Memo

To: Don Nieman, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
From: Mark J. Kasoff, Director, Canadian Studies Center
Date: 3/29/04
Re: Response to Program Review Committee Report

The Canadian Studies Center (CSC) always welcomes the opportunity to obtain feedback and suggestions for improvement. Many good insights have come from the Program Review process, especially our Self-Study and the report of the Senécal-Sulzner External Review Committee. The report of the Program Review Committee (PRC) is disappointing. It does not reflect a good understanding of our mission, state-mandated line item funding, and interdisciplinary relationships within the University.

Please consider this memo the response of the Canadian Studies program to the Program Review Committee (PRC) report dated May 12, 2003. Comments below are based upon a careful review of the PRC report by members of the Canadian Studies Advisory Committee and the staff of the Canadian Studies Center. The PRC report contains a number of factual errors that will be detailed along with specific comment.

Overall, PRC recommendations fail to appreciate the full scope of current activities, governance, and need to secure long-term financial support. The basic problem at the CSC remains one of resources. The PRC recommends that we should not receive any new University support but that we should seek outside funding. This is precisely what we do already. A detriment to our raising funds is our inability to show would-be funders significant University support. This was most obvious in our recent Title VI application. It is difficult to inspire confidence and commitment of outside funders when they see how little the University contributes.

As Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences you were quick to recognize this deficiency, resulting in support for the American Review of Canadian Studies (ARCS) and a three-year Canadian Studies Instructor position to meet the strong student demand for CAST 201-Introduction to Canadian Studies. You understand what is needed to take Canadian Studies to the next level. The PRC report does not reveal a similar understanding of the realities of providing outreach and academic programming while simultaneously cultivating and pursuing fundraising opportunities.
A page-by-page analysis of the PRC report follows.

1. (See pg 1 “Introduction”) BGSU is a Select Canadian Government Document Depository not “a Depository Institution of the National Library of Canada.”

2. (See pg 1-2 “Relationship to College and University”) CAST 201-Introduction to Canadian Studies has not been “taught through distance learning” as so indicated. Guest lectures from Olscamp Hall have been made to the BGSU Fireland’s campus.

3. (See pg 2-3 “Program Identification”) Canadian Studies minors are not “encouraged to take a French course” as so indicated. The course description states “The study of French is strongly advised.” Obviously, the study of French means more than simply taking a course.

4. (See pg 3 “Graduate Assistant Resources”) The Canadian Studies Center (CSC) has employed two graduate students in the Fall and one in the Spring for the past two years. In the Fall, one works 15 hours and the other 10 (not 20 and 10 as so indicated). In the Spring the CSC has one graduate student who works 15 hours. Thus we have slightly less student hours than the PRC attributes to us.

5. (See pg 3 “Staff Resources”) With the appointment of Mark Kasoff as Editor of the American Review of Canadian Studies (ARCS), the director is released from one additional course per year (as required by the Association of Canadian Studies in the United States (ACSUS) thus teaching one course per year.

6. (See pg 4 “Information Resources and Services”) “The Environmental Resource Room in the Center includes a substantial collection of Canadian-related materials” is incorrect regarding location. This refers to the holdings of the Center for Environmental Programs.

7. (See pg 4 “Financial Resources”) The Board of Regents line item has steadily decreased from its peak of $169,000 per year in the 1994-98 period. It stood at $149,799 in 2002-03 and is estimated to fall to $121,586 in 2003-04 and $118,546 in 2004-05. Funding has not remained at $169,000 per year as indicated by the PRC Report.

8. (See pg 4 “Financial Resources”) The director’s salary comes from the College of Business, not the College of Arts and Sciences personnel budget.

9. (See pg 5 “Faculty Quality and Productivity”) The CSC does not limit travel and research funds to $500 per faculty annually. Requests are considered on an individual basis.

10. (See pg 5 “Quality of curriculum, instruction, and support services”) The Program (i.e. CSC) has not spent $30,000 on monographs and $68,000 on serials titles. The CSC has contributed to Jerome Library acquisitions based upon our ability to access external funds. The work of ordering, processing, and housing library materials is due to the efforts of personnel in the University Libraries.

11. (See pg 7 “Unit Planning”) “The attainment of the goals and objectives described in the self-study is dependent to a large degree on funding of the Title VI proposal” is an incorrect statement. Our Self-Study states “While we
are hopeful that our NRC proposal will be favorably reviewed, these goals and objectives will guide the future” (see pg 18 of Self-Study Report).

