The Department of Classics is heartened at the Task Force’s recognition of our growing national reputation and of the policies and practices we have instigated to achieve this distinction.

We are proud of our department’s gender diversity as well as our diversity with regard to under-represented students. Traditionally, Classics as a discipline has been less attractive to under-represented students, but this, happily, is changing, and our department is at the forefront of attracting well-prepared, promising under-represented students. We currently have two under-represented students out of 16. Every year we receive excellent applications from under-represented students, and we intend to improve upon this trend by actively recruiting these excellent students and continuing to apply for Dean’s Graduate Fellowships.

The desire to improve our completion rate and time to degree has prompted us to introduce a checklist contract that is given to students in their first semester. Every semester thereafter each student speaks with the DGS in conference to evaluate and discuss progress. This program is already showing success: of the students who entered three years ago, all are on track for a 6-7 year graduation. This policy is also strongly enhanced by the close mentoring involved in the Student Editorships for our journal, *Syllecta Classica*, and our department is hopeful that funding for this enterprise may continue.

Our department in general, and the graduate program in particular, is very aware of the natural connections we have with various other departments, and we have been working to strengthen those ties. We are putting in place various programs and policies to take advantage of the intersection of our scholarly interests with those of faculty in several departments. These include encouraging joint graduate degrees (two are now in progress, with History and Anthropology), graduate courses that cross the boundaries of departments (one is now in progress with Religious Studies; we have more planned), joint degrees and close collaboration with the Program in Medieval Studies, as well as with the Translation MFA Program (we currently have a student with a joint degree). We are always looking for connections, and are becoming skillful at both promoting and organizing them.

In all of these ways, and in others we will continue to envision and implement, our goal in the coming years is to improve on our successes in order to reach the rating of “Exemplary.”