Program Overview and Vision
The Philosophy Department is pleased with the success of our MA program, as reflected in our continued presence in the *Philosophical Gourmet*. That ranking, while somewhat problematic—it has been challenged by many in the profession on various grounds—still provides a good rough ranking of quality. We attribute our success to our recruiting dynamic and successful young faculty, and providing good support for our graduate students. Our strategic plan is out of date, and it is one of our aims (in line with the aims of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the University) to produce an updated plan, responsive to the current situation. We are also in the process of revising our program assessment policies and procedures. When the strategic plan and program assessments are completed, it will be easier to think tactically about what we need to do in the future.

Faculty Productivity
Over the last six years, we have had a lot of faculty turnover, with one retirement, one negative tenure decision, and vacancies filled by VAPs. This makes it difficult to assess our productivity as a department. The study revealed an average publication rate of 0.5 publications per faculty member, per year. This average, as the committee noted, conceals the fact that a few of the faculty produce a high number of publications, while some others publish at a much lower rate. I would like to increase that publication rate to one per faculty member, per year, by providing instituting some kind of incentive program beyond the occasional merit raise. Also, necessarily, that measure does not include any weighting for quality of the venues in which the publications appeared. Most of us submit to journals and publishers who are very selective and prestigious, so there is no problem in that area, though there is always room for improvement. In
addition to encouraging a higher rate of publication, it would be good to find a way to increase the quality of publication venues.

**Quality and Quantity of Graduate Students**

The department has managed in recent years to attract increasingly well-qualified and talented graduate students. This can probably be attributed largely to our Philosophical Gourmet ranking, though faculty also make recruiting efforts on their own initiative, and former graduate students also have helped make us visible around the country. Many of our recent graduates have gone on to excellent PhD programs, and their success helps bring us visibility. Current graduate students travelling to conferences a delivering papers has also helped. Our current brochure is badly outdated, and needs to be replaced in the coming year.

For the last several years, we have had twenty to twenty-five graduate students. It is difficult for us to increase that, because we have too little funding to support more, and too few course offerings for them to act as TA. Even that level is maintained only by heavy use of work-study and course fees, which may not always be possible. Some students will come to the program unfunded, but that is quite rare. If we had the funds, we could support more graduate students with non-teaching fellowships, or research assistantships, to address the second concern, but we know of no way to increase our funding. The committee concluded that with current faculty size and current funding, the program could grow to 30 graduate students, but it is not at all clear how we could do that.

**Curriculum and Programs of Study**

It is difficult to keep our curriculum stable, as over the last several years we have had quite a bit of faculty turnover. We manage to cover all the courses we need to, but it is difficult for us to meet the curricular needs of both our graduate students and our undergraduates. As a result, we offer more piggy-backed graduate/undergraduate courses
that we would like. We also have notable gaps in the faculty’s areas of expertise. We expect to be adding an Ethicist next year, which will help alleviate that concern to some extent, though we will probably still need at least one more permanent faculty member.

The committee report noted that it would be a good idea to have a core sequence of seminars to give the curriculum some structure. Since we received the report, we discovered that we already adopted such a policy, so all we need to do is make that information available to students, by putting it on the webpage, and including it in other advertising.

Facilities and Resources
Our classroom and office space are adequate for our current needs, except that we have only one classroom that will hold 100 students, which makes some scheduling difficulty for our large introductory courses. We are in the process of converting our old computer lab into a classroom that will hold 60 students, which will give us a little more flexibility. We are also converting our A/V storeroom to a second, smaller seminar room.

Our main office has all the equipment necessary for day-to-day functioning of the department. Every faculty member is entitled to a new computer every 3-5 years, though most use the same computer for much longer than that. We have had no difficulty finding the funds for that. We are going to replace the outdated computers in the TA offices, and provide them with a printer of their own, too.

Conclusion
In general, with one exception noted above, we agree with the assessment and recommendations of the review committee. While we believe the graduate program is doing well, we believe it could be improved by the following changes over the next year:

Institutional changes
Addition of one or two permanent faculty lines, to shore up curricular needs
Addition of $50,000 in graduate student funding, to replace funding formerly provided by the Graduate School

*Departmental changes*
- Revise and update strategic plan (underway)
- Put information about MA core sequence on the webpage (done)
- Introduce incentive policy for publication and grant acquisition
- Update and mail departmental brochure
- Plan and execute recruiting activities
- Convert storage room and computer lab to classrooms (underway)
- Provide new computers and printers for graduate students (done)

The Philosophy Department would like to extend its thanks to the committee for their diligence, and the helpful feedback they have provided.