12. (See pg 9 “The Staff”) “and one administrative staff” should read “one administrative assistant” as this position is a classified staff member not an administrative position.

13. (See pg 9 “The Outreach Program”) Should change text to the following: “Other annual events are the Pallister French-Canadian Lecture Series (which is also funded by an endowment), an Economics …” since mention was made earlier in the paragraph about the Reddin Symposium being “funded by an endowment from the Reddin family.”

14. (See pg 11 “Program Review Committee Findings”) Should mention the CSC newsletter AuCanada and miscellaneous publications developed for outreach events (brochures on workshops, fliers, posters, CSC brochure, library brochure, etc) in publication efforts. “Other significant events” should also include the Pallister French-Canadian Lecture Series, Economic Development workshops, numerous guest speakers, film showings, readings, etc. It seems the PRC is overlooking or dismissing much of our outreach programming.

15. (See pg 12 - #1) On what basis does the PRC state the “Program relies heavily for its success—perhaps too heavily—on the productivity and expertise of the current director.”? The Self-Study points out the staffing and oversight arrangements that make the Center function.

16. (See pg 12 - #1) We do educate the community about Canada through ongoing events like the Reddin Symposium and numerous cultural activities on campus. While there is some crossover in attendance at various events, these are often tailored to specific audiences. A wide array of attendees come from across Ohio, lower Michigan and southwest Ontario. This PRC recommendation again indicates some basic misunderstanding of our outreach programming.

17. (See pg 12 - #1) Regarding the outreach mission and how it relates to the CS minor or CAST 201: students are encouraged to attend various events. This may heighten interest about Canada, the Canadian Studies minor, and occasionally leads to choice of graduate school program, and employment.

18. (See pg 12 - #4) “PRC is not in agreement with the recommendations of the external team” on funding. The PRC report fails to properly acknowledge the increased funding from regular University funds in recent years. Examples include funding the Canadian Studies Instructor position and support for the American Review of Canadian Studies. More importantly, we still strongly advise that the University develop a plan to fund the salaries of the administrative assistant and the assistant to the director. Such support is needed in light of a continuing erosion of state line item funds and to demonstrate BGSU’s long-term commitment to Canadian Studies. This factor was cited as a shortcoming of our program during the USDOE review of our Title VI grant application.

19. (See pg 12-13 - #4) While we appreciate the PRC’s endorsement of our efforts to become a USDOE National Resource Center under Title VI, the recommendation that other external funding be found should the application
not receive favorable review is curious and incomplete. When a program applies for an external grant to engage in new activities, it does not obligate them to other funding under such circumstances. External funds are usually available to support activities designated by the grantor which may not be transferrable to other sources. The PRC report fails to acknowledge the substantial external support raised by the Canadian Studies Center through grant applications, co-sponsorship of events, establishment of endowments, etc. We have tried repeatedly to work with the Development Office to identify possible donors and solicit external support without success. This is due to a lack of interest and follow-through by the Development Office. Consequently, we do most fundraising on our own, careful to follow University guidelines and procedures, and mindful (as much as possible) of potential overlap with Development Office activities.

20. (See pg 13 - #1) CBA faculty have served on the Advisory Committee in the past (Dan Klein, Finance) and currently (Linda Ueltschy, International Business). Mark Kasoff is also a member of the CBA faculty. Greater CBA faculty membership would be welcome. Many attempts have been made to generate interest including offering summer research grants, travel support, etc and efforts will continue, subject to the availability of funds. Peter VanderHart (Economics) has agreed to serve on the committee.

21. (See pg 13 - #2) All outreach events sponsored the CSC are evaluated by participants, with evaluation instruments developed for each activity. Additional items considered include: the number of repeat attenders, media coverage, and all indicators of program quality and our ability to meet the mission and objectives of the Center.

22. (See pg 14 - #6) Library holdings are already centralized at the Jerome Library and Ogg Library, except for a small collection of primarily business-related holdings purchased with CSC funds used primarily by CSC staff to support the ongoing activities of the Center. These materials are available for student and faculty use upon request. The PRC recommendation that materials be “centralized and made available to students, faculty, and other scholars” is uninformed and unnecessary. Regular University support for library acquisition remains woefully inadequate. Fortunately, the University Libraries and the CSC have been able to meet the requirements for a number of Canadian Government matching library grants. The CSC has also raised substantial external support for University Libraries acquisition.

pc: Mark Gromko