Classics and Ancient History Program
Submission to RSHA Change Management Steering Committee

As we indicated during the consultation phase of the restructure process, staff in Classics and Ancient History (CAH) were strongly in favour of the proposed restructure—and we continue to be so.

We are concerned, however, that the document seems overly “School of Cultural Inquiry (SCI)-centric” — and not in a good way. In addition to problems at the discipline level, such as a lack of visibility characterizing English and Museum Studies (see below, point 3) and the apparent inability of Art History to capitalize on its reputation to secure research grants (II.4 p. 5), SCI overall is characterized by a “decline in undergraduate load” (I.3 p. 3). The chart on p. 8 reinforces this impression but appears misleading (e.g., IHuG should not appear there since it does not teach undergraduate students) and, based on other evidence, inaccurate (the April 2013 figures are by no means definitive for the entire year; SCI’s second semester enrolments are rising as this is being written, for example).

We in CAH do not think SCI is a problem to be solved but a strong performer not just in undergraduate education (student satisfaction surveys for Sem. 1 2013 average well above the VC’s gold standard of 80%) but by the relevant research benchmarks (ERA ranking, research outputs)—the latter in spite of being disadvantaged in terms of traditionally heavy teaching loads when compared to other schools and disciplines.

CAH would also like to register the following specific concerns about the RSHA Change Management Proposal, particularly as it affects our current and future AOU.

1. **Integrity of the Classics and Ancient History program.** CAH seeks an assurance that it will continue to exist as an identifiable program within our future AOU, and that staff in CAH will be allowed to organize among themselves the teaching necessary to maintain our three majors without unnecessary interference from our future AOU’s management.

2. **Staffing.** CAH would like an assurance that staffing levels across its future AOU will be examined to ensure equity among academic staff, rather than simply remaining at levels determined by accidents of history or determined by a profit/loss approach to staffing. In order to maintain the internationally accepted standards within our inherently interdisciplinary field of study, it is
necessary for CAH to teach three separate majors (Greek, Latin, Ancient History). At present we do this (in addition to managing a named degree—the Bachelor of Classical Studies) with four staff, necessitating teaching loads which reduce our opportunity, in comparison with peers in some other disciplines, to research and publish (despite being held to the same expectations for research outputs). This inequity should be addressed.

3. **The Name.** The Change Management Proposal document (hereafter, “the proposal”) stresses the importance of “visibility” of disciplines such as English (II.4 p. 5) and Museum Studies (II.4 p. 6) in the restructure. CAH feels very strongly that its identity and visibility must be reflected in the name of its future AOU (along the lines of the new School of Archaeology, Anthropology, Heritage and Museum Studies). The proposal refers to the future version of SLS as “The School of Languages and Literature.” This will not promote CAH’s visibility or identity within our future AOU. We suggest that the name of our future AOU be “the School of Languages, Literatures [note the plural] and Ancient Mediterranean Studies.” The latter has been deemed to be the best (and least cumbersome) way of badging the inherent inter- and multidisciplinarity of Classics and its focus on the languages, literatures and histories of ancient Greece and Rome, their impact on the western intellectual tradition and their ongoing impact in the modern world. Members of CAH would like to be consulted directly on any proposed nomenclature for our future AOU.

4. **The Approach.** Throughout the RSHA Change Management Proposal, the prevailing attitude seems to be that SCI will be absorbed into some altered version of SLS. This approach to the fate of the academic staff reinforces its feeling of being rather marginal—a “poor relation” absorbed into a larger, more powerful existing school (SLS) rather than one of two schools (SCI and SLS) being disestablished and reformed as a new entity. The tone of the document in this regard reinforces the impression, mentioned earlier, that SCI is a problem to be solved rather than an equal stakeholder in the Change Management Process.

5. **Representation.** CAH believes that the Change Management Steering Committee should be expanded to include at least one more head of school from the existing AOUs affected by the restructure. We believe that SCI is the most suitable candidate since it appears to be the main (and often negative) focus in the Change Management Proposal and will be the school most profoundly affected by the outcome (disestablishment). Petitioning the
committee to take into account SCI staff’s concerns through submissions is not as potent a tool as membership of the committee and the attendant ability to help direct (indeed, steer) its debates.

6. **The Classics Museum.** CAH seeks written assurance that management and curatorship of the Classics Museum will not be removed from the academic staff best positioned to manage and curate it and interpret its content (CAH). It is primarily a teaching collection and is used for teaching purposes by CAH staff in their courses.

7. **Location.** In reference to the document, II.6 p. 9, CAH asks that it not be physically relocated from its current position surrounding the Classics Museum on the ground floor of the A.D. Hope building. CAH staff, the Classics Centre and the Classics Museum must remain a physically integrated and proximate entity.

8. **IHuG.** The dismemberment of IHuG and redistribution to the new AOUs must be transparent and equitable. The research achievements of its member centres and their ERA rankings will benefit the various future AOUs into which they will be integrated. Budget documents show how healthy IHuG’s bottom line has been (only 60% of its budget absorbed by salaries, compared to the 90% average in the Schools), which can only help the bottom lines of the various future AOUs. The different centres currently under the IHuG umbrella should be distributed equitably between RSHA, SCI’s future AOU and the proposed School of Archaeology, Anthropology, Heritage and Museum Studies. The redistribution of its economic and scholarly resources should be handled transparently and should not disadvantage any of the discipline areas involved in the restructure.

9. **Teaching – Research synergies.** It is unclear to us what the document means by its aim to “deepen the research culture within larger sustainable clusters to address declines in some of the teaching programs.” If this means distributing research funding more equitably across AOUs under the RSHA umbrella to subsidize teaching activity (that is, by placing research-intensive staff in teaching AOUs, along with their attendant PhD supervision funding, grant funding, etc.) then we think this is important—provided it is done equitably (see point 8). If, however, this means supporting teaching-intensive staff with teaching relief from research-intensive staff then CAH will be disadvantaged (as it was during the CASS “integration” of 2010) since we have no opposite numbers among the research-intensive staff with the training to teach our
courses. Equitable staffing remains an overwhelming concern for CAH (see point 2).

We look forward to a consultative and transparent process in the next phase of the RSHA restructure. Looking ahead to the second stage of the consultation process, focusing on implementation of “the agreed broad organisational and governance structure of the relevant AOUs” (III.8 p. 10), we request that academic staff in the relevant AOUs be permitted to choose their own heads of school rather than having HoSs imposed on them from outside their AOUs.

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