



FOR INFORMATION

PUBLIC

OPEN SESSION

TO: Academic Board

SPONSOR: Susan McCahan, Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
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PRESENTER: See above
CONTACT INFO:

DATE: November 10, 2021 for November 17, 2021

AGENDA ITEM: 2b

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Semi-Annual Report on the Reviews of Academic Units and Programs,
October 2020 – October 2021

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

“The Committee...has general responsibility...for monitoring, the quality of education and the research activities of the University. In fulfilling this responsibility, the Committee works to ensure the excellent quality of academic programs by...monitoring reviews of existing programs....The Committee receives annual reports or such more frequent regular reports as it may determine, on matters within its purview, including reports on the ...[r]eviews of academic units and programs.” (*Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) Terms of Reference, Sections 3, 4.9*)

Within the *Accountability Framework for Cyclical Review of Academic Programs and Units*, the role of AP&P is to undertake “a comprehensive overview of review results and administrative responses.” AP&P “receive[s] semi-annual program review reports including summaries of all reviews, identifying key issues and administrative responses,” which are discussed at a “dedicated program review meeting with relevant academic leadership.” (*Policy for Approval and Review of Academic Programs and Units*). AP&P’s role is to ensure that the reviews are conducted in line with the University’s policy and guidelines; to ensure that the Office of the Vice-President and Provost has managed the review process appropriately; to ensure that all issues relative to the quality of academic programs have been addressed or that there is a plan to address them; and to make recommendations concerning the need for a follow up report.

The compendium of review summaries is forwarded, together with the record of the Committee’s discussion, to the Agenda Committee of the Academic Board, which determines whether there

are any issues warranting discussion at the Board level. The same documentation is sent to the Executive Committee and the Governing Council for information.

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. Committee on Academic Policy and Programs [for information] (October 26, 2021)
2. Agenda Committee of the Academic Board [for information] (November 4, 2021)
- 3. Academic Board [for information] (November 17, 2021)**
4. Executive Committee of the Governing Council [for information] ((December 7, 2021)
5. Governing Council [for information] (December 16, 2021)

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

Governing Council approved the *Policy for Approval and Review of Academic Programs and Units* in 2010. The *Policy* outlines University-wide principles for the approval of proposed new academic programs and review of existing programs and units. Its purpose is to align the University's quality assurance processes with the Province's Quality Assurance Framework through establishing the authority of the University of Toronto's Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP).

The Semi-Annual Report on the Reviews of Academic Units and Programs (October 2019 – October 2020) was previously submitted to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs on October 27, 2020.

HIGHLIGHTS:

External reviews of academic programs and units are important mechanisms of accountability for the University and a vital part of the academic planning process. Academic reviews are critical to ensuring the quality of our programs through vigorous and consistent processes that assess the quality of new and existing programs and units against our international peers.

Summaries of the external review reports and the complete decanal responses for twelve external reviews of units and/or academic programs are being submitted to AP&P for information and discussion. Of these, three were commissioned by the Vice-President and Provost and nine were commissioned by Deans. The signed administrative responses from each Dean highlight action plans in response to reviewer recommendations.

Overall, the themes raised in these reviews echoed those in previous compendia: the excellent quality of our programs, the talent and high calibre of our students, and the impressive body of scholarship produced by our faculty. In addition, this set of reviews highlighted the programs' interdisciplinary strengths and the many initiatives undertaken by the academic units to enhance equity, diversity, and inclusion.

As always, the reviews noted areas for development. The reviews identified the need for units to strengthen their communication and governance structures, and suggested ways to engage in

meaningful discussions regarding student recruitment and faculty workload. The reviews also highlighted the need to ensure that diversity is reflected in faculty complement and curriculum.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Not applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for information and feedback.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

Compendium of Reviews of Academic Programs and Units, October 2020 – October 2021



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PROVOST,
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Reviews of Academic Programs and Units

October 2020 - October 2021

Report to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

October 26, 2021

Reviews of Academic Programs and Units

October 2020 - October 2021

Report to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

October 26, 2021

Provostial Reviews

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

- *No programs, not a UTQAP review*

Faculty of Information and its programs

- Undergraduate: Bachelor of Information, B.I.
- Graduate: Diploma in Advanced Study in Information Studies, D.A.I.S.; Master of Information, M.I.; Master of Museum Studies, M.M.St.; Doctor of Philosophy in Information Studies, Ph.D.

Toronto School of Theology/University of Toronto Conjoint Programs

- Undergraduate: Master of Arts in Ministry & Spirituality; Master of Divinity; Master of Pastoral Studies (Including Category 2 Certificate: Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy); Master of Religious Education; Master of Sacred Music; Master of Theological Studies; Certificate in Theological Studies
- Graduate: Master of Theology; Master of Arts in Theological Studies; Doctor of Ministry; Doctor of Philosophy in Theological Studies

Decanal Reviews

Faculty of Arts & Science

- Department of Anthropology and its programs
 - Undergraduate: Anthropology – General, B.A. (Hons): Major, Minor; Anthropology – Society, Culture & Language, B.A. (Hons): Specialist, Major; Archaeology, B.A. (Hons): Specialist, Major, Minor; Environmental Anthropology, B.A. (Hons): Minor; Anthropology – Evolutionary, B.Sc. (Hons): Major
 - Graduate: Anthropology: M.A., M.Sc., Ph.D.
- Department of Italian Studies and its programs
 - Undergraduate: Italian, B.A. (Hons): Specialist, Major, Minor; Italian Culture and Communication, B.A. (Hons): Minor
 - Graduate: Italian Studies: M.A., Ph.D.
- Department of Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations and its programs
 - Undergraduate: Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations - Ancient, B.A. (Hons): Specialist, Major; Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations - General, B.A. (Hons): Specialist, Major; Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations - Medieval, B.A. (Hons):

- Specialist, Major; Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations - Modern, B.A. (Hons): Specialist, Major; Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, B.A. (Hons): Minor
- Graduate: Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations: M.A., Ph.D.

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

- Department of Leadership, Higher, and Adult Education and its programs
 - Graduate: Adult Education and Community Development: M.Ed., M.A., Ph.D.; Educational Leadership and Policy: M.Ed., M.A., Ed.D., Ph.D.; Higher Education: M.Ed., M.A., Ed.D., Ph.D.

Temerty Faculty of Medicine

- Department of Molecular Genetics and its programs
 - Undergraduate: Molecular Genetics & Microbiology, B.Sc.: Specialist, Major (FAS); Molecular Genetics & Microbiology – Genetics Stream, B.Sc.: Specialist (FAS); Molecular Genetics & Microbiology – Microbiology Stream, B.Sc.: Specialist (FAS);
 - Graduate: Molecular Genetics: MSc, Ph.D.; Genetic Counselling, M.Sc.; Medical Genomics, M.H.Sc.
- Department of Physical Therapy and its programs
 - Graduate: Master of Science in Physical Therapy, M.Sc.P.T.
- Rehabilitation Sciences Institute and its programs
 - Graduate: Rehabilitation Science, M.Sc., Ph.D.; Speech-Language Pathology, M.Sc., Ph.D.

University of Toronto Scarborough

- Department of Biological Sciences and its programs
 - Undergraduate: Biology, H.B.Sc.: Major; Minor; Conservation and Biodiversity, H.B.Sc.: Specialist; Major; Human Biology, H.B.Sc.: Specialist; Major; Integrative Biology, H.B.Sc.: Specialist; Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, H.B.Sc.: Specialist and Specialist Co-op; Molecular Biology, Immunology and Disease, H.B.Sc.: Major; Plant Biology, H.B.Sc.: Major
- Centre for Critical Development Studies and its programs
 - Undergraduate: International Development Studies, H.B.A.: Specialist, Specialist Co-op, Major; International Development Studies, H.B.Sc.: Specialist, Specialist Co-op; International Development Studies Minor (Arts)

Non-UTQAP Review Summary - **DRAFT**

Program(s) Reviewed:	Not applicable
Division Reviewed:	Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
Commissioning Officer:	Vice-President and Provost
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	Robert Floden, Dean and University Distinguished Professor, College of Education, Michigan State University Christopher Morpew, Dean, School of Education, Johns Hopkins University Jennifer Tupper, Dean, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta
Date of Review Visit:	March 22-26, 2021
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 26, 2021

Previous Review

Date: January 20 – 22, 2016 (Provostial, non-UTQAP review)

Summary of Findings and Recommendations:

Teaching and Research

The reviewers observed the following strengths:

- Stellar record of academic offerings and scholarship
- OISE has repositioned itself as institution preparing teachers via a two-year graduate Master of Teaching degree—one of the first institutions in Canada to do so
- Notable impact of scholars in their respective fields

The reviewers identified the following areas of concern:

- Master of Teaching (MT) needs further development to make it one of OISE’s flagship programs

- Unclear if MT is well-served by being housed in one department
- Heterogeneous classes: experienced practitioners mixed with new graduates
- Some programs need greater sense of ownership and structure
- Urgent need for an inclusive academic planning process
- Identity requires a redefinition that aligns with local and global contexts
- Unclear whether OISE sees itself as integral to the University, including links between OISE's strategic plan and that of the University's

The reviewers made the following recommendations:

- Assume an active role in indigeneity and social justice across programmatic areas and academic units
- Redevelop curriculum and academic programs in new graduate-only environment
- Consider what role the MT could play in enhancing cross-departmental collaboration
- Find the right combination of senior faculty and professional teaching staff to participate in the MT
- Rebuild OISE's identity as a community of scholars
- Create new vision that launches recalibrated mission and identity, tied to faculty renewal and advancement priorities
- Reconceive OISE as a high-profile professional school underpinned by world-class research and deep engagement with the profession and provincial education system

Organizational Structure & Resources

The reviewers identified the following areas of concern:

- Structural reorganization of academic and administrative units was meant to create improved administrative process and new efficiencies, but has instead resulted in challenges
- Departmental siloes persist even after restructuring
- Little obvious embracing of the vision and transition to a graduate faculty
- Looming structural deficit

The reviewers made the following recommendations:

- Develop a more focused commitment and nimble orientation to change
- Create clear mechanisms, processes, and accountabilities so that programs cohere and contributors understand their roles and positions
- Create a new budget and revenue distribution model to sustain programs
- Consider new entrepreneurial directions, alternative revenue streams, and new partnerships

Internal & External Relationships

The reviewers observed the following strengths:

- Highly ranked globally; a world leader in a number of domains
- Exceptional profile for scholarship, both nationally and internationally
- Alumni are extremely proud of being OISE graduates and are appreciative of OISE's attempts to maintain connections
- Emerging joint offerings with other divisions

The reviewers identified the following areas of concern:

- Communication is lacking both internally and externally

- No evidence of strong engagement in community building

The reviewers made the following recommendations:

- ▶ Develop a clear external engagement strategy with alumni, schools, systems, governments and other leading institutes to enhance teaching and the student experience; impact policy; gain context; develop collaborations and opportunities for consultancies
- ▶ Prioritize internal collaborations between OISE and the rest of the University

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

The following documents were provided:

- Site Visit Schedule
- Terms of Reference
- Self-Study and Appendices
- *Towards 2030: The View from 2012 - An Assessment of the University of Toronto's Progress Since Towards 2030*
- Comments received from VPAP Web Form

Consultation Process

The reviewers met directly with the following, in order of meeting schedule:

- Vice-President and Provost
- Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
- Dean, OISE
- Associate Dean, Programs
- Associate Dean, Research, International & Innovation
- Chair, Applied Psychology and Human Development
- Chair, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
- Chair, Leadership, Higher and Adult Education
- Chair, Social Justice Education
- Graduate Students
- Graduate Program Coordinators
- Administrative Staff Representatives
- Vice-Principal, Academic & Dean, University of Toronto Mississauga
- Dean, Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education

- Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts and Science
- Early and mid-career faculty
- Senior Faculty
- Teacher Education Students
- Director, Advancement & External Relations
- Alumni Representatives
- Vice-Dean, Programs and Innovation, School of Graduate Studies
- Senior Administrative Leaders/Managers

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Teaching and Research (Items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 from Terms of Reference)

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- OISE is well-respected nationally and internationally and regularly appears among the highest-ranked Faculties of Education in the world
- Unique history and contemporary status as the only all-graduate faculty of education in Canada
- Commitment to excellence in teaching and research, and to improving education locally, nationally, and globally
- Students commented positively on OISE’s culture and faculty care for students, strong advising relationships, and OISE’s flexibility in providing additional time to advanced Ph.D. students
- OISE’s culture of research excellence is reflected in high national and international rankings
- Junior faculty members appreciate the mentorship and support from the Research Office, the Associate Dean for Research, and the Dean, noting that these were critical to their success within a culture of research excellence
- Mid-career faculty noted the quality of support they received from the Research Office
- Campus leader in research and teaching related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice
- OISE has been strengthening its work in indigenous education, including having several indigenous scholars with prestigious Canada Research Chairs

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Reviewers note concerns regarding faculty:student ratio after a period of adding program options and growing enrolments without corresponding tenure-stream faculty hires; students commented on challenges posed by “stretched-thin faculty”

- MT students commented on limited opportunities to engage intimately with faculty, relative to other students
- Students described “artificial curricular boundaries” (e.g., research versus clinical) as barriers to research-to-practice outcomes
- OISE Doctoral students have few opportunities to gain teaching experience
- Junior faculty noted that support from Chairs was at times uneven across the Faculty
- Indigenous-focused research would benefit from greater focus and support, including more tailored, one-to-one research mentoring for Indigenous faculty members
- Unfunded research and community involvement not always considered in annual faculty performance reviews; “further concern was raised given the disproportionate efforts in these areas by equity deserving faculty and those working in equity areas”
- Combined Degree Programs leading to teacher certification have encountered difficulty in returning enrolments to the same levels as seen before the shift to graduate-only teacher certification

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Rebalance faculty and student numbers as soon as possible and ensure that faculty hired into contingent roles and new tracks are integrated into the Institute’s culture
- Grow and leverage the Institute’s expertise in social justice topics such as Indigenous Studies programming and research, and serve as the University resource in this area
- Reviewers observe that OISE’s history gives it a head start toward establishing a collaborative offering with other University divisions in EDI-related areas and recommend “centralizing resources and expertise in this space to create the highest quality programs”
- Continue with faculty complement planning and faculty:student ratio “rebalancing,” including planned hires, finding innovative ways to fund tenure-stream positions, and better integration of teaching-stream faculty into fabric of the Institute
- Explore the possibility of offering student-taught courses on topics related to social justice and anti-Black racism to the rest of the University
- Reviewers recommend exploring how to create course-sharing and research-sharing opportunities across programs, especially in ways that include teacher education students, noting that “as the only graduate-only faculty of education and one of the world’s leading research centers on education, teacher education graduates should emerge... with a different set of skills and experiences than graduates from other Ontario and Canadian education schools”
- Address artificial curricular boundaries through consultation with students and faculty to allow and encourage students to take a broad set of coursework and engage with topics and methods outside their traditional programs
- Support development of additional course offerings and involvement in research efforts focused on social justice and anti-racism
- Provide clear direction from the Dean’s Office to Chairs with respect to research mentorship for junior faculty

