Final Assessment Report

Cyclical Review of the Graduate Programs in Translation Studies and Conference Interpreting

Graduate Programs Evaluation Committee
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

Submitted to the
Senate of the University of Ottawa

June 2014
Recommendation of the FGPS Graduate Programs Evaluation Committee

Good quality for MA and PhD in Translation Studies
Good quality with report for the Master of Conference Interpreting (MCI)

Programs reviewed

Master of Arts in Translation Studies
Doctor of Philosophy in Translation Studies
Master of Conference Interpreting

Evaluation process

This executive summary of the translation and interpretation graduate programs is based on the following documents, which were reviewed by the Graduate Programs Evaluation Committee on March 18, 2014:

a) The academic unit’s self-study report
   - Volume 1: Programs
   - Volume 2: Curricula vita
   - Volume 3: Outside evaluators
b) The report drafted by the two external examiners following their campus visit (June 2013)
c) The internal examiner’s report (June 2013)
d) The academic unit’s response to the reports (November 2013)
e) The letter from the Dean of the Faculty of Arts (January 2014)
f) The academic unit’s answers to the Graduate Program Evaluation Committee’s questions (January 2014)

The Graduate Program Evaluation Committee first examined the draft of volumes 1, 2 and 3 of the self-study report at its meeting of October 2, 2012. Concerns were expressed and comments conveyed to the unit. A revised report was sent to the consultants.

The visit by external examiners, accompanied by the internal examiner, took place on May 22 and 23, 2013.

External examiners:
- Professor Benoît Léger, Département d’études françaises, Concordia University, Montreal
- Professor Georges L. Bastin, Département de linguistique et de traduction, Université de Montréal

Internal evaluator:
- Professor Sylvie Frigon, Department of Criminology, University of Ottawa

The evaluators raised a number of concerns while noting at the same time that the MA and PhD programs are excellent overall. They noted that there were some concerns among professors about the governance structure of the programs and about the distribution of PhD thesis supervisions among faculty members. They also pointed out that the presence of international students who speak either French or English and one or more additional languages but who are
not bilingual French-English contradicts the academic regulations requiring French-English bilingualism. They also noted a lack of professors working in the area of conference interpreting and questioned whether the existing laboratory was sufficient to meet the needs of the Master of Conference Interpreting program. Finally, they also called for additional professor positions in translation studies.

The unit replied effectively to most of these concerns. It presented a plan to make better use of the existing language laboratory, pointing out that the need for internationalization and the requirement for bilingualism are at the centre of Destination 2020, the University’s strategic plan. Unit personnel also described the current governance structure of the program. When the dean of the Faculty of Arts indicated there would be no additional funding for a staff position or for the language laboratory, the unit presented an innovative plan for adjunct appointments and for a cross appointment to staff the interpretation program. Finally, the unit has also developed a plan to ensure that all of their programs include a research component.

PART 1: MA and PhD in Translation Studies

Strengths of the programs

The evaluation showed that students in the MA and PhD programs are generally satisfied with their experience at the University of Ottawa and have a good relationship with their professors. The examiners all highlighted the calibre of the faculty members—in terms of the quality and volume of their research and publications, the quality of their teaching and their success in obtaining research funding. They were impressed at the work that has been accomplished in the areas of terminology and technology. Graduates of the programs find exciting and challenging jobs related to their training.

Areas for improvement

Despite the evident strengths of the program, the evaluation identified certain areas for improvement. The program has great potential for further development by attracting international students who are bilingual, though not necessarily in French and English. However, a language policy coherent with the admission and program requirements must be developed. While students indicated they were satisfied with the quality of thesis supervision, supervisions are not well distributed among department faculty members. Not all students are required to take the methodology course, which seems to be central to the program. Finally, students complained about a lack of information about expectations and administrative practices.

Recommendations

1. Consider offering more thorough orientation sessions for new students and provide a program guide with clearer information on the program requirements and administrative aspects.
2. Strike a balance between the unit’s goal of attracting top international students and its commitment to French-English bilingualism—especially at the PhD level. Monitor progress carefully to ensure that the unit continues to foster both internationalization and French-English bilingualism, two important goals of Destination 2020.
3. Consider making the methodology course mandatory for both MA and PhD students.
4. Actively monitor thesis supervisions and their distribution to maximize the program’s research strengths.
5. Continue to monitor retention rates and times to completion.

Calendar and deadline

The five recommendations above are to be addressed by the next cyclical review, to be completed in July 2020.

Authority

The director of the graduate studies in translation and interpretation, the chair of the School of Translation and Interpretation as well as the vice-dean (graduate studies) of the Faculty of Arts are responsible for following up on these recommendations.

PART 2: Master of Conference Interpreting (MCI)

Strengths of the program

This program trains interpreters for the Parliament of Canada and for high-level interpretation positions both in Canada and internationally. Its graduates are especially marketable and enjoy a high employment rate.

The School of Translation and Interpretation has innovative leadership that has been successful in finding creative ways to overcome the challenges of the program. It has secured a guarantee of continued financial support for program from the Translation Bureau (Department of Public Works and Government Services) for the next five years.

Areas for improvement

While the program has an excellent record with respect to the employment rate of graduates, the evaluation raised significant concerns about the program. It lacks any regular professors with publications in the area. Although the program has a strong professional focus, it is unclear how it meets the requirements for a research component. The language laboratory facilities are extremely outdated.

Recommendations

1. To be viable, the program must have professorial resources. A full report must be drawn up on plans to create a cross-appointment from the School of Psychology and to appoint an adjunct professor from Glendon College, York University, and possibly some other appointments in order for the program to continue.
2. Integrate a research component and explore ways students could undertake research on professional practice, drawing on the experience of other professional master’s programs both at the University of Ottawa and elsewhere.
3. Consider offering a compulsory theory course taught by institutionally approved graduate studies faculty members.
4. Continue to pursue avenues to fund improvements to the laboratory.
Calendar and deadline

All recommendations are to be addressed in a report to be submitted no later than December 2016.

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Executive Summary of the 2012-2013 Cyclical Evaluation of the
Programs in Translation Studies and Conference Interpreting
Prepared by the Graduate Program Evaluation Committee of the
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
Meeting of May 21, 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs:</th>
<th>Translation Studies and Conference Interpreting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degrees:</td>
<td>Master of Arts in Translation Studies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Master of Conference Interpreting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy in Translation Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fields:</td>
<td>MA (literary translation)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PhD (translation theory; translation-oriented lexicography and terminology)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final rating</td>
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