOT Analysis of
Academic & Global Communication (AGC) Program (*formerly ELIP*)
Department of Linguistics
Ohio University

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><u>Faculty</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nimble, adaptive, innovative & entrepreneurial • Diverse, internationally renowned & accomplished scholars/researchers • Experts in academic, technical & discipline-specific communication; global communication; educational technology; writing centers; second language writing; international TAs • Teach, supervise & mentor in Linguistics students <p><u>Internal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally recognized model program • Only program serving both international & domestic students in US • AGC courses, labs, SPEAK test & workshops • Institutional partnerships • First to deliver online writing course • First to offer live online tutoring • Employ & train international student tutors • Small operating cost • Contributes to OHIO's recruitment & retention • Contributes to OHIO's mission <p><u>External</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online certificate programs with international partners • Revenue streams: online certificate programs & State Department grants • Contributes to OHIO's recruitment & retention • Contributes to OHIO's mission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No tenure-track/tenured faculty • Lack of institutional support • Loss of 2 FTE faculty (May 2018, May 2020), no replacements • Loss of Director (August 2020), no replacement • Small number of staff: 4 full-time & 1 half-time • Non-renewal of all faculty (May 15, 2020)
Opportunities	Threats
<p><u>Internal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of new Global Communication Certificate • Expansion of online graduate writing courses: One OHIO • Expansion of discipline-specific writing courses <p><u>External</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of OHIO global brand • New international partnerships • New external revenue streams • New global online academic writing course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of unique & innovative program • Loss of international renowned faculty • Loss of essential support courses & services, especially for international students • Loss of student work & training opportunities, especially for international students • Loss of AGC's contribution to OHIO's recruitment & retention efforts • Loss of AGC's contribution to OHIO's mission • Loss of existing & potential international partnerships for online programs and certificates • Loss of external revenue generation • Degradation of OHIO's global brand

NOTE: See details below.

What Losing the Academic & Global Communication (AGC) Program (formerly ELIP) Means for Ohio University

1. Losing a unique and innovative program unlike any in the US

- Nationally recognized model program
 - Dr. Joseph Lee: Invited to the University of Michigan (2019)
 - Dr. Dawn Bikowski: Invited to the Pennsylvania State University (2018)
 - Report of 7-year Review of Linguistics Department by Dr. Charlene Polio (External Review, Michigan State University, April 21, 2017)
 - 5. ELIP: “I have nothing but praise for this program, so I will not focus on it this report, but to summarize: the students were happy, the faculty is highly qualified, the director is highly organized and the program seems to provide a great service to students across campus. In addition, the MA students benefits from both the Group 2 faculty’s instruction and placement into ELIP” (p. 6).
 - 7d. Commendations: “The ELIP program as a model of organization and professionalism” (p. 7).
- Only academic communication program serving both international and domestic students
 - Courses consist of ~50% international and ~50% domestic students
 - Labs serve all OHIO students (international and domestic); employ & train both international and domestic student tutors
- Internal & external programs: Internal programs (AGC courses, labs, SPEAK Test) and external programs (online certificate programs)
 - Internal & external programs contribute to OHIO’s recruitment & retention efforts
 - Internal & external programs contribute to OHIO’s mission and vision
- Educational technology innovation
 - First online/hybrid academic writing courses (since 2013)
 - First live online tutoring (since 2013)
 - External online certificate programs w/ international partners (since 2017)
- Research unit (2014 to present)
 - Output: 11 publications and 25 presentations
 - Research feeds back into curricula and teacher/tutor development
 - Provides research experience and opportunities for Applied Linguistics MA students