- “Rather, careful attention to how research and research methods are understood from an Indigenous perspective was thought to be a critical next step in pushing back against more traditional, reductive, and individualistic forms of research that create challenges and barriers for Indigenous faculty members”
- Consider recognizing unfunded research and community involvement in annual performance reviews

2. Organizational Structure & Resources (Item 5 from Terms of Reference)

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Widely praised changes in the budgeting and decision making structure, allowing greater autonomy, flexibility and planning by Departments, have been successful in maintaining OISE’s strong record in research and teaching, accommodating a shift in teacher preparation to the graduate level, addressing structural financial deficits, and restoring positive connections between departments and the Dean's office
- OISE Research Office provides important and valued support to faculty members and graduate students to identify and apply for research funding; junior faculty appreciate Research Office’s help in identifying possible funders, editorial help with proposals, and for assistance with other aspects of their professional growth
- Four department structure described positively by faculty, staff and students, particularly as it facilitates a strong sense of belonging
- OISE support staff are integral to the core mission of teaching, research, and service
- Staff enjoy working in OISE and appreciate recent efforts to streamline processes
- All Department Chairs praised the new budget model as more stable and transparent; they noted feeling more empowered to make strategic financial decisions in order to advance priority areas, better steward resources from one year to the next, and use carry forward dollars to hire faculty members
- Recent efforts to refresh and update common areas and other spaces have been appreciated

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Significant differences in size and focus between the four departments create challenges balancing the ratio of students to faculty members; large MT program within CTL Department results in a greater reliance on sessional instructors than in other departments
- Staff suggested that training for systems and tools specific to their roles be carefully considered, noting that on-the-job learning can be stressful and at times frustrating
- Reviewers note comments from staff that they are becoming more stretched as enrolments increase

- Reviewers note comments regarding “serious capacity issues,” particularly in graduate supervision, as faculty retirements and resignations have outpaced hiring over the last several years
- New budget model limits faculty members’ ability to engage in inter-departmental teaching
- Physical space in the main OISE building noted as the most significant concern with respect to infrastructure
- Student financial aid and scholarship support noted as pressing needs

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Undertake a new round of strategic planning, particularly with regard to strengthening OISE’s research and scholarly excellence, faculty complement planning, enrolment management, and advancement priorities
- Continue with successful decentralized budget model; consider adjustments to enable greater inter-departmental teaching and remove “artificial curricular boundaries”
- Develop an advancement strategy and infrastructure to build OISE’s endowment, particularly with regard to student financial support
- Additional staff support in the Research Office would enhance capacity, providing “additional value-added and expanded support without duplicating central services”
- Enhance career development support and mentorship opportunities for mid-career faculty
- Undertake staff complement planning to meet demands created by growing enrolments, and review current roles and responsibilities to ensure they are reflective of the work staff are actually doing
- Prioritize communication with staff, and create mechanisms for staff to provide feedback to their supervisors and members of the OISE leadership team in an effort to improve systems, processes, and the overall staff experience
- Support entrepreneurial opportunities for departments to explore additional sources of revenue, including customized international programming
- Review functions and operations of the OISE Writing Centre to ensure that students receive the highest level of support
- Prioritize hiring of racialized faculty members

3. Internal & External Relationships (Items 6, 7 from Terms of Reference)

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- “Omnipresent among the conversations the external review team held with OISE faculty and staff was respect and gratitude for Dean Jones’s leadership, particularly his financial management and empathetic leadership style”

- “OISE’s strong reputation locally, nationally and internationally is due in part to its past and present outreach, community engaged scholarship, relationship with key educational stakeholders within and beyond the province, quality of the research undertaken by OISE faculty members, creative knowledge mobilization activities, and the types and varieties of graduate programs accessed by domestic and international students”
- “To some extent, OISE has continued to be seen, and see itself, as a distinct institution... That distinctiveness has advantages, such as continuing to benefit from a long record of international excellence as a school of education.”
- UTM Institute for the Study of University Pedagogy (ISUP) noted as a promising recent connection between OISE and the rest of the University
- OISE’s commitments to equity, diversity, inclusivity, Indigeneity, and advancing racial justice are having significant societal impact and OISE faculty members are seen to be thought leaders in these areas
- High-quality Continuing and Professional Learning unit appears to be very successful in reaching multiple demographics and areas of focus
- Alumni described “amazing partnerships with local and global organizations”
- Launch of the Sustainability and Climate Action plan was seen to have tremendous potential for social impact

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Enhance communication with the broader University community regarding the importance and value of research undertaken by OISE faculty
- Consider ways to take advantage of synergies that might support joint initiatives with other University divisions (e.g., additional work on STEM education or expanding work in indigenous topics)
- Consider ways to expand OISE’s collaborative involvement in the UTM Institute for the Study of University Pedagogy
- Continue prioritizing Sustainability and Climate Action plan to realize “considerable potential to position OISE as a community and research hub in this area”
- Advancement opportunities (e.g., endowed research chairs, support for post-doctoral fellowships, funding for specific Centre initiatives, and international collaborations) present tremendous opportunities to strengthen OISE’s societal impact

2. Administrative Response & Implementation Plan

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
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FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION

Normand Labrie, PhD, FRSC
Professor and Interim Dean

Professor Susan McCahan, Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
University of Toronto
65 St. George Street, Room 106
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2E

September 10, 2021

Re: Request for Administrative Response to the 2020-2021 Provostial Review of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE)

Dear Professor McCahan,

Thank you for your request for the administrative response to the 2020-2021 Provostial review of OISE and for the summary of the review; your comments and observations are greatly appreciated.

The review took place during the 2020-2021 academic year after the 2019-2020 decanal reviews of all four of OISE's departments and their programs, and during challenging times of the ongoing pandemic and related significant shifts regarding how we teach, learn, work and engage our community. Nonetheless, the self-study process was consultative and inclusive – involving the participation of faculty, staff, students and alumni allowing the community to reflect on our achievements and challenges, and share their perspectives regarding possible new directions that should be considered as OISE moves forward.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Institute's leadership team, faculty, staff, students and alumni for embracing the review as an opportunity for reflection, and for demonstrating a collective commitment to OISE's success. Particularly, I want to thank and congratulate former Dean Glen Jones for having put all his leadership, expertise and wisdom in the service of OISE over the review period.

We are very appreciative of the contributions of external reviewers, professors Floden (Michigan State University), Morpew (Johns Hopkins University) and Tupper (University of Alberta), for their consultation with us in March 2021. Their report represents a thoughtful review of the challenges and opportunities facing the Institute including focused and constructive suggestions for moving forward. The report was distributed, and the executive summary was developed and made available on our [OISE Review](#) website in order to attract the attention it deserved. The issues and suggestions identified by the external reviewers were discussed in detail by our Deans and Chairs committee, and presented to OISE Council at its first meeting in the Fall term of 2021.

What follows is our response to the points raised (in italics) in your letter dated July 21, 2021, which was developed in collaboration with the Institute's leadership team.

- *The reviewers recommended exploring ways to enhance the student experience, including increased course- and research-sharing across programs, refining the budget model to enable more inter-departmental teaching and collaboration, and providing opportunities for students “to take a broad set of coursework and engage with topics and methods outside their traditional programs.”*

Excellence in Academic Programs and Student Experience is one of the two building blocks of our Institute¹, that permeate all aspects of our work. Enhancing student experience through excellence in teaching and graduate supervision, and providing better access to professional development and support mechanisms our students need to complete their programs, and transition into rewarding careers are important priorities outlined in OISE's current Academic Plan (2017-2022). To that effect, our academic departments and faculty continue to invest tremendous energy and resources to introduce innovative program changes including the creation of new course clusters, academic foci and specializations, as well as shared courses and research opportunities for OISE students. For the last 20 years, OISE's Graduate Students' Research Conference (GRSC) has been providing our students with an inclusive and accessible space for showcasing their research at all stages while providing a rich platform for exchange of ideas across departments, disciplines and programs in a formal academic conference setting.

Implementation Plan

(a) Immediate to Medium-term Actions

In addition to their multiple degrees and fields/concentrations, many of OISE's academic programs include specific program emphases (e.g., Early Learning, Indigenous Education, Wellbeing) that allow students to explore a broad set of coursework and engage with topics outside their traditional programs. Related to this, it is important to note that our professionally accredited programs (i.e., Teacher Education, Clinical Psychology) offer limited possibility for choosing courses outside the program; however, most programs have an elective space of at least two half-courses. Furthermore, with zero to five (out of ten) half-courses required, the majority of our course-based MEd programs include substantial elective space; in most cases, from three to five half-courses can be taken outside the program. The majority of OISE programs participate in [collaborative specializations](#) providing students an additional multidisciplinary experience as they complete their home degree program. To expand upon these opportunities, following the approval of OISE's current Academic Plan, several cross-program [degree themes](#) were identified to guide course selection and allow students to add an additional focus to their degree. These currently include: Indigenous Education, Educational Technology, Urban Education and Program Evaluation. In addition to focusing on their specific program areas, OISE students have the ability to choose their elective courses based on course themes, both from within their home department, and from the courses of other departments. OISE's degree themes provide a refreshed perspective on the variety and commonality of course topics available at OISE. In response to this recommendation, supported by the Office of Associate Dean, Programs, the current degree themes and related courses will be reviewed collaboratively and the possibility of identifying new degree themes and related courses will be considered. Specifically, as part of this process, courses in equity, diversity and accessibility that are open to all OISE students will be identified with a view to adding the Equity, Diversity and Accessibility degree theme to the existing four themes.

(b) Medium-term to Long-term actions

Regarding the need for greater availability of research methods courses, especially quantitative methods, OISE's current Academic Plan calls for the creation of joint research methods courses (quantitative and mixed methods) to enhance student research skills and broaden the offering of quantitative research methods courses for all research-stream students. To that effect, two jointly offered quantitative research methods courses have been made available under the auspices of the Office of Associate Dean, Programs including JOI1287H: Introduction to Applied Statistics, and JOI6000H: Special Topics in Advanced Quantitative Research Methods. Although these courses are offered by instructors from two OISE departments (i.e.,

¹ The second one is Excellence in Research in Scholarship

Applied Psychology and Human Development; and Leadership Higher and Adult Education), registration is open to all OISE students. Strengthening capacity in this area within OISE continues to be a priority.

Following approval of the Academic Plan in 2017-2018, the Office of Associate Dean, Programs established the OISE Programs Strategic Advisory Committee (OPSAC) comprised of Associate Chairs, Academic Coordinators, Graduate Liaison Officers, and other colleagues involved in the planning and delivery of academic programs. The mandate of OPSAC is to advise on issues that have the most significant impact on the development and delivery of OISE's programs, including ensuring that our programs continue to be strong and relevant in terms of their content and learning outcomes, and that they are sustainable and meet the needs of students. Over the course of this academic year, a subcommittee of OPSAC will be formed to review the research courses across OISE in order to ensure a solid foundation in research methodology for students in research-stream programs (MA & PhD). The subcommittee will review existing research methods courses, identify duplication and gaps/areas for course development, with a view to increasing the number of and access to both quantitative and qualitative research methods courses for all research-stream students consistent with the decentralized budget model at OISE. We see this as a good opportunity to enable more inter-departmental teaching and collaboration. As training in research methods is not only secured through courses, the subcommittee will also conduct a survey of other means by which students develop their research skills including, for example, working as Graduate Assistants and Research Assistants, their participation in thesis groups lead by their supervisors, and through the various training sessions offered by administrative and academic units.

- *The reviewers commented on the high percentage of MT courses taught by sessional instructors, and encouraged leveraging OISE's status as a leading centre of research on education to provide MT graduates with "a different set of skills and experiences than graduates from other Ontario and Canadian education schools."*

The 2019-2020 external review of the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning (CTL), which houses the Master of Teaching (MT) program found that over 80% of MT courses are taught by sessional instructors. It is important to note here that the MT is a program of professional education accredited by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT). One of the accreditation requirements is that "the faculty members teaching the program are an appropriate combination of persons with appropriate academic qualifications; practitioners with appropriate experience in the field of education; and persons with appropriate expertise in the divisions and components of the program." O. Reg. 347/02, ss. 9. (1) 12. As such, in order to offer an outstanding graduate teacher education program that meets the accreditation requirements, in addition to faculty with continuing appointments, OISE and CTL will continue to engage sessional instructors in the MT program while balancing staffing by hiring faculty in continuing tenure-stream and teaching-stream positions.

With their strong links to schools and school districts, sessional instructors bring to the program their knowledge, professional expertise and an understanding of the realities of life in Ontario schools, and contribute to strengthening the partnership between the university and the field. In addition to being experienced educators, MT sessional instructors meet the requirements of the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) to teach at the graduate level; the process for hiring sessional instructors is highly selective, and the department has a pool of excellent educators to draw from many of whom have made sustained contributions to the program over many years.

In addition to continuing to prioritize hiring of faculty with continuing appointments within the MT, the program deploys a number of strategies that showcase its research centredness, and allow its students to gain a distinct skillset with a strong foundation in research and inquiry. Over the course of the program, students study the latest educational research and conduct their own research on a topic related to teaching and

learning. In their first year of the program, students take an introductory research literacy course; and in the second year, they design and carry out a qualitative research study examining both the educational theory relating to a topic and its practical application to teaching. Additionally, the program's [research website](#) highlights research courses, the annual [MT Research Conference](#), and the [MT Review](#)—an open source journal that focuses on research and research-informed practice in K-12 and initial teacher education.

Implementation Plan

(a) Immediate to Medium-term Actions

However, since sessional instructors are on short-term appointments, maintaining continuity has been an issue in the MT. This has been overcome to a certain extent by establishing a number of continuing faculty positions for the department's experienced Contractually Limited Term Appointment (CLTA) faculty members to take on leadership roles within the MT and provide program continuity. As well, assigning CLTA opportunities to promising early career sessional instructors who wish to eventually apply for continuing faculty positions as those become available has been a positive development and a possible model to achieve a greater staffing balance within the MT. During the period 2014 to 2020, several experienced sessional lecturers in the MT program were hired into newly created CLTA faculty positions with leadership roles, and a number of MT CLTA faculty members have since moved into continuing positions as well.

Issues of balance between contract faculty and faculty with continuing appointments in the MT continues to be a challenge especially with the recent MT enrolment expansion from a program enrolling 139 students across two years (in 2013-2014) to 854 students (in 2019-2020). Now that teacher education at OISE is offered at the graduate level, we have taken steps to increase engagement of faculty with continuing appointments in the MT, both tenure-stream and teaching-stream, and will continue to work on this priority. To that effect, two continuing faculty positions were recently added to the MT faculty complement. The first one: Assistant Professor – Mathematics Education (effective July 1, 2020); and the second one: Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream – Inquiry and Research Practice in Teaching and Teacher Education (effective July 1, 2021). This reflects the value that OISE places on high quality, research-infused instruction by faculty on regular appointments.

In addition to the strategic and principled faculty renewal planning focused on the MT program needs, one of the effective strategies includes the increased participation of tenured and tenure-stream faculty from CTL's two other programs (Curriculum and Pedagogy; and Language and Literacies Education) in the MT in a variety of ways including course development and teaching electives, collaborating on instructional teams, etc. Another strategy entails increasing collaboration among instructional teams through the role of the Teaching and Learning Coordinator (a senior teaching-stream faculty member) who is responsible for supporting faculty development activities related to program curriculum renewal; as well as the role of Course Leads (experienced instructors) whose role involves mentoring and supporting fellow instructors of a specific course, which contributes to building coherence within the MT. Additionally, through the ability to take elective courses outside their department, MT students can work with excellent tenure stream faculty from across the institute leveraging OISE's collective academic excellence while enriching student experience. It is expected that these strategies will continue to be implemented over the next two years.

- *The reviewers noted OISE's position as a campus leader in programming and research in social justice, Indigenous studies, and addressing anti-Black racism; they recommended supporting further research, and exploring the possibility of establishing collaborative offerings with other University divisions, in these areas.*

One of the few institutions of higher learning in North America that has a department dedicated to social justice education, OISE has a long-standing commitment to social justice in all aspects of the institution. Our community strongly believes that a commitment to social justice should permeate and drive the Institute's work, which is highlighted in our current Academic Plan (2017-2022). In addition to research-stream and professional degree programs in Social Justice Education, many of our programs embed social justice, equity, diversity and accessibility issues within curricula and courses.

Similarly, OISE's commitment to Indigenous education and research is longstanding and is echoed in our current Academic Plan. In 2019-2020, OISE's Indigenous Education Network (IEN) celebrated its 30th anniversary. Since then, there are many examples of increasing the presence of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives within our programs, research, and decision-making process. These range from OISE's first MOOC "[Aboriginal Worldviews and Education](#)", and our [Deepening Knowledge Project](#), to Indigenous-focused research, the creation of the [Dean's Advisory Council on Indigenous Education \(DACIE\)](#), and most recently, [the establishment of the Indigenous Educational Research Centre](#).

Last but not least, OISE is home to influential, world-renowned scholars who are committed to critical scholarship, scholar activism, and community engagement. As such, OISE faculty members are often called to lead University-wide initiatives aimed at enhancing equity, diversity and accessibility. Recent examples include Professor Ann Lopez's appointment as [Provostial Advisor on Access Programs](#), and Professor Njoki Wane's appointment as one of the co-Chairs of the University's [Anti-Black Racism Task Force](#). Additionally, the OISE Black Faculty Caucus meets with the Dean periodically to provide guidance and advice on a range of activities and issues affecting Black communities at the University of Toronto, in the GTA and beyond including actions aimed at addressing anti-Black racism within the community, meeting the needs of Black faculty, students and staff, and promoting Black excellence through events and initiatives.

Implementation Plan

(a) Immediate to Medium-term Actions

In response to the reviewers' recommendation related to supporting further research, and exploring the possibility of establishing collaborative offerings in areas of social justice education, Indigenous studies and anti-Black racism, over the course of the 2021-2022 academic year, OISE will advance the following two initiatives:

- (1) The establishment of the Centre for Black Studies in Education. The proposal for the establishment of the Centre was developed, and with community consultations underway, it is expected that the proposal will go through the governance process in the fall term of the 2021-2022 academic year. Once established, in addition to research, the Centre for Black Studies in Education will support the needs of Black faculty, staff and students, assist the OISE community in addressing anti-Black racism, and advance OISE's leadership in this critical area of scholarship.
- (2) The development of a Collaborative Specialization (CS) in Indigenous Education. The proposal is currently being developed in consultation with members of DACIE, IEN and the Office of Associate Dean, Programs. The academic focus of the new graduate CS will be the theory, practice, and research of Indigenous education including but not limited to Indigenous approaches to teaching and learning, Indigenous worldviews and how they relate to research and theory, and Indigenous political struggles for self-determination and taking care of children, elders, and communities, land education, and sharing of knowledge and ways of knowing. It is expected that the proposal development and consultation process will be completed by the end of 2021-2022 academic year with the goal of obtaining governance approval for a new CS in Indigenous Education the following academic year.

- *The reviewers made a number of recommendations regarding faculty complement planning and renewal, including prioritizing racial diversity in new faculty hires, balancing faculty/student ratios, and considering the optimal proportions of tenure and teaching stream faculty, and sessional instructors.*

OISE's more than 100 full-time continuing faculty members, along with many more affiliated educators and researchers, represent excellence in their fields of teaching and research with wide-ranging interests and active research programs. In addition to being one of the key recommendations from the current—as well as previous—review of the Institute, the need to “prioritize faculty renewal to recruit and retain outstanding faculty in order to maintain and grow research strength, and ensure quality and sustainability of programs” was recognized as a key goal in the OISE Academic Plan 2017-2022. Actions to address this goal include: (a) principled and fiscally-responsible faculty renewal planning that is reviewed and updated annually; (b) maintaining and improving recruitment and retention strategies for world-class faculty; (c) supporting the pursuit of research opportunities and funding; and (d) ensuring broad consultation regarding the development of workload policies.

In addition to focusing on replacing retiring faculty and supporting the delivery of programs, increasing faculty diversity is among the core principles guiding faculty renewal at OISE. Therefore, the departmental faculty renewal plans prioritize increasing faculty diversity. Additionally, the commitment to equity, diversity and accessibility is one of the six key focusing themes in OISE's current Academic Plan, which calls for increasing the diversity of faculty, staff and students in order to better reflect the communities served by OISE. This commitment, along with our commitment to equity and social justice, continues to be a vital priority for all OISE departments and units.

Implementation Plan

(a) Immediate to Medium-term Actions

For a number of years, OISE has been experiencing a decline in tenure-stream faculty due to being unable to replace retirements. By 2016, OISE moved to a position of being able to replace all faculty retirements; however, many retirements were already in progress, and with the budget approval and search process, there is a two-year delay between a faculty member retiring and filling their spot with a new hire. Since 2017, the decline has been halted and OISE is holding steady with about 100 tenure-stream faculty, and, with faculty replacements moving forward this figure is expected to increase to 120 by 2024.

From 2015-2016 to 2020-2021, OISE appointed 29 new continuing faculty members (23 tenure stream and 6 teaching stream). In light of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and the growing recognition of the pervasiveness of anti-Black racism in our society and institutions, increasing the number of Black and Indigenous faculty at OISE has become a particular priority. Since 2015-2016, OISE has recruited 5 Indigenous and 5 Black faculty into continuing academic positions, in addition to a number of faculty hires from other designated groups. OISE has successfully taken advantage of funding incentives offered by the University, such as the Diversity in Academic Hiring Fund and the Indigenous Faculty Hiring Fund, and strongly encourages departmental search committees to engage in diversity-focused recruitment practices that can lead to such opportunities.

Faculty renewal plans include an additional 13 faculty positions over the next two years. With a view to increasing diversity and ensuring that equity is evident throughout all institutional practices and at every level of engagement, [*OISE's Guiding Principles on Equity and Diversity*](#) inform all decisions and initiatives, including recruitment, hiring, retention, evaluation and promotion of faculty. At the divisional level, the

Dean works collaboratively with members of DACIE and the Black Faculty Caucus to increase the participation of Indigenous and Black faculty. Additionally, the Dean's Office posts advertisements for faculty positions not only in venues focused on the broad academic job market, but also in venues focused on specific designated groups in higher education: racialized persons/persons of colour, women, Indigenous/Aboriginal people of North America, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQ persons. Furthermore, in approving the membership of search committees, the Dean ensures that committees include members of both genders and, wherever possible, members of other designated groups. A decanal representative is appointed to each committee to ensure compliance with University guidelines and procedures, including those that relate to excellence, diversity and equity. The Dean's Office works with departments to ensure that committee members have read and discussed University best practices documents such as [Better Practices in Recruitment](#) and [Strategies for Recruiting an Excellent & Diverse Faculty Complement](#). The Dean also meets with the search committee at its first meeting to speak to members about the integrity of the search process and the importance of including diversity as an element of excellence in selecting the best possible shortlist of candidates. The Dean's Office also strongly urges all committee members to undertake unconscious bias training and makes training resources available to them.

- *The reviewers made a number of observations and recommendations regarding mentorship and support for faculty members, including faculty at the junior and mid-career levels, as well as Indigenous faculty members.*

One of the priorities outlined in OISE's current Academic Plan 2017-2022 is improving faculty life through meaningful engagement strategies, mentorship and professional development programs. In addition to the supports available through the University of Toronto's Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation (CTSI), and within OISE's academic departments, OISE Dean's Office also supports faculty development through centrally provided programming. For example, the Dean's Office offers a series of Early Career Faculty Development meetings (4 to 6 sessions a year) facilitated by a senior colleague with experience in faculty development and mentoring. Recent sessions have included discussions of approaches to graduate supervision, teaching in relation to interim review, tenure review, and continuing status review, use of teaching evaluation guidelines, and preparing a teaching portfolio. The Dean and Associate Deans also provide individualized mentoring to faculty related to the development of teaching and research. The Dean has a touch-base lunch with all faculty (usually in their first term) to obtain feedback on their transition and to identify any concerns with their research and teaching activities.

Additionally, the Dean's Office staff members provide support to faculty at all levels undergoing reviews that assess teaching (e.g., interim review, tenure, continuing status, promotion). They also support faculty development programming including organizing meetings for early career faculty, and support the development and administration of OISE's teaching excellence awards. Staff in the Dean's Office also collaborate on special initiatives such as revision of teaching evaluation guidelines, promotion of examples of teaching excellence in outreach materials, and support faculty applications/nominations for university and external teaching awards. The Provost and the Dean's Office also cover all costs for faculty who participate in the [Faculty Success Program](#) offered by the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity.

Implementation Plan

(a) Immediate to Medium-term Actions

OISE puts strong emphases both on enhancing student experience and on supporting and celebrating faculty teaching and research excellence. Given that OISE hired a number of new faculty over the review period, and this trend is expected to continue as part of our faculty renewal efforts, continuing to offer excellent

programming and services for faculty members, including junior and mid-career faculty, as well as faculty members from underrepresented groups will be critical and the Institute's academic leadership team will continue to be committed to supporting faculty development.

Following the review of OISE's Teaching Excellence Awards in 2019-2020 including the introduction of a new Award for Excellence in Educational Leadership, the upcoming priorities will include strengthening the current services and programs such as a renewed focus on faculty development series, and revisions to OISE's Divisional Teaching Guidelines (expected to be completed and approved in 2021-2022). Related to faculty research awards, the Office of Associate Dean, Research, International and Innovation (ADRII) developed an awards and honours strategy that promotes a culture of research excellence and contributes to OISE's reputation as a leader in research and home to world-class experts in multiple areas of education and human development. Moreover, to provide newly hired faculty members with a sense of community, an understanding of OISE, and the supports needed to build successful careers, over the course of the summer of 2021, the Office of ADRII developed a three-prong onboarding program including: (1) New Faculty Welcome and Orientation within the first year of hire; (1) Initial Mentoring for first and second year faculty who need basic information regarding OISE organization and structure, research, academic programs and departments; and (3) Continued Mentoring for faculty members in years 3-5 focused on the pathways to interim review and tenure/continuing status. The implementation of this program will lead to the development of an early career community of practice comprised of all faculty members in the 'pre-continuing appointment' period. This group of peers would meet regularly throughout the academic year to identify and explore topics of interest (e.g., via guest speakers) and share with OISE's academic leadership their suggestions on supports needed for early career faculty. Additionally, the Dean's Office will continue to engage in conversations with members of DACIE and OISE's Black Faculty Caucus to gain their insights and perspectives on supports for the development, integration and retention of new Indigenous and Black faculty.

- *The reviewers observed that unfunded research and other forms of community involvement are not always accounted for in faculty members' performance reviews, and noted concerns regarding "the disproportionate efforts in these areas by equity deserving faculty and those working in equity areas."*

As one of Canada's most research-intensive faculties of education, OISE is committed to advancing a strong, collaborative and supportive research culture—one that supports the breadth of faculty research, funded or otherwise. In fact, unfunded research often involves important work with communities such as schools and school districts, marginalized communities, non-governmental and community organizations. This work is critical not only for securing future funded projects but more importantly for building effective relationships with our surrounding communities, which is one of the President Gertler's [three priorities](#) that OISE subscribes and contributes to. OISE's [Centre for Urban Schooling](#), the [Comparative, International and Development Education Centre](#), as well as our [Centre for Social Economy and Work](#) have done excellent work with local communities and non-profits.

Implementation Plan

(a) Immediate to Medium-term Actions

While funded research is extremely important in terms of measurable scholarly outputs that can support the Progress Through the Ranks (PTR) process, unfunded research and other forms of community involvement are equally important and valued at OISE. In fact, for the PTR reviews, research is evaluated holistically and all OISE departments expect faculty members to detail both their funded and non-traditional research

outputs, as well as professional development activities. In order to ensure that this work is recorded and thus recognized, faculty members will be encouraged to utilize the My Research Non-Funded tool that the University provides; however, faculty are currently seldom using this tool to record collaborations and activities. Another issue is related to difficulties with obtaining activity reports from the Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) type collaborations, which are almost always unfunded. The ADRII Office maintains the MOUs database and will reinforce their annual reporting process introduced in 2018 that asks OISE MOU leads to provide information on activities and achievements of the partnership. Additionally, OISE Communications have included stories promoting unfunded research and this will continue. The ADRII Office is developing a tool to track the “beyond scholarly” impact of research that will be in place by the Winter term of 2022. Last but not least, OISE’s new [Award for Excellence in Educational Leadership](#) (effective 2020) is well suited to formally acknowledge some of the unfunded work especially related to contributing to major educational change and policy initiatives with external organizations and institutions. Working with the Dean’s and Chairs group, nominations of deserving faculty for this award will be encouraged.