2. Losing internationally renowned scholars and professional leaders/experts

- All full-time faculty have PhDs (Drs. Joseph Lee, Edna Lim, H. Keira Park & Lara Wallace); 1 half-time faculty has a Linguistics MA (Art Oestrike)
- Leading experts in academic, technical, and discipline-specific research writing; intercultural/global communication; educational technology; writing center; second language writing and oral communication; international teaching assistants
- 75+ publications (peer-review articles, books, book chapters, book reviews, conference proceedings, professional newsletters)
- 250+ conference presentations, workshops, webinars, and invited talks
- Editorial Review Boards: 3 international journals
- Regular Reviewers: 16 international journals
- Reviewers: 3 book publishers
- Regular Proposal Reviewers: 5 international conferences
- Teach in Linguistics Department Programs: Linguistics BA, Applied Linguistics MA, MTESOL, TESOL Endorsement, TEFL Certificate & CALL Certificate

- Supervise & collaborate with Applied Linguistics MA students: 7/10 former AGC GAs/TAs went on to top PhD programs
- Serve on Linguistics, CAS, and University committees

3. Losing essential courses OHIO students, especially international students, need to succeed

- Support international & domestic students across the university
- Institutional partnerships with the Business College, Engineering College, English Department, M.A in Political Science, MA in Communication & Development, M.A. in International Development Studies, and formerly with Master of Public Administration
- 2017-18 to 2019-20: Served 95 departments/year | 428 students/year
- 2019-20: Served 414 students: 53% international & 47% domestic students
- ***ENG D160 (Fundamental Usage Skills)/ENG 1610 (Freshman Composition)***
 - Tier 1 First-Year English Composition
 - All international/nonnative undergraduate students
 - 1-2 sections offered in fall & spring
 - 2017-18 to 2019-20: 87 students/year
- ***ET 6020 (Technical Writing Seminar)***
 - Developed in response to plagiarism scandal in Engineering College in 2006
 - Required: All Engineering graduate students (international & domestic)
 - 2 sections offered in fall & spring
 - 2017-18 to 2019-20: 67 students/year
- ***ELIP/AGC 1300 (Business Relations and Communication Skills)***
 - Tier II Cross-Cultural Perspectives
 - Both international & domestic students from across campus
 - 1 section offered in fall & spring
 - 2017-18 to 2019-20: 44 students/year
- ***ELIP/AGC 5220 (Classroom Communication Skills for TAs)***
 - ALL int'l TAs not passing the SPEAK test required to receive funding
 - 2 sections offered in fall & 1 section offered in spring
 - 2017-18 to 2019-20: 41 students/year
- ***ELIP/AGC 5320 (Presenting in Research & Professional Contexts)***
 - Popular class for the oral defense & conference presentations
 - Both international & domestic students from across campus
 - 1 section offered only in spring
 - 2017-18 to 2019-20: 13 students/year
- ***ELIP/AGC 5140 (Academic Writing in Graduate Studies)***
 - Required: All graduate Political Science, Communication & Development, & International Development Studies (international & domestic)
 - Both international & domestic from across campus
 - 2-3 (in person & online) sections offered in fall & 2 (in person & online) sections offered in spring
 - 2017-18 to 2019-20: 98 students/year

- ***ELIP/AGC 5160 (Writing for Research & Publication)***
 - Required: All graduate Political Science students (international & domestic)
 - Both international & domestic from across campus
 - 1 section offered in fall & 2 sections offered in spring (in person & hybrid section for science majors)
 - 2017-18 to 2019-20: 44 students/year
- ***New Opportunities***
 - Development of “Global Communication Certificate” (tentative title): an interdisciplinary certificate that prepares our domestic and international students to engage with the world and communicate effectively with the diversity of English speakers and Englishes from around the world as globally competent citizens. As English has become the global language, this type of education has become more crucial for our students' future engagement and success.
 - Expansion of online graduate writing courses for growing online graduate programs
 - Expansion of discipline-specific writing courses for on-campus graduate programs