- *The reviewers recommended undertaking a strategic planning process around a number of objectives, including collaboration with other University divisions, opportunities for revenue generation, and advancement priorities.*

The 2021-2022 academic year is the last year of OISE’s current Academic Plan (2017-2022). We are very pleased with our accomplishments to date, while recognizing that there are several more goals to be achieved until the expiration of the Plan in 2022. These goals are focused primarily on: (1) continuing to support our students and enhance student experience; (2) building on, and leveraging our faculty expertise in pedagogical innovation using technology to offer high-quality teaching and learning online while also enhancing access to our programs and faculty expertise during and beyond the pandemic; (3) continued space planning for effective utilization of space; and (4) sustainability and climate Action. Over the course of the 2021-2022 academic year, under the leadership of the Interim Dean, the OISE community will work collaboratively on advancing our academic goals and realizing the remaining priorities outlined in the Academic Plan.

Implementation Plan

(a) Medium-term to Long-term Actions

The process of developing this Self-study for the 2020-2021 Provostial review of OISE provided members of our community with a chance to share their thoughts and observations on OISE’s challenges and opportunities, including several new directions the Institute should consider over the next few years. In addition to completing the remaining priorities from our Academic Plan 2017-2022, and—taking into account unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic related challenges—OISE will need to consider new ways to continue its primary academic mission of teaching and research while offering high quality learning and research opportunities for all students, and a safe and stimulating working environment for its faculty and staff. The 2020-2021 external review provided helpful advice in this regard and following the appointment of a new Dean for OISE, the Dean will play an essential role in engaging the community in a new planning cycle, and in implementing the best ideas and plans arising from this process.

- *The reviewers observed that further integration with the University could create opportunities for collaborative research with faculty from other divisions, and may provide additional opportunities for OISE students to gain teaching experience.*

OISE has maintained strong links and a host of fruitful research, teaching and outreach relationships with other divisions at the University. At the graduate level, these include participation in a variety of collaborative specializations with partners across the University, the establishment of the University's tri-campus framework for Clinical Psychology involving Psychology departments at OISE and the University of Toronto Scarborough, and involvement in cross-departmental and cross-disciplinary research initiatives through our research centres. Additionally, a number of OISE faculty members are cross-appointed to various departments across the University, and some have provided administrative leadership at the University, for example, within the School of Graduate Studies, the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation, and most recently, the Institute for the Study of University Pedagogy. At the undergraduate level, participation in the Provost's Undergraduate Course Development Fund (UCDF) is another important way OISE connects with other divisions and contributes to enhancing undergraduate education at the University of Toronto. Importantly, OISE's expertise in teacher education has made significant contributions to the integration of professional education and discipline-based studies, initially through the Early Teacher Projects and the former Concurrent Teacher Education Program, and now through a suite of Combined Degree Programs that link undergraduate studies at all three University of Toronto's campuses with OISE's graduate teacher education programs.

Implementation Plan

(a) Immediate to Medium-term Actions

We trust that OISE will not only build on these fruitful partnerships but will identify new ways to deepen collaboration and strengthen engagement with our U of T partners, for example, through the development of the above-mentioned Collaborative Specialization in Indigenous Education that will engage departments and programs both within and beyond OISE. Related to the reviewers' comment regarding enhancing opportunities for OISE students to gain teaching experiences, it is important to highlight that these opportunities have diminished since 2015-2016 due to the phasing out of our undergraduate teacher education programs and OISE's transition to an all-graduate institute. However, enhancing teaching experiences for our doctoral students is currently the subject of an Institute-wide discussion led by the newly established Student Teaching Experience Working Group. This group is a branch of the OISE Student Experience Committee and, over the course of the 2021-2022 academic year, will engage in consultation and examine possibilities for expanding teaching opportunities for OISE students including, for example, collaborations with undergraduate departments across U of T that focus on issues where OISE has expertise with the goal of creating more teaching opportunities for OISE's doctoral students through Teaching Assistantships.

We trust that this response addresses the main areas raised by the reviewers. Please contact me if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



Normand Labrie, PhD, FRSC, D.h.c.
Professor and Interim Dean
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

This section will be inserted after AP&P by the VPAP office using language verbatim from the approved Report of the meeting.

Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers praised OISE as a highly productive academic unit, among the highest ranked Faculties of Education in the world; they commended OISE's continued commitment to excellence in teaching and research, and to improving education locally, nationally and globally, and emphasized OISE's position as the campus leader in programming and research on issues of diversity and Indigenous studies; they highlighted students' appreciation for the culture and level of faculty care that OISE provides, and noted alumni comments regarding amazing partnerships with local and global organizations; finally, the reviewers noted faculty and staff's overwhelming respect and gratitude for the outgoing Dean, particularly his financial management and empathetic leadership style. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: exploring ways to enhance the student experience; addressing the high percentage of M.T. courses taught by sessional instructors; supporting further research and collaboration on social justice and EDI issues; with regard to complement planning, prioritizing racial diversity in new faculty hires, balancing faculty/student ratios, and considering the optimal proportions of tenure and teaching stream faculty, and sessional instructors; enhancing mentorship and support for faculty members; exploring ways to better account for unfunded research and other forms of community involvement in faculty members' performance reviews; undertaking a strategic planning process around a number of objectives, including collaboration with other University divisions, opportunities for revenue generation, and advancement priorities; and exploring further integration within the University to create opportunities for collaborative research and potentially provide additional opportunities for OISE students to gain teaching experience. The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty, unit and programs' responses to the reviewers' recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

Monitoring and Date of Next Review

A formal monitoring report is not required for non-UTQAP reviews.

The date of the next review will be determined in consultation with the Provost's Office.

Distribution

On **date**, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was provided by email to the Dean of OISE and the Secretaries to AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council.

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan - DRAFT

1. Review Summary

Programs Reviewed:	<p>Undergraduate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Information, B.I. <p>Graduate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diploma in Advanced Study in Information Studies, D.A.I.S. • Master of Information, M.I. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ <i>Concentrations:</i> Archives and Records Management; Critical Information Policy Studies; Culture and Technology; Human Centred Data Science; Information Systems and Design; Knowledge Management and Information Management; Library and Information Science; User Experience Design • Master of Museum Studies, M.M.St. • Doctor of Philosophy in Information Studies, Ph.D. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ <i>Concentrations:</i> Archives and Records Management; Critical Information Policy Studies; Cultural Heritage; Information Systems and Design; Knowledge Management and Information Management; Library and Information Science; Media, Technology and Culture; Philosophy of Information <p>Combined Degree Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Information / Master of Museum Studies
Division Reviewed:	Faculty of Information
Commissioning Officer:	Vice-President and Provost
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anind K. Dey, Dean and Professor, Information School, University of Washington • Thomas Finholt, Dean and Professor of Information, School of Information, University of Michigan • Lisa Henderson, Dean and Professor, Faculty of Information & Media Studies, Western University
Date of Review Visit:	February 1-5, 2021
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 26, 2021

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: January 15 - 17, 2014

Significant Program Strengths

- Good reputation of programs
- Strong course offerings
- Well-designed curriculum structure
- Active and engaged faculty with deep expertise and innovative research
- Commitment of alumni and professional groups to the Faculty

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

The reviewers recommended that the following be considered:

- Reducing the number of concentrations within the Master of Information (MI) program
- Exploring student recruitment strategies to help address MI enrolment challenges
- Strengthening administration of the graduate program
- Striving to increase faculty research funding
- Enhancing communication among Faculty members with respect to strategic direction, governance structures, and promotion processes
- Creating additional academic administrative leadership roles
- Re-visioning the relationship between the Robarts Library, the Bissell Building, and the Inforum
- Extending fundraising initiatives
- Conducting a re-branding exercise of the Faculty

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

- Review Terms of Reference
- Site Visit Schedule
- Self-study and appendices, including access to course descriptions and faculty CV's
- Previous review report (2014) including administrative response
- Towards 2030: The View from 2012 - An Assessment of the University of Toronto's Progress Since Towards 2030

Consultation Process

- Vice President and Provost
- Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
- Dean, Faculty of Information
- Associate Dean Academic
- COVID-19 Advisor and former Associate Dean Academic
- Bachelor of Information (B.I.) students
- Master of Information (M.I.) students
- Master of Museum Studies (M.M.St.) students
- Ph.D. students
- Full Professors
- Associate Professors
- Assistant Professors
- Contract Limited Term Appointed faculty members
- Teaching stream faculty members
- Faculty members - Institute of Communication, Culture, Information and Technology, UTM
- Faculty members - Department of Arts, Culture & Media, UTSC
- Program Directors
- Chief Librarian and Deputy Chief Librarian
- Dean, School of Graduate Studies
- Vice-Principal, Academic & Dean, UTM
- Vice-Principal, Academic & Dean, UTSC
- Dean, Faculty of Music
- Vice-Dean, Academic Operations, Faculty of Arts & Science
- Dean, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work
- Administrative Staff Representatives
- Director, Institute of Communication, Culture, Information and Technology, UTM
- Chair, Department of Arts, Culture & Media, UTSC
- Office Manager & Executive Assistant
- Assistant Dean, Registrarial and Student Services
- Chief Administrative Officer
- Research Funding Coordinator

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall Quality
 - B.I. program “has gotten off to a strong start with high expectations of students”

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Demanding and holistic admission requirements
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ B.I. program launched with 16 students in 2019-20, after a highly competitive admission process; of 159 applicants, 27 were admitted (17% admission rate)

2. Graduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Demanding and holistic admission requirements across all programs
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Leadership and faculty have been effective in elaborating new academic programs to meet growing demand in emerging (e.g., human-computer interaction, data science)
 - ▶ M.I. Co-op program placement rate fluctuates, but has remained “fairly high” since it was introduced in 2016
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Reviewers note that the graduate students they met with were “bright, engaged, and not afraid to speak truth to power,” noting in particular the initiative taken to create the student-authored report on equity, diversity and inclusion
 - ▶ Ph.D. students report feeling supported by their supervisors
 - ▶ Staff show energy and enthusiasm in supporting student career development, and impressive openness to using enterprise-level systems to enhance service capabilities in this area
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ *Ph.D.*: Dramatic rise in applications between 2013-14 and 2018-19, driven largely by international applicants after the University tuition equalization policy; over the same period the admission offer rate decreased (from 36.1% to 25.4%) and the offer acceptance rate increased (from 76.9% to 93.3%) in 2018-19; trajectory of these rates is promising for the quality of applicants and enrolled students
 - ▶ *M.I.*: Applications doubled between 2013-14 and 2018-19 after introduction of attractive new concentrations and enhancement of existing ones; over the same period there were only minor changes in both the admission offer rate (from 70.4% to 67%) and the offer acceptance rate (from 62.1% to 62.5%)
 - ▶ *M.I.*: International student enrolments increased 685% (from 14 in 2013-14 to 110 in 2018-19), indicating significantly broadened recruitment field
 - ▶ *M.I.*: “Rock solid” time-to-completion rate (1.6-1.7 years) very promising for student employment success and limiting student debt
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ *M.I.*: Promising rates of employment within 12-18 months of graduation; 99% of alumni surveyed in 2019 described their work as closely or somewhat related to their graduate training

- ▶ *M.M.St.*: Employment rates reflect the program’s greater specialization, with higher fluctuation relative to the M.I.; 100% of alumni surveyed in 2019 described their jobs as closely or somewhat related to their graduate training
- ▶ Active Faculty of Information Alumni Association (FIAA) committed to offering professional insight and opportunity to new graduates

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Ph.D. students expressed concern regarding mismatch between program requirements and expected time-to-completion of four years, commenting that program course requirements are “overly burdensome” and leave limited time to conduct research and write dissertations; students reported average Ph.D. time-to-completion rate of over seven years
 - ▶ Ph.D. students conducting qualitative/ethnographic research during the COVID-19 pandemic have had their progress halted due to restrictions on in-person contact and access to physical sites
 - ▶ *M.M.St.*: Reviewers suggest that the curriculum “rooted primarily in established museums and related organizations in Canada and North America” may be less attractive to international students
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Ph.D. students indicated that they did not feel supported by the iSchool administration, due in part to a perceived lack of response to issues related to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization (EDID)
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Ph.D. students reported feeling less connected to Faculty’s research mission due to a perceived lack of support for student funding
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ *M.M.St.* admission rate increased from 2013-14 to 2018-19 while enrolments remained steady
- Student funding
 - ▶ Ph.D. students expressed concern that funding packages were not sufficient to support them through their program; students noted the high cost of living in Toronto and the larger issue of basing funding packages on expected time-to-completion of four years
 - ▶ International students “may be eligible for far fewer opportunities” to secure their own external funding

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Examine and adjust expectations for Ph.D. program time-to-completion
 - ▶ Support Ph.D. students in identifying alternative ways to make progress to degree completion in light of pandemic-related restrictions on in-person activity

- ▶ Review M.I. Co-op program to optimize and stabilize student placement rates
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Explore ways to increase PhD student involvement in writing research proposals
- Student funding
 - ▶ Address student requests for institutional funding beyond their fourth year of study
 - ▶ Identify funding mechanisms to extend time-to-completion for students with pandemic-related research interruptions

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ Impressive cohort of junior faculty bring “important energy into the research enterprise”
 - ▶ First-rate recruitment of ambitious, creative tenure-stream faculty and CLTAs, including for emerging curricular areas
 - ▶ Immensely enthusiastic teaching stream faculty enjoy their role as “experimental pedagogues with relative job security”
 - ▶ Assistant professors unanimously enthusiastic about their appointments, Faculty culture and mentorship, research support, and iSchool’s commitments to EDID

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Research
 - ▶ Concern regarding low rates of participation in Tri-Council research funding and corresponding low rates of graduate student (HQP) grant-based funding
 - ▶ Faculty members report lack of incentives and Faculty support for pursuing large-scale funding as impediments to increasing involvement in Tri-Council research
 - ▶ “Disengagement” by associate-level faculty deprives iSchool of key leadership in driving successful research proposals
- Faculty
 - ▶ Concern that EDID-related curriculum updates fall disproportionately on faculty with diverse backgrounds, creating additional emotional labor
 - ▶ Recurring tension around faculty growth, and inclusion of UTM/ICCIT and UTSC/ACM faculty members in iSchool’s graduate faculty
 - ▶ Changing nature of faculty research work, with some research models dependent on a greater number of doctoral students, creates competition for Ph.D. students and may lead to faculty retention issues; further competition for students noted between faculty across the three University campuses; “at the moment, there aren’t enough students to satisfy all of these demands”
 - ▶ Associate level faculty reported an aversion to taking on large research projects

- ▶ Reluctance among Associate level faculty to seek promotion to full professor noted as a serious issue
- ▶ Some Associate level faculty report disillusionment and “consistent violations of trust by leadership”
- ▶ ICCIT and ACM faculty do not always feel recognized for their teaching contributions to the M.I. program
- ▶ Concern regarding employment uncertainty expressed by CLTA appointees

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
 - ▶ Provide assistance for faculty members in developing a “granting culture” within the iSchool, including workshops, proposal review, assistance with budget preparation, and the use of operating reserves to support development of Tri-Council funding proposals
 - ▶ SSHRC Connections Program strongly recommended as a collaborative opportunity for iSchool/ICCIT/ACM faculty, with lower barriers to entry than other SSHRC programs; SSHRC Partnership Grants program noted as a “long-term goal”
- Faculty
 - ▶ Ensure that faculty of colour are not expected to fulfill students’ needs regarding EDID issues; initiatives undertaken should be collaboratively developed and implemented
 - ▶ Make an accurate inventory of ACM and ICCIT faculty members’ teaching in the M.I. program, and their other iSchool service contributions
 - ▶ Support integration and collaboration between tri-campus faculty members, including complementary scholarship and instruction
 - ▶ Broad recognition of scholarly equity among tri-campus faculty would lead to increased research cooperation within and across faculty groups, possibly including more Tri-Council grant collaborations and HQP funding
 - ▶ Provide course release for academic program directors to align with best practices at peer institutions and elsewhere within the University
 - ▶ Continuous teaching stream faculty appointments, including conversion of CLTAs, would help in retention of Indigenous faculty and faculty of colour
 - ▶ Provide mentorship and guidance for junior faculty members regarding the “changing balance of tenure-system life”, including adjustments over time in the relative emphasis on teaching vs. research, to help with faculty retention and career development

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Good morale overall, notably high among recently hired faculty and new academic leaders

- ▶ Collegial relationship between iSchool and SGS leadership, based on cooperation and mutual understanding; iSchool is well-regarded by Deans of cognate divisions with areas of collaboration, shared goals, and similar points of tension and possibility
- ▶ Dynamic, integrative tri-campus activities and initiatives in knowledge mobilization, internal and external partnerships, and research centers
- ▶ Dean's Office recognizes the exceptional scholarship of colleagues at ICCIT and ACM, with faculty from these units contributing to a variety of iSchool administrative activities as well as moderate teaching and supervision in the PhD program
- ▶ Highly engaged and committed Faculty of Information Alumni Association (FIAA) assists students with career development support, networking events, and grants
- ▶ Administrative staff are supportive of the Faculty's goals and genuinely appreciative of leadership; staff also appreciate being invited to participate in broader conversations regarding equity and community at the iSchool
- ▶ Professional/Managerial staff are enthusiastic about the Faculty's mission, and appreciative of Dean's assistance in addressing areas in need of additional resources and support
- ▶ iSchool is recruiting a Director for EDID, and has committed to a greater focus on recruiting and retaining Indigenous faculty and students
- ▶ Reviewers express appreciation for the sincerity with which members of the Tri-Campus Review Graduate Unit Working Group had "surveyed different configurations to seek good faith and intentionality in establishing partnerships where everyone knows what to expect"
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Scope of leadership roles is logical, although very broad in some cases
 - ▶ Professional/Managerial staff welcomed and appreciated central administrative systems in helping to manage processes of a moderately large Faculty
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Faculty has had tremendous recent success in program development, domestic and international student recruitment, and faculty and staff renewal
 - ▶ Staff acknowledge Dean's recent efforts in program expansion and internal reorganization; all agree on the importance of a strategic planning process to guide the Faculty under a new Dean
- International comparators
 - ▶ iSchool "has the distinct advantage of exceptionally high academic rankings"

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ EDID issues were raised frequently in site visit meetings, with faculty and student groups commenting on a lack of coordinated action and a felt sense of complacency from Faculty administration
 - ▶ Some faculty members commented on being marginalized and "reported a few incidents where issues related to EDID caused significant damage to relationships and a lot of distrust"

- ▶ iSchool students had conducted a survey on EDID issues within the Faculty and an audit of course reading lists to assess the proportion of readings authored by BIPOC scholars, resulting in a student-authored report with a series of recommendations and demands; students reported a more active response to the report from individual faculty members than from the Faculty overall
- ▶ Faculty members reported mixed reactions to the student-authored EDID report; reviewers note “there was no faculty-wide discussion to help support each other,” a situation exacerbated by the absence of in-person and ad hoc conversations due to the pandemic
- ▶ Given their experiences teaching “broadly diverse undergraduate student populations,” ACM and ICCIT faculty are well-positioned to respond to student EDID concerns but feel their input is not sought or considered by the iSchool
- ▶ Faculty members requested a strategy/roadmap for engaging and responding meaningfully to students’ concerns, including curriculum updates; iSchool leadership acknowledged that this is needed but were reticent to create a longer-term plan prior to the appointment of a new Dean
- ▶ Reviewers noted concerns about the transparency of the EDID Director hiring process, and observed a number of opinions from faculty and staff regarding the role and its potential to help the iSchool move forward together
- ▶ Reviewers note “inevitable” tension in tri-campus relationships due to competition for resources, doctoral students, and recent increases in master’s program enrolments
- ▶ Additional tri-campus tension appears rooted in historical expectations, resource distribution, and impressions of status difference between “flagship” and “satellite” campuses common to North American multi-campus institutions; reviewers note significantly more collegial and collaborative relationships between ACM and ICCIT faculty members than between these groups and St. George campus-based iSchool faculty
- ▶ Staff members acknowledged having witnessed microaggressions
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ iSchool staffing and systems have not caught up to iSchool’s growth, and are strained by recent enrolment increases
 - ▶ Academic programs are highly differentiated, resulting in a large number of individual Director roles with disparate work expectations
 - ▶ ACM/ICCIT faculty encounter challenges finding available when working in the iSchool’s Bissell building
 - ▶ Reviewers note limitations of “scarce resource” logic expressed in the iSchool self-study; observing that “austerity in the face of success” can undermine trust
 - ▶ Combination of roles to into Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies position creates a single expansive, multi-dimensional, possibly overwhelming role
 - ▶ Dean’s repeated short-term appointments create difficulty addressing systemic and long-term challenges, resulting in faculty and student frustration and “magical thinking” about what a new Dean will be able to accomplish
 - ▶ Significant leadership roles within the Faculty held by faculty with relatively little administrative experience

- ▶ Rapid growth of the Faculty, as well as pandemic-related shift to remote work, has resulted in increased demands for staff support
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ iSchool is “at the painful inflection point between the legacy orientation to library science and the future of a broader orientation (including library science but encompassing new opportunities in human-computer interaction and in data science)”; reviewers note that navigating and bridging the “likely cultural divide between the seasoned and new faculty” will be a major challenge
 - ▶ The role for the iSchool in significant, newly-launched initiatives in data science and related areas is not clear; reviewers note: “There is some concern that the lack of engagement may result in the Faculty of Information being subsumed in a larger academic unit broadly focused on Computing and led by Computer Science”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Focus EDID efforts towards a core set of goals, expressed in a strategic plan; the plan should create a framework for Faculty-wide and tri-campus conversations, provide a roadmap for necessary changes, include mechanisms for shared accountability, and connect with broader University EDID initiatives
 - ▶ Consider engaging third-party experts to moderate sensitive community-wide conversations about EDID and curriculum
 - ▶ Selection process for EDID Director should be transparent, and include community-wide engagement around the scope and responsibilities of the role
 - ▶ Seek assistance from the School of Graduate Studies and the Provost’s Office in the tri-campus Memorandum of Agreement process, to reach a sustainable, cooperative revenue and resource agreement balancing faculty academic access and iSchool revenue operations
 - ▶ Strong recommendation for all graduate faculty members to read the Tri-Campus Review Graduate Unit Working Group Report to understand complexities of tri-campus history, changing demographics, and relationships
 - ▶ Transparency and cooperation will be important factors in ongoing conversations regarding tri-campus dynamics; reviewers observe that to realize full potential, tri-campus iSchool community will need to recognize that “flagship/satellite configuration and its status presumptions no longer apply, and if continued will hinder integration and collaboration”
 - ▶ Recommendation to create a Memorandum of Cooperation to support culture shift and buy-in for tri-campus iSchool faculty, with input and commitment from participating Faculty and Unit leadership; the document could be drafted but not finalized until new iSchool Dean is appointed
 - ▶ Conduct a survey of unique alumni involvements and visits to clarify participation, extend outreach, and reduce the per-alum expectation in FIAA activity
 - ▶ Reviewers agree with staff comments regarding the need to update the iSchool website to improve clarity, navigability, and community engagement

- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Reviewers emphasized the critical importance of completing the appointment of a new dean for the Faculty
 - ▶ Reviewers caution against “magical thinking” regarding the appointment of a new Dean and note they will need “room to learn, make decisions, make mistakes, and ultimately succeed in the role”
 - ▶ Leadership roles with broad, multi-dimensional responsibilities should be reviewed and adjusted as necessary to ensure appropriate workload
 - ▶ Where possible, consolidation of sub-disciplinary specialization areas may relieve “service fatigue” expressed by faculty in leadership roles
 - ▶ Provide leadership development opportunities for faculty seeking leadership positions
 - ▶ Cultivate a culture of financial accountability, trust, and appropriate transparency
 - ▶ Reviewers caution against continuation of “austerity culture” and note that the iSchool is positioned for a shift to “articulating the need and willingness to spend money (wisely) to meet growth, even as resources are set aside to support building renovation”
 - ▶ Consider staff suggestions to develop an iSchool online calendar, improve records management processes, and develop standardized onboarding processes for new faculty and staff in all positions
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Opportunity exists to develop intra-University relationships and partnerships; consider in particular the future of iSchool’s relationships with University computer science units, and possible roles in new data science initiatives
 - ▶ Work to optimize alumni development/advancement opportunities and consider a fundraising campaign
 - ▶ Begin individual and group contemplation and discussion of iSchool’s long-term strategy, in preparation to continue strategic planning after new Dean is appointed



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF INFORMATION

Office of the Dean

15 September 2021

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost Academic Programs
University of Toronto
65 St. George Street, Room 106
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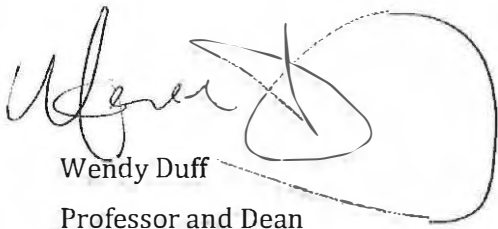
Re: Administrative Response to the External Reviewers' Report, Faculty of Information

Dear Professor McCahan:

This letter constitutes the administrative response to the external review report for the Faculty of Information dated 31 March 2021. The self-study process and external review were very helpful in identifying foci for both our immediate and longer term attention, as well as in reinforcing areas of strength within the Faculty.

We are grateful to the staff of your office for the coordination of the Review, and to the reviewers for a very insightful and constructive review that will contribute significantly to our academic planning.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wendy Duff', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Wendy Duff
Professor and Dean

Administrative Response to the External Review of the Faculty of Information

The response follows the numbering of the Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Graduate Programs

1.1 PhD Curriculum and program delivery/ Student funding/ Student engagement, experience and program support services

Examine and adjust expectations for Ph.D. program time-to-completion

- Numerous changes to the pre-candidacy course requirements have been made over the past several years to allow students more flexibility in course selection to provide more opportunities for students to develop their dissertation topics and methods. Moreover, when the Media, Technology, and Culture (MTC) concentration was introduced in 2019, it was argued that providing area-specific courses and redistributing some preparatory work away from reading courses toward a slightly more standardized curriculum would enable students to complete and defend their dissertations in their fourth year. In the immediate and medium-term the Faculty is focusing its efforts on addressing the reviewers' recommendations that focus on removing some of the structural and financial barriers students face in completing their degree requirements within the expected time period and increasing the amount of fifth year funding provided by the Faculty.

Address student requests for institutional funding beyond their fourth year of study

Immediate term actions

- Doctoral students entering their fifth year in Fall 2021 without external funding will receive a Doctoral Completion Award and the COVID-19 Program Completion Award; the combined value of those awards is equivalent to the living allowance that is normally discontinued after the student's fourth year of study. Fifth year tuition fees are already paid for by the Faculty and that will continue.
- Flag opportunities for students to apply for University-wide doctoral fellowships, such as those available through the Critical Digital Humanities Initiative and the Jackman Humanities Institute.

Medium term

- Explore ways in which PhD slots can be supported across the St. George, UTM and UTSc campuses, either directly, or through partial support provided through supervisors and, on the basis of that exploration, develop a plan to deliver fifth year funding for PhD students.

- Undertake an analysis of time-to-completion rates for students who have been enrolled in the Media, Technology, and Culture (MTC) concentration since 2019 to assess whether this model offers an effective means of reducing student time-to-completion and if so, to consider how it might be transportable to other PhD concentrations.
- Work with the Associate Director for Advancement (see 3.3 below) to increase funding for international doctoral students.

Longer term

- Find ways to increase funding to PhD students on a year to year basis with a view to reducing the pressure on students to take on additional teaching assistantships which may delay their time to completion.
- On an annual basis monitor time to completion to assess whether and to what extent changes in the funding model and structure are shortening time to completion.

Lead: PhD Directors in consultation with Dean and ADA; Associate Director for Advancement

Support Ph.D. students in identifying alternative ways to make progress to degree completion in light of pandemic-related restrictions on in-person activity.

Immediate and medium term actions

- Monitor the issues students face as a result of pandemic-related restrictions which have been documented most recently through the vehicle of the students' 2021 Annual Progress Report (APR) and provide advice and assistance to students and supervisors seeking to identify alternative ways to move their research forward.

Lead: Doctoral Committee on Standing; PhD Director; MTC concentration lead; doctoral advisors/supervisors

Identify funding mechanisms to extend time-to-completion for students with pandemic-related research interruptions

Immediate and Medium term actions

- The Faculty has already put in place two funding mechanisms aimed at reducing the impact of COVID-19 on doctoral research and time to completion. The COVID-19 Program Completion Award is a fellowship provided to full-time Doctoral students in the Faculty of Information who, for reasons due to COVID-19, require additional time in their program that takes them beyond the funded cohort of the Doctoral program. The COVID-19 Research Pivot Bursary is available to students who have incurred additional costs (e.g., replacement of equipment or supplies, travel, language classes, etc.) as a result of pivoting their research plans due to a COVID-19 related disruption.
- Monitor the administration of these two awards and adjust parameters as needed.

Lead: PhD Directors in consultation with Dean and ADA

Explore ways to increase PhD student involvement in writing research proposals

Immediate term actions

- Strongly encourage doctoral supervisors to engage their students in the process of preparing their grant proposals.
- Through the Faculty's Learning Hub, develop workshops for PhD students on topics related to the preparation of research proposals and grant applications.

Medium and long-term actions

- In the medium and long term, increasing PhD student involvement in writing research proposals will be tied to the Faculty's success in cultivating a "granting culture" within the Faculty (see actions identified below under 2.1. Research).

1.2 MI Curriculum and program delivery

Review M.I. Co-op program to optimize and stabilize student placement rates

Immediate term actions

- The Faculty has recently hired a business development consultant to identify potential employers and to develop a strategic plan for the MI co-op option. The plan will identify resources required and annual targets for placements in the MI co-op option.

Lead: Dean; Co-op academic lead; Assistant Dean, Student and Registrarial Services (responsible for Career Services)

Medium term

- The Faculty will implement the strategic plan and tweak it as necessary; monitor the success of the program and the number of new employers and; survey graduates who have completed the co-op program to determine their employment success.

Lead: Co-op academic lead; Assistant Dean, Student and Registrarial Services

Longer term

- The Faculty will continue to monitor the number and diversity of co-op placements as well as the employment rates of MI graduates who complete the co-op option.
- Drawing on the lessons learned from developing and implementing the strategic plan for the co-op option, the Faculty will develop and implement a strategic plan for its other work experience opportunities, i.e., the BI, MI, and MMSt practica and internships.

Lead: Program Directors in consultation with Career Services

2. Faculty/Research

2.1 Research

Provide assistance for faculty members in developing a “granting culture” within the iSchool, including workshops, proposal review, assistance with budget preparation, and the use of operating reserves to support development of Tri-Council funding proposals

SSHRC Connections Program strongly recommended as a collaborative opportunity for iSchool/ICCIT/ACM faculty, with lower barriers to entry than other SSHRC programs; SSHRC Partnership Grants program noted as a “long-term goal”

Immediate term actions

- With support of UofT Research Services, hire a Strategic Research Development Officer who will be responsible for strategic planning and provide support to the Associate Dean Research (ADR). This role will supplement our existing Research Grants Officer in supporting the ADR. The Strategic Research Development Officer will work with individual faculty members to build individual strategic research plans, and support the development of relationships between the Faculty and researchers/communities outside of it. This action was implemented in August 2021.
- Create a series of workshops for NSERC Discovery Grant applying faculty members. These workshops will provide peer-based support for developing the NSERC grant proposals across the six months leading to Discovery Grant submission. We will supplement this in the long term by providing workshops targeted to junior STEM-oriented faculty members to inform them of other relevant granting opportunities (e.g. MITACS). This action has been implemented and we are executing this task.
- Ease the mechanical burden of completing grant applications by hiring a work-study position for mechanical tasks. We have hired a work-study position to help faculty members complete the Canadian Common CV. This was perceived to be an onerous task by many of our faculty members, and another way we could support them.
- Develop individual strategic research plans for pre-tenure faculty members applying for SSHRC funding to help them identify opportunities for funding, and review their grant proposals. This action has been implemented and we are executing it.
- Split the positions of ADR and PhD Director to allow the ADR more time to focus on these activities. This action has been implemented.

Lead: ADR

Medium term

- Develop a strategic research plan for the Faculty (see 3.3 below). Our current approach is to develop an overall strategic plan for the Faculty. Emerging out of this work will be a supplemental document that outlines the strategic research priorities. These should be aligned with the strategic research directions outlined by the institution, as well as extant and

growing strengths of our Faculty. We are now engaged in the process of developing the strategic plan for the Faculty.

- Develop individual strategic research plans for all faculty members, including those applying for SSHRC funding, to help them identify opportunities for funding, map out the foreseeable future, and review their grant proposals. We had previously developed individualized strategic plans for some faculty members on an ad hoc basis, and saw that this led to a significant level of success, particularly with tri-council funding. We will engage more faculty members with this initiative, beginning with pre-tenure faculty members, before moving to mid-career faculty members, and providing it as an option for more senior colleagues. Through this initiative we hope to raise faculty members' awareness of the wide range of SSHRC research programs available to them and encourage them to take advantage of the various types of research these programs support.
- Identify mechanisms for reducing the administrative load of tenure-track faculty members to enable them to devote more time to their research (see 3.2 below).

Lead: ADR

Longer term

- Implement and monitor the strategic research plan. We have begun developing a set of metrics that we can use to assess our progress towards improving the research climate at the Faculty.
- Conduct a comprehensive five-year review of the plan and revise accordingly

Lead: ADR

2.2 Faculty

Ensure that faculty of colour are not expected to fulfill students' needs regarding EDID issues; initiatives undertaken should be collaboratively developed and implemented

- Actions related to EDID issues are described below under 3.1 Relationships.

Make an accurate inventory of ACM and ICCIT faculty members' teaching in the M.I. program, and their other iSchool service contributions

Support integration and collaboration between tri-campus faculty members, including complementary scholarship and instruction

Broad recognition of scholarly equity among tri-campus faculty would lead to increased research cooperation within and across faculty groups, possibly including more Tri-Council grant collaborations and HQP funding

- Actions related to Tri-Campus issues are described below under 3.1 Relationships.

Provide course release for academic program directors to align with best practices at peer institutions and elsewhere within the University

- Actions related to faculty administrative workload and compensation are described below under 3.2 Organizational and Financial Structure.

Continuous teaching stream faculty appointments, including conversion of CLTAs, would help in retention of Indigenous faculty and faculty of colour

- Actions related to retention of Indigenous faculty and faculty of colour are described under 3.1 Relationships.

Provide mentorship and guidance for junior faculty members regarding the “changing balance of tenure-system life”, including adjustments over time in the relative emphasis on teaching vs. research, to help with faculty retention and career development

Immediate term

- Develop an onboarding handbook for new faculty members across the tri-campus that explains how things work at the University and Faculty levels (e.g., administrative structures, processes and procedures relating to teaching and research) and who does what (e.g., the role of the associate deans, program directors, concentration liaisons, student services and Dean’s office staff). See also 3.2 below.
- Create orientation sessions for new faculty that explain the handbook’s contents in more detail.
- Assign a faculty mentor to all assistant and associate faculty members.
- Hold meetings between the Dean and new assistant professor faculty members on a bi-monthly basis to discuss various aspects of faculty life including tenure and PTR processes.
- Hold meetings between the Dean and associate professors on a bi-monthly basis to discuss various issues relating to research, teaching and service loads and the path to full professorship.

Lead: Dean

Medium term

- Reduce teaching load of faculty in their first 5 years.
- Conduct annual interviews with new faculty during their pre-tenure period to identify and address any issues or challenges the faculty member may be experiencing.
- Identify university wide support structures for new faculty who come from underrepresented groups.

Lead: Dean

Longer term

- Monitor the impact of the actions described above and revise accordingly.
- Conduct a comprehensive five-year review of the immediate and medium term actions and revise accordingly.

Lead: Dean

3. Administration

3.1 Relationships

Focus EDID efforts towards a core set of goals, expressed in a strategic plan; the plan should create a framework for Faculty-wide and tri-campus conversations, provide a roadmap for necessary changes, include mechanisms for shared accountability, and connect with broader University EDID initiatives

Consider engaging third-party experts to moderate sensitive community-wide conversations about EDID and curriculum.

Selection process for EDID Director should be transparent, and include community-wide engagement around the scope and responsibilities of the role

Immediate term actions

- Hire a consultant to moderate community-wide conversations about EDID. In October 2020, the Dean hired two external consultants to facilitate conversations with faculty and staff and prepare a report outlining findings and recommendations. The consultants were chosen from a list of recommended consultants found on the ARDCO website. The consultants organized two community discussions with faculty and staff between October and December 2020 and submitted a report with findings and recommendations in February 2021. The new EDI Director is now reviewing the report as one of the preliminary steps in developing an EDI strategic plan.
- Hire a Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. This action has been implemented. The hiring process took place between January and April 2021: in January, the Dean invited two faculty members from St. George and UTM Campus, two graduate students (nominated by the MI and MMSt student associations), the Assistant Dean for Student Services, and Chief Administration Officer to serve on the Search Committee for EDI Director. Two central HR staff members: an Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) officer and the Executive Director, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, also participated in the search. The Committee was larger and more diverse than our previous PM searches. The Dean provided updates on the search at Faculty Meetings on January 21, March 18 and at Faculty Council on February 4 and March 25, 2021. The new EDI Director joined the Faculty in June 2021 and is currently meeting with staff and faculty one on one to solicit their views on the Faculty's current strengths and challenges in relation to equity, diversity and inclusion; their expectations concerning the role of the EDI Director, and priority areas requiring attention.

- Create new faculty positions in areas that **will** attract Black and Indigenous scholars, i.e., Black Studies and the Archive; Indigenous Data Sovereignty; Indigenous Knowledge Systems. these positions have now been approved and will be posted in Fall 2021. Racialized and Indigenous faculty members and doctoral students were asked to serve and provide guidance on these searches.
- Create an EDI Committee and a Truth and Reconciliation Committee as Standing Committees of Council.
- Create EDI fellowships for students.
- Initiate a process for incorporating EDI elements into the Faculty's program-level student learning outcomes with a view to integrating those elements into the content, delivery and assessment of the academic programs and ensuring that all the courses offered within those programs are in alignment with them.

Lead: Dean; ADA; Program Directors; EDI Director

Medium term

- Develop an EDI strategic plan that aligns with the recommendations of the Anti-Black Racism Task Force Report.
- Complete the process for incorporating EDI elements into the Faculty's program-level learning outcomes and integrating them into the curricula of those programs.
- Increase the number of racialized faculty and develop a strong mentoring program for new faculty from underrepresented groups.
- Work with UTL, Alumni Association and other stakeholders to increase the number of scholarships, awards and bursaries for students from underrepresented groups
- Require the completion of a minimum of one mandatory module on anti-Black racism every year by all academic administrators and senior administrative staff in the Faculty (this aligns with rec. 7.2 of the Anti-Black Racism Task Force Report).
- Organize an annual EDI Day where faculty and staff can receive EDI education and training

Lead: Dean; EDI Director; ADA; Program Directors; Assistant Dean, Student and Registrarial Services

Longer term

- Implement the EDI strategic plan and monitor its success
- Conduct a comprehensive five year review of the EDI strategic plan and revise accordingly

Lead: Dean; EDI Director; ADA; Program Directors; Awards Committee

Seek assistance from the School of Graduate Studies and the Provost's Office in the tri-campus Memorandum of Agreement process, to reach a sustainable, cooperative revenue and resource agreement balancing faculty academic access and iSchool revenue operations

Strong recommendation for all graduate faculty members to read the Tri-Campus Review Graduate Unit Working Group Report to understand complexities of tri-campus history, changing demographics, and relationships

Transparency and cooperation will be important factors in ongoing conversations regarding tri-campus dynamics; reviewers observe that to realize full potential, tri-campus iSchool community will need to recognize that "flagship/satellite configuration and its status presumptions no longer apply, and if continued will hinder integration and collaboration"

Recommendation to create a Memorandum of Cooperation to support culture shift and buy-in for tri-campus iSchool faculty, with input and commitment from participating Faculty and Unit leadership; the document could be drafted but not finalized until new iSchool Dean is appointed

Immediate term actions

- Operating within the framework of the *Tri Campus Review: Graduate Units Working Group Report* (Feb. 2020) and using the vehicle of the Tri-Campus Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), the Dean will work with the ICCIT/UTM and ACM/UTSc Deans to develop a tri-campus Memorandum of Agreement to support the culture shift recommended by the reviewers (this developmental work is already in process).
- Appoint ICCIT faculty in leadership roles (ICCIT faculty recently have been appointed to the positions of PhD Director, the MTC PhD concentration and the Critical Information Policy Studies (CIPS) MI concentration).
- Identify and track annual teaching and service related to the Masters' and PhD program by faculty at ICCIT and ACM.
- Establish a PhD funding model that allows the Faculty of Information to begin to take advantage of currently unfunded PhD slots to enable "lab model" faculty members across the tri-campus to recruit doctoral students more effectively and in an equitable way.
- Include ICCIT and ACM faculty in all the Faculty's onboarding initiatives for new faculty.

Lead: Dean; Tri-Campus Deans; PhD Director; MTC academic lead

Medium term actions

- Establish annual meetings of the FI Dean and the Directors of UTM and UTSc to implement the recommendations of the tri-campus review of programs.
- Monitor the success of the MOA in improving the relationship among faculty working on the three campuses.
- Develop research clusters across the three campuses to support integration and collaboration among tri-campus faculty.

Administrative Response to the External Review of the Faculty of Information

- Within the framework of the MOA, determine how PhD slots can be co-supported by these units more broadly—either directly, or through partial support provided through supervisors.

Lead: Dean; Tri-campus Deans; ADR; PhD Director

Longer term actions

- Conduct a comprehensive five-year review of the MOA and revise accordingly.

Lead: Dean

Conduct a survey of unique alumni involvements and visits to clarify participation, extend outreach, and reduce the per-alum expectation in FIAA activity

Immediate term actions

- The new Associate Director for Advancement (see 3.3 below) will conduct an alumni survey.

Reviewers agree with staff comments regarding the need to update the iSchool website to improve clarity, navigability, and community engagement

Immediate term actions

- In April 2021, the Faculty hired a new Communications Coordinator, whose job includes keeping the website up to date. This coordinator also has responsibility for executing the Faculty's social media strategy, which is designed to enhance engagement on all its platforms including the website. Analytics data shows the Faculty has so far succeeded in increasing engagement for all its social media accounts as well as directing users to specific pages on the website.
- In June 2021, the Faculty transferred the hosting of the website from a US-based service provider to a company located in Ontario. This was a preliminary step towards the ongoing revitalization of the website.
- In summer 2021 a Website Revitalization Committee (WRC) was struck to get the process of revitalizing the website underway. It is composed of faculty members, staff, and recent graduates and is chaired by the Senior Communications Officer. The Ultimate overseer of the WRC is the Dean. As the WRC goes about its work it will be seeking input from those responsible for the different sections of the website. For example, it will coordinate with the Associate Dean Research while working on the site's Research Section, the Careers Office while working on the site's Careers section, and the Alumni Association while working on the Alumni section. Ultimately, the WRC will be responsible for ensuring consistency and continuity throughout the website as well as compliance with best practices.
- As a first-step, the WRC sent out a questionnaire to all staff and faculty members and a sampling of students. The next step is for committee members approve an action plan, submit it to the Dean for approval, hire a contractor, and begin the process of redesigning the website and cleaning up the backend.

- The working schedule calls for the hiring of a contractor this fall. This contractor will be selected by the WRC and hired by the Chief Administrative Officer. The contractor's work will be supervised by the Senior Communications Officer, assisted by the Communication Coordinator. We anticipate that if the contractor is hired on schedule, the new revitalized website will be ready to launch in early 2022.
- Best practices will be established for updating the website, and quickly spotting and addressing clarity and navigation issues.
- Simultaneously, an audit will be carried out to ensure the writing quality on the current website is up to par. The Communications team will work with those responsible for different sections of the website to restructure and improve writing quality, starting with the most high-traffic web pages.
- Also simultaneously, the Communications team, working together with a newly-hired contractor, will begin immediately to try to address the website's most critical current problem – the failure of the site's search engine, which ceased to function this summer – and any other major problems that arise.

Medium term actions

- Launch of new website.
- Ongoing monitoring to ensure that best practices are being followed for the website with revisions undertaken as needed.

3.2 Organizational and financial structure

Reviewers emphasized the critical importance of completing the appointment of a new dean for the Faculty

Reviewers caution against “magical thinking” regarding the appointment of a new Dean and note they will need “room to learn, make decisions, make mistakes, and ultimately succeed in the role”

- The decanal search that was in progress this past year did not result in the appointment of a new Dean. Since a new decanal search will not take place for another two years, these recommendations are moot.

Leadership roles with broad, multi-dimensional responsibilities should be reviewed and adjusted as necessary to ensure appropriate workload

Where possible, consolidation of sub-disciplinary specialization areas may relieve “service fatigue” expressed by faculty in leadership roles

Provide leadership development opportunities for faculty seeking leadership positions

Immediate term actions

- Working within the framework of the Faculty's strategic plan (see 3.3 below), the following actions will be taken:

- Initiate a review of the MI concentrations with a view to making recommendations concerning whether and how they might be consolidated or organized into larger clusters.
- Initiate a review of the current concentrations in the PhD programs with a view to making recommendations concerning whether and how they might be consolidated or organized into larger clusters.
- Initiate a review of existing administrative staff roles with a view to identifying existing and potential staff who could assist directors and liaisons to reduce the workload related to their administrative roles.
- Provide a 0.5 course release to program directors and MI concentration liaisons for the larger concentrations on a one-year trial basis while the review of the academic administrative structure is ongoing.
- Identify workshops/opportunities available in the broader university community that focus on supporting new and emerging academic leaders (e.g., the Emerging Leaders Program offered through the Rotman School of Management; the New and Emerging Academic Leaders (NEAL) Program offered through the Centre for Faculty Development in the Temerty Faculty of Medicine).
- Assign an administrative mentor from outside the faculty to assist new faculty administrators in acclimating to their administrative role.

Lead: Dean; Program Directors and concentration liaisons in consultation with the ADA

Medium term

- Implement the recommendations of the above-mentioned reviews to create a more streamlined academic administrative structure.
- Increase the number of teaching stream faculty members who can serve in academic administrative roles which better align with their advancement goals and priorities

Longer term

- Monitor the new academic administrative structure and administrative staff roles and tweak as necessary. As part of that monitoring, conduct annual interviews with academic administrators to identify and address issues and challenges they may be experiencing in their roles.
- Undertake a comprehensive five-year review of the academic administrative structure and revise accordingly

Lead: Dean; Associate Deans; Program Directors

Cultivate a culture of financial accountability, trust, and appropriate transparency

Reviewers caution against continuation of “austerity culture” and note that the iSchool is positioned for a shift to “articulating the need and willingness to spend money (wisely) to meet growth, even as resources are set aside to support building renovation”

Immediate term actions

- The Dean is committing significant resources to increasing the faculty complement while ensuring the Faculty does not go into debt. In spring 2021, the Dean invited faculty members to serve on the Faculty Complement Planning Committee. The Committee met in June to discuss Faculty needs and possible hires. Based on their recommendations the Dean's Office surveyed faculty members to solicit their views on the Committee's recommended faculty hires. On the basis of that feedback the Dean slightly revised the Committee's recommendations and submitted a list of proposed faculty hires to the Provost. Provostial approval has now been given to hire seven new faculty members in the 2021-2022 academic year. In this year's Annual Budget Report, the Dean will request permission to hire five additional faculty members in the 2022-2023 academic year.

Consider staff suggestions to develop an iSchool online calendar, improve records management processes, and develop standardized onboarding processes for new faculty and staff in all positions

Immediate term actions

- Including a calendar as part of the new website is a top priority. Unfortunately, in the past, technical issues with the current website prevented developers from adding any of the most popular WordPress calendar widgets. The Communications Coordinator will investigate a possible temporary fix. WordPress and WordPress widgets are continually updated and it is possible that current calendar widgets may no longer cause the technical issues they have in the past. If possible, a temporary calendar will be launched.
- In Spring 2021, a graduate of the MI program was hired to design a SharePoint file repository. Administrative records located on shared drives were successfully migrated to SP and organized in accordance with an approved Records Plan. We also created a Collaboration Site on Share Point and will use it until the intranet is put in place for sharing documents.
- A standardized onboarding process has now been introduced for all new faculty and staff hires. The Dean met with new faculty hires twice over the summer, let them know she has an open door policy and that faculty should feel free to come to her with any questions. Mentors were assigned to all new hires and those who did not have mentor in the past (for all ranks: Assistant, Associate, CLTAs). See also

3.3 Long-range planning and overall assessment

Opportunity exists to develop intra-University relationships and partnerships; consider in particular the future of iSchool's relationships with University computer science units, and possible roles in new data science initiatives

Immediate term actions

- Over the past several months the Faculty of Information has begun the work of developing intra-University relationships and partnerships and has actively pursued participation in a number of University-wide ISI initiatives. It is now an institutional partner in the Data Sciences Institute (DSI) and a contributor to the Critical Digital Humanities Initiative (CDHI). In addition, nine faculty members have been appointed as faculty affiliates with the Schwartz-Reisman Institute for Technology and Society.
- Connect Faculty and faculty members with the Black Research Network, the Indigenous Research Network and other emerging research networks that align with the disciplinary and professional interests of the the Faculty of Information

Work to optimize alumni development/advancement opportunities and consider a fundraising campaign

Immediate term actions

- Hire an Associate Director of Advancement as part of 2025 campaign work to identify a unique brand for the Faculty of Information.
- Create two additional staff positions to support advancement work.

Begin individual and group contemplation and discussion of iSchool's long-term strategy, in preparation to continue strategic planning after new Dean is appointed

- While the recent decanal search in the Faculty of Information did not result in the appointment of a new Dean, the Faculty is moving forward on strategic planning. Dean Duff, who has agreed to continue as Dean for another two years, will lead this work.

Immediate term actions

- Begin the process for developing a strategic plan for the Faculty. At the end of August 2021, the Faculty held a very successful strategic planning session to brainstorm ideas. During the planning session faculty members engaged in a number of activities aimed at identifying strategic priorities and priority enablers. This planning exercise has laid the groundwork for the next step in the strategic planning process.
- Hire a consultant to facilitate the strategic planning process in order to develop a clear vision, mission, values, and strategic directions. The Faculty is currently in the final stages of hiring the consultant who will report to the Faculty's Strategic Planning Committee (chaired by the Dean). Over the next six months, the consultant will carry out the following tasks:
 - ✓ Review the findings of the 2020 Self Study
 - ✓ Review the recommendations of the 2021 External Review of the Faculty of Information
 - ✓ Review the most recent academic plan
 - ✓ Review the Faculty of Information's select operating infrastructure and make recommendations for optimizing its effectiveness
 - ✓ Identify the key participants to be interviewed and/or be involved in focus groups
 - ✓ Develop an interview guide

- ✓ Develop goals and actions based on the strategic priorities
- ✓ Organize and facilitate two strategic planning retreats with key stakeholders (first within 1 month of the start of this project, the second within 4 months)
- ✓ The first retreat should accomplish the following: Establish the Faculty's vision, mission and values and confirm the priorities established based on the Self Study and External Review.
- ✓ The second retreat should accomplish the following: Test goals, strategic priorities, directions and actions over the next 5 years
- ✓ Draft and finalize the strategic plan within 2 months after the second strategic planning retreat
- ✓ Provide recommendations for the development of an implementation plan to move the Faculty of Information's strategic plan forward, including key action steps, timelines, and accountabilities

Medium-term actions

- Complete and implement the Strategic Plan and identify performance measures

Longer term

- Monitor the implementation of the Strategic plan and revise accordingly.

3. Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

This section will be inserted after AP&P by the VPAP office using language verbatim from the approved Report of the meeting.

4. Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers praised the Faculty's tremendous recent success in program development, international student recruitment, and faculty and staff renewal; the modernization of program curricula to meet growing demand in contemporary sub-disciplines such as human-computer interaction and data science; the bright, engaged, and socially conscious students; the "demanding and holistic" admission requirements across all programs; the dramatic increases in PhD and MI program applications since the previous review; and the first-rate recruitment for tenure-/teaching-stream and CLTA positions, resulting in ambitious and creative new faculty hires. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: optimizing and stabilizing co-op placement opportunities for students in the M.I. program; addressing variations in the nature of faculty work within the discipline and tensions around faculty growth and doctoral admissions; addressing student concerns around a mismatch between Ph.D. program requirements and expected time-to-completion; providing additional support to Ph.D. students whose research was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; consolidating certain specialization areas to alleviate service fatigue; supporting faculty serving in administrative or leadership roles; increasing faculty participation in Tri-Council-funded research projects; supporting and enhancing tri-campus relationships in the area of information, technology, communication and media studies; encouraging community-wide conversations on curricular EDID matters and developing a faculty-wide EDID strategic plan; providing guidance for junior faculty on the changing balance of tenure-stream life; and clarifying the Faculty's distinctive strengths "in the present and the intended future". The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty, unit and programs' responses to the reviewers' recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5. Monitoring and Date of Next Review

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs on the status of the implementation plans, due midway between the year of the last and next site visits.

The next review will be commissioned for a site visit to take place no later than eight years from February 2021.

6. Distribution

On **date**, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the Dean of the Faculty of Information, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance.

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan - DRAFT

1. Review Summary

<p>Programs Reviewed:</p>	<p>Emmanuel College:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Divinity • Master of Pastoral Studies (including Category 2 Certificate in Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy) • Master of Sacred Music • Master of Theological Studies • Certificate in Theological Studies • Master of Theology • Master of Arts in Theological Studies • Doctor of Ministry • Doctor of Philosophy in Theological Studies <p>Knox College:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Divinity • Master of Pastoral Studies (including Category 2 Certificate in Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy) • Master of Religious Education • Master of Theological Studies • Certificate in Theological Studies • Master of Theology • Master of Arts in Theological Studies • Doctor of Ministry • Doctor of Philosophy in Theological Studies <p>Regis College:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Arts in Ministry & Spirituality • Master of Divinity • Master of Theological Studies • Certificate in Theological Studies • Master of Theology • Master of Arts in Theological Studies • Doctor of Ministry • Doctor of Philosophy in Theological Studies
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	<p>St. Augustine’s Seminary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Divinity • Master of Religious Education • Master of Theological Studies • Certificate in Theological Studies <p>University of St. Michael’s College:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Divinity • Master of Religious Education • Master of Theological Studies • Certificate in Theological Studies • Master of Theology • Master of Arts in Theological Studies • Doctor of Ministry • Doctor of Philosophy in Theological Studies <p>University of Trinity College:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Divinity • Master of Theological Studies • Certificate in Theological Studies • Master of Theology • Master of Arts in Theological Studies • Doctor of Ministry • Doctor of Philosophy in Theological Studies <p>Wycliffe College:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Divinity • Master of Theological Studies • Certificate in Theological Studies • Master of Theology • Master of Arts in Theological Studies • Doctor of Ministry • Doctor of Philosophy in Theological Studies
Division Offering Programs:	Toronto School of Theology
Commissioning Officer:	Vice-President and Provost
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helen Bond, Professor of Christian Origins and Head of the School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh • Pamela Cooper-White, Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Dean, Union Theological Seminary

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garth Green, John W. McConnell Professor of Philosophy of Religion and Director of the School of Religious Studies, McGill University • Gregory E. Sterling, Lillian Claus Professor of New Testament and Reverend Henry L. Slack Dean of Yale Divinity School, Yale University
Date of Review Visit:	March 8-12, 2021
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 26, 2021

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: January 10-11, 2012

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths:

- Small-group study
- Co-curricular activities
- Opportunities for personal growth outside the classroom

Opportunities for Program Enhancement:

- Addressing the “below standard” quality of the Doctor of Ministry and Doctor of Theology, including closing the Doctor of Theology program
- Addressing the number of students who are admitted to the conjoint Doctor of Theology program but subsequently transfer to and graduate from the PhD program solely offered by the University of St. Michael’s College
- Developing a process to ensure that faculty involved in the offering of conjoint degrees meet U of T standards for research, teaching and other qualifications
- Creating a conjoint PhD (and also possibly a conjoint MA) program
- Coordinating and streamlining course and program offerings across TST member colleges, including differentiating between and articulating common educational standards and purposes for basic (i.e. second entry undergraduate) and advanced (i.e. graduate) degrees
- Developing a faculty renewal plan across TST member colleges to support coordinated, streamlined program offerings
- Improving the research profile of the faculty to increase the number of grant applications and number of externally funded research grants
- Developing a TST long-range plan

- Developing TST and U of T's relationship in alignment with Towards 2030, including exploring models for a closer relationship that could serve a range of academic, professional and external communities

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

- Review Terms of Reference
- Site Visit Schedule
- Self-study and appendices, including access to course descriptions and faculty CV's
- Previous review report (2012) including administrative response
- Towards 2030: The View from 2012 - An Assessment of the University of Toronto's Progress Since Towards 2030

Consultation Process

- Vice President and Provost
- Acting Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
- Director, TST
- Senior Executive Council
- Governance Committee and Faculty Assembly Executive
- Basic Degree Council
- Program Directors and Coordinators
- Basic Degree Students
- Basic Degree Alumni
- Graduate Studies Council / Centre for Study of Ministry
- Graduate Centre for Theological Studies Staff
- Graduate Students
- Graduate Alumni
- Vice-Dean, Programs and Innovation, School of Graduate Studies
- Academic Deans
- Emmanuel College Faculty
- Knox College Faculty
- St. Michael's College Faculty
- Regis College Faculty
- Trinity College Faculty
- Wycliffe College Faculty
- St. Augustine's Seminary Faculty
- TST Staff
- Chair, Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations
- Chair, Department for the Study of Religion
- Director, Centre for Medieval Studies

- Dean, Faculty of Music
- TST Library Committee & Librarians
- TST Member college Registrars

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ High quality programs
 - ▶ Successful program delivery through “abundant good will,” coordination and commitment of TST and member colleges
- Innovation
 - ▶ Master of Sacred Music (M.S.M.) noted as innovative program
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Very high levels of student engagement and appreciation across all programs
 - ▶ “Students value small courses, extensive access to engaged faculty, and a vital combination of intellectual enquiry and professional experience”
 - ▶ Alumni appreciate “the ecumenical nature of the consortium, the close sense of community, and excellent libraries”
- Student funding
 - ▶ Generous funding package for Knox College Master of Divinity students