4. Losing essential services students, especially international students, need to succeed

- SPEAK Test
 - 2017-18 to 2019-20: 134 students/year
- AGC Undergraduate Writing Lab (in person/live online)
 - 2017-18 to 2019-20: 89 students/year | 399 sessions/year
- AGC Graduate Writing & Critical Reading Lab (in person/live online)
 - 2017-18 to 2019-20: 128 students/year | 636 sessions/year
- AGC Presentation Lab (in person/live online)
 - 2017-18 to 2019-20: 67 students/year | 772 sessions/year
- Employment & training of international & domestics student tutors
 - 2017-18 to 2019-20: 29 tutors/year (35% international & 65% domestic)

5. Losing partnerships with and reputation among international institutions

- Cyber Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, South Korea
- United International College, China
- Duta Wacana Christian University, Indonesia
- Seojeong College, South Korea
- Global Cyber University, South Korea
- ***New Opportunities***
 - Develop new international partnerships and expand OHIO global brand
 - Develop global online academic communication courses

6. Losing current and future external revenue streams

- Online (External) Certificate Programs: 2017-18 to 2019-20
 - Total Enrollment (2017-18 to 2019-20): 3024 students
 - Total Revenue (2017-18 to 2019-20): \$293,335
 - Projection (2020-21): Total Revenue: \$167,500
- U.S. State Department Grants
 - English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI)
 - Total Revenue (2020-21): \$225,065
 - English for Tourism Professionals
 - Total Revenue (2020-22): \$181,000

- *New Opportunities*
 - Develop new international partnerships to expand external revenue streams

From: [Bell, David](#)
To: [Such, Barbel](#); [Plassmann, Florenz](#)
Cc: [Dewald, Howard](#)
Subject: Re: Linguistics Program Review report / response requested
Date: Monday, March 1, 2021 9:10:50 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Barbel,

Thanks for this. The Linguistics Department endorses the report and its recommendations.

We do have a few suggestions for edits to the language of the report

p.5 A new one-year applied master's program (~~Master of Teaching English to Other Speakers – MTEOS~~) was approved in May 2020

= (Master of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages – MTESOL)

p.6 “Collaborations across campus have been formed through ~~TOEFL~~ and CALL and have resulted in the recruitment of students from other social sciences to pursue minors and certificates

= TEFL

p. 7 There is a verb missing in the main clause. “~~In an attempt to increase revenue- generating program options, the M.A. task force on developing a second track to provide students with the option of selecting a “track” that best meets their career goals.~~”

It should also be repeated in this section that the department introduced a new 1-year MTESOL in addition to restructuring the 2-year MA curriculum and changing the name from MA Linguistics to MA Applied Linguistics

Thanks

David

David Bell PhD
Associate Professor of Linguistics
Chair, Linguistics Department
Gordy Hall 383c
740 593 4562





OHIO
UNIVERSITY

College of Arts and Sciences

Office of the Dean
Wilson Hall, College Green
1 Ohio University
Athens OH 45701-2979
T: 740.597-1833
F: 740-593-0053

DATE: March 4, 2021
TO: Bärbel Such, Program Review Committee
FROM: Florenz Plassmann, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
RE: Dean's response to the three-year midterm review of Linguistics

I express my gratitude to the two internal reviewers of the UCC Program Review Committee, Candice Thomas-Maddox and Eric Stinaff, for their analysis of the Linguistics Department and the AGC program. I share the reviewers' sentiment that the department has done an admirable job of meeting or exceeding the improvements that the review committee had recommended three years ago.

The report does not mention that instruction in two of the four languages offered by the department is now done solely by graduate students, with oversight by a tenured faculty member. While I wish that the college was able to continue supporting faculty positions in these areas, I commend the department for adjusting instruction in a way that allows Ohio University to continue offering undergraduate as well as graduate language instruction in Arabic and Swahili.

I appreciate the committee's recommendations. My thoughts follow:

- (1) **Reinstate the AGC Program:** I agree that AGC provides valuable services to the university, and I commend the previous director Dawn Bikowski for securing two sizeable external grants from the State Department and for initiating revenue-generating partnerships with international institutions. But even those external funds were insufficient to cover the program's full annual cost to the college. It is my hope that the IOTT will identify a financing structure that allows us to continue the services that AGC provides.
- (2) **Allow the department to complete its Tenure Track hire:** The instruction of living languages at OU is spread over three units: LING, MODL, and CIS. Arabic and Swahili are taught exclusively by graduate student instructors, and as I understand, language instruction in CIS is also done mostly/exclusively by student instructors. CAS will be increasing graduate student instruction in Chinese and Japanese, we have suspended the

German major, we will put the certificate in Italian on hold and end the instruction of Russian in Summer 2021. These adjustments occur while the university is experiencing declining enrollment that has hit CAS particularly hard, both in terms of decreasing numbers of our own majors as well as in terms of the student credit hours that CAS departments provide to students in other colleges. It is clear that all areas of language instruction need support, but I do not foresee opportunities for hires, whether tenure track or instructional, within the current financial environment and current structure.

Consolidating language instruction within a single unit might generate efficiencies that would allow us to bolster instruction. During the past two years, LING and MODL have investigated the possibility of a merger. The 2017 report indicates that such a possibility had also been discussed under Dean Frank. The current review does not address these discussions, and I understand that the two departments currently have different foci that make a merger unattractive. But a possibility of future interdisciplinary hires that support multiple areas might increase the attractiveness of forming a single unit of language instruction. I am happy to explore such possibilities with all units affected and university leadership. This would need to happen on a short timeline since time is clearly of the essence.

In the meantime, I ask that the Linguistics Department be judicious in building curricular plans that it can offer with its current instructional resources.

- (3) **Rehiring and selective promotion of Instructional Faculty:** I agree that many instructional faculty in our college are doing a fantastic job. It is not possible to convert instructional positions to tenure track positions because filling a new tenure track position requires a national search. However, I urge the Linguistics Department to put forward those faculty who are eligible and ready for promotion in rank.

From: [Yang, Lijing](#)
To: [Such, Barbel](#)
Subject: Grad Council comments on Civil Engineering and Linguistics
Date: Friday, April 9, 2021 5:52:53 PM

Barbel,

The Grad Council has reviewed two program review reports, Civil Engineering and Linguistics and summarized our comments below.

[The comments pertaining to the Civil Engineering review have been deleted from this document.]

Linguistics:

The Linguistics Department had a three-year midterm review to address the previous reviewers' concerns of "serious difficulties" in program offerings. We concurred with the program review team that the Linguistics program is viable and has met or exceeded the recommended improvements. However, our committee have deep concerns about elimination of the Academic & Global Communication (AGC) program and would like to call for Grad Council's support to reinstate the AGC program.

In May of 2020, Ohio University announced the elimination of the English Language Improvement Program (ELIP), which is currently called AGC, in 2021 due to OU's current budget issues. In the [elimination announcement](#), OU stated that it will reorganize all international student support services starting from the summer of 2020.

However, the program review has not shown any evidence about whether the reorganization is in progress.

The program review report said "AGC Program (formerly ELIP) continues to be, an exemplary and essential program to the entire university". It has "immense positive impact" on international students' education by "strengthening their English skills and enhancing their adaptation to the Athens community". It has also been serving domestic students, providing critical assistance in writing academically for a specific audience in their major fields of study.

We are deeply concerned that the elimination of the AGC program will 1) hinder the English language development of our students, particularly international students; and 2) shift the burden of English testing and teaching academic writing courses to academic program faculty, especially for those programs with large enrollment of international students.

Thus, the Grad Council has drafted a letter, based on the above comments, to Faculty Senate to call for support to help reinstate the AGC program. We hope you will also present these comments to UCC to engage the larger academic community in the conversation.

Thank you!

Lijing

Lijing Yang, PhD,
Associate Professor, Higher Education and Student Affairs
Ohio University
The Patton College of Education
Department of Counseling and Higher Education
McCracken Hall 432N
Athens, Ohio 45701
Office: (740) 597-1930
Email: yangl@ohio.edu