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Minimum GPA requirement of 2.7 for undergraduate programs “risks appearing as a very low standard” relative to both the University and to international peer institutions
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Reviewers express concern regarding the number of courses taught by non-core faculty, particularly in certain subject areas
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Reviewers note lack of diversity among students and faculty
 - ▶ Promotion of diversity (racial, cultural, gender, LGBTQ+) not seen to be a point of emphasis in student recruitment or curriculum development
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Reviewers restate concern from previous review regarding a lack of clear communication about the distinctiveness of TST’s master’s degree programs

- Student funding
 - ▶ Student funding levels unsustainably low, particularly for international students
 - ▶ Issues of affordability for international students lead to a predominantly local student body relative to the rest of the University and to the city of Toronto

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Increase minimum GPA for admission to undergraduate programs to 3.0 as a better indicator of academic rigour, while continuing to interpret each applicant's GPA against their overall application
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Continue to advance curricular reform, cross-registrations, and co-teaching across the consortium to support the ecumenical spirit of the consortium and emerging inter-faith opportunities
 - ▶ Reduce the number of degree programs offered; encourage use of streams or tracks within programs, to cover a wider variety of subject areas while reducing costs and administrative overhead
 - ▶ Where possible given theological/ecclesiastical constraints, increase development of courses intended to be shared by two or more member colleges
 - ▶ Standardize instruction in Greek and Hebrew
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Support and encourage recruitment of a more diverse student body and faculty complement
 - ▶ Develop streams/tracks within programs to attract and foster full participation of students of all genders and gender identities
- Student funding
 - ▶ Prioritize increasing financial aid availability, to improve students' experience and to continue attracting high-quality students
 - ▶ Investigate possibility of reducing disparities in tuition between national and international students

2. Graduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ High quality programs
 - ▶ Successful program delivery through "abundant good will," coordination and commitment of TST and member colleges
- Curriculum and program delivery

- ▶ University of Toronto faculty serving on Ph.D. committees expressed high praise for TST doctoral students' preparation and scholarly excellence
- ▶ Closure of Th.D. program and focus on conjoint Ph.D. program a positive development, and consistent with practices at other international peer institutions
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Very high levels of student engagement and appreciation across all programs
 - ▶ "Students value small courses, extensive access to engaged faculty, and a vital combination of intellectual enquiry and professional experience"
 - ▶ Alumni appreciate "the ecumenical nature of the consortium, the close sense of community, and excellent libraries"
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ TST has been successful in placing Ph.D. graduates in a wide variety of employment settings

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Reviewers express concern regarding the number of courses taught by non-core faculty, particularly in certain subject areas
 - ▶ Reviewers express reservations about the high number of graduate programs offered
 - ▶ D.Min. may not be "the optimal choice" as an advanced professional degree offering
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Reviewers note lack of diversity among students and faculty
 - ▶ Promotion of diversity (racial, cultural, gender, LGBTQ+) not seen to be a point of emphasis in student recruitment or curriculum development
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Some Ph.D. student reports of "loneliness and lack of mentoring"
- Student funding
 - ▶ Problematic disparities in availability of graduate funding between member colleges
 - ▶ Overall funding levels are unsustainably low and not competitive with international peer institutions, limiting TST's ability to attract top students and to recruit students from a diverse range of backgrounds

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Objectives
 - ▶ Doctoral programs should aim to prepare students for a broad range of career options
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Increase selectivity in doctoral program admissions
 - ▶ Evaluate doctoral admission rates in light of decreasing availability of academic positions for graduates
- Curriculum and program delivery

- ▶ Consider whether an advanced one-year master's degree would be preferable to the D.Min.
- ▶ Where possible given theological/ecclesiastical constraints, increase development of courses intended to be shared by two or more member colleges
- ▶ Standardize instruction in Greek and Hebrew
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Support and encourage recruitment of a more diverse student body and faculty complement
- Student funding
 - ▶ Explore options for increased funding for graduate students to remain competitive and to attract and retain a diverse student population
 - ▶ Consider alternate funding structures in order to equalize funding for students in the same program across the member colleges

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ Faculty are invested in programs and students' success
 - ▶ Faculty complement includes renowned scholars and passionate instructors

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Research
 - ▶ Uneven faculty grants and publication activity
- Faculty
 - ▶ Significant concerns raised regarding graduate faculty appointments, including a lack of clarity about the appointments process and frustration with existing requirements
 - ▶ Reviewers heard anecdotally about challenges identifying supervisors and composing doctoral committees
 - ▶ Inconsistent tenure processes across member colleges
 - ▶ Student:faculty ratio is significantly higher than at international peer institutions

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
 - ▶ Encourage broader discussions among faculty and University colleagues regarding opportunities for external grant income and dissemination of research
 - ▶ Explore ways to stimulate a more vibrant research culture at TST
- Faculty
 - ▶ Actively promote diversity in future faculty complement planning and recruitment across all faculty ranks

- ▶ Calibrate teaching load requirements across faculty ranks to support research productivity
- ▶ Where possible, consider possibilities for harmonizing faculty ranks across member colleges, and aligning with those at the University
- ▶ Consider options for streamlining the graduate faculty appointment process including increased involvement from the TST Director's office
- ▶ Improve communications regarding the graduate faculty appointments process
- ▶ Undertake a coordinated, strategic faculty complement planning exercise that includes consideration of the current high faculty-student ratio, anticipated retirements, and the diversity of the faculty complement
- ▶ Increase collaborative relationship with the University through strategic hiring of cross-appointed faculty

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Impressive *esprit de corps* within TST, reflected by a shared commitment “to create and sustain a theological enterprise that can compete and make a difference on an international level”
 - ▶ Strong relationship between TST and the University
 - ▶ Talented, committed TST Director is held in high esteem
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Effective functioning of “extraordinarily complex administrative entity” is possible through good will and talent of administrative leadership and staff
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ High quality of TST consortium and programs is “evident and unimpeachable”
 - ▶ TST possesses both a historical tradition of excellence and a current, resource-rich situation
 - ▶ TST's delivery of a “transformative education” aligns with University's mission statement and provides a basis for a renewal of understanding and collaboration between TST and the University
 - ▶ Commendable ongoing initiatives undertaken by TST and member colleges to increase curriculum integration and encourage faculty collaboration
- International comparators
 - ▶ “TST sets a standard for quality in theological education in Canada, and is one of very few institutions that can aspire to this same profile internationally.”

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Reviewers note “room for improvement” in the relationship between TST and the University and how each perceives the other

- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Large number of degree programs offered creates unwieldy and costly bureaucratic structure
 - ▶ Elimination of departments following previous review noted as a concern by some faculty members
 - ▶ Reviewers note significant challenges arising from organizational structure in which TST, particularly the Director's office, "shoulders decanal responsibility for quality assurance of both graduate and second-entry undergraduate degrees" but has little economic or jurisdictional authority of its own
 - "All of the pressures of the complex system, that involves the member colleges and UT, converge upon the central point of the TST Director's office, which is in certain respects the weakest rather than the strongest node in the system."

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Explore possibilities for closer mutual collaboration and cooperative governance between TST and the University, including where TST could provide or contribute to University facilities and programs, and where University resources may be opened up to TST faculty
 - ▶ Encourage TST students to take full advantage of available University resources, including taking University courses in related fields
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Consider changes to TST's organizational structure in order to address administrative, academic, and financial challenges of current model:
 - Strengthen TST central administration, including expanding the position of TST Director, with independent budget and revenue stream and involvement in graduate faculty appointment process
 - Bring the advanced graduate programs (PhD and MA) formally under TST as a degree granting entity
 - Member colleges should remain independent and continue oversight of basic/advanced professional degrees
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Implicit bias training and proactive recruitment to increase racial-ethnic and gender diversity should be a priority
 - ▶ Improved data collection and presentation to allow more detailed internal (i.e., across the member colleges) and external comparisons of TST programs is recommended for future reviews
 - ▶ Strong recommendation to develop a long-range strategic plan
- International comparators
 - ▶ Improvements to administrative model will enable TST to advance its degree programs and be a leader among North American peer institutions

2. Administrative Response & Implementation Plan



Toronto School of Theology

GRADUATE CENTRE FOR THEOLOGICAL STUDIES
CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF MINISTRY

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September 8, 2021

Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
University of Toronto

Dear Vice-Provost McCahan,

I am pleased to offer the Toronto School of Theology's UTQAP Administrative Response, on behalf of the Toronto School of Theology and its member colleges.

Introduction and Context: We conducted our UTQAP self-study while pivoting to remote functions, largely in the first year of the COVID pandemic. Despite that dual process, the TST community poured its energy into representing its accomplishments and continuous improvement since the 2011 UTQAP. The review team visited virtually, under difficult circumstances, and we appreciate their extraordinary effort to provide a constructive and comprehensive review, first meeting with us virtually, then meeting among themselves to determine what they had heard and how they should respond. We appreciate their willingness to contribute to this review under such circumstances. Furthermore, the office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs supervised this and many reviews while pivoting the entire university through the pandemic crisis. Despite their work overload, they remained cheerful and helpful throughout – a monumental task for which we are grateful.

TST has committed itself to the goal of continuous improvement as an intrinsic value and good. This reality contributed to the review team recognizing both our international standing as leaders in theological education and the “unimpeachable” quality of our programs. The university's request for administrative response intersects with ongoing initiatives and provides an impetus to begin some long-range conversations.

The review report and Request for Administrative Response has been reviewed by and responded to by the Senior Executive Council (SEC), TST Board of Trustees (BOT) and its Executive Committee, Basic Degree Council (BDC), DMin Advisory Committee, and the Faculty Assembly (FA) its Executive (FAE), the Registrars, and various staff. Those conversations specifically inform this response. Below, we have listed project leads, who must be consulted throughout the seven-college consortium, and what body confirms the decisions. It goes without saying that the TST Executive Director (TST ED) will work with all leads listed below and that academic decisions go through the U of T governing process. Administrative decisions are reviewed in the yearly joint MOA committee between U of T and TST, which will be the formal body providing accountability for

research, analysis, conversation and decisions taken as a result of this review. In the charts below we have estimated timelines necessary for the full completion of the projects but would note that incremental steps toward each goal may be taken as we gain knowledge and experience.

We were asked to comment on the following:

1. The reviewers recommended implementing more rigorous entrance criteria for the conjoint SEUG programs, noting that the relatively low minimum admission standards may impact the programs' reputation for academic excellence.

The reviewers' recommendation must be considered in relationship to student success, the mission of the schools, and the nature of the degrees. We will take an evidenced-based approach to evaluating this recommendation. The result of this research, analysis and conversation will be incorporated into #2 and #9, below.

Lead	Time Frame	Resources needed	Governance, organizational or policy changes	Other Comments
Lead: TST Registrar Consult: SEC, Basic Degree Council (BDC) Confirm: AC	Intermediate, two years (including six months for analysis, six months for conversation)	Time and energy	Admissions policy	Research needed; must weigh reputation, student success and mission of the schools

2. The reviewers commented on the large number of programs offered and noted less than ideal communication regarding differentiation between these programs. They recommended that the number of SEUG degree programs be reduced, with increased development of sub-specializations (e.g., streams) within programs.

They argued this change would clarify communication and reduce administration. This recommendation extends a conversation TST has had about the possibilities and obstacles to further collaboration about courses (which was commended by the reviewers) into an area not explored, the consolidation of SEUG degrees (as our curricular focus since the last UTQAP stayed on development and closure of graduate degrees). It extends a conversation already in progress between Regis College and St. Michael's College about alignment of degrees for alliance purposes. The Basic Degree Council had significant conversation about this proposal on August 17, 2021 and agreed to use the 2021-2022 academic year to create a feasibility study and potential master plan for such a reduction. Dr. Josephine Lombardi, faculty person who has taught theology and religious education at St. Augustine's Seminary, will lead this work in the 2021-2022 academic year. The

analysis will focus on whether the MTS could house all two-year academic degrees and MPS could house programs in spiritual care, spirituality, arts, religious education, and urban development. Part of that plan will include the additional human and financial resources necessary to undertake the work of major modifications of these degrees and then closing the degrees they replace. TST is not currently staffed for the paperwork in such a large overhaul. We will include in our analysis whether, in the long run, consolidation of programs will reduce faculty administration in the service of faculty research, #5, below.

Lead	Time Frame	Resources needed	Governance, organization or policy changes	Other comments
Lead: Josephine Lombardi, faculty, SAS Consult: BDC, SEC Confirm: AC; through SEC, Governing boards at member colleges;	Long term (5 years minimum)	At least one additional TST staff person, additional technology, plus course releases for faculty leadership	Possible increased responsibilities for BDC chair; course release	Research needed; Requires significant additional funding

3. The reviewers acknowledged that revisions to the DMin are currently in progress but noted that the DMin may not be the “optimal choice for the advanced professional degree.”

Our research on the DMin revision is significantly underway. We have created an advisory committee of faculty with DMin students and alums to augment the work of the Center for the Study of Ministry. We are informed by not only our review of our own DMin but by a report we have since commissioned (reported to faculty, June 2021) on a comparison of the DMin and religious professional degrees in Canada, the United States, Australia and Great Britain. We have also reviewed comparisons to new professional doctorates at the U of T. The DMin Advisory Committee of faculty, students and alums met on August 19, 2021, to discuss the emerging outline. Our alums and students clearly want a full doctoral degree, with a significant research component focused on professional issues and audiences and are not in favor of a one-year degree as proposed by the review committee. The outline considers a number of other names, such a “Doctor of Professional Religious Practice”—no consensus has been reached. After one more meeting with faculty, we will be ready for the discussion of an “outline” with the office of the U of T Vice-Provost, Academic Programs.

Leads	Time Frame	Resources needed	Governance, organizational or policy changes	Other comments
Lead: TST ED Consult: D Min Advisory; SEC, CSM; GSC Confirm: Academic Council	intermediate; two years	Faculty dedicated to following current students, writing the proposal, and closing the current program	Possible incorporation of CSM in GCTS; possible designation of professional faculty	Research has is nearing completion; a new proposal will be forthcoming in this academic year

4. The reviewers urged TST and the member colleges to make student financial aid a major goal, noting that current funding levels limit the graduate programs' ability to attract top-quality students and students from more diverse backgrounds; they also recommended providing consistent levels of financial support within each program, across the member colleges.

We have gathered initial data and will develop an advisory committee that includes students.

Leads	Time Frame	Resources needed	Governance, Organizational, Policy changes	Other comments
Lead: Stephen Andrews, Principal, Wycliffe College Consult: SEC, TST finance committee, member college governing boards Confirm: TST BOT	Report on directions forward: 2021-2022 academic year. Implementing directions, TBA	Development office, MOA	Intercollegiate advancement support	Research needed that compares current levels of support. As financial support is situated in every school, this recommendation involves a feasibility study by advancement and member colleges

5. The reviewers recommended a number of strategies for supporting faculty research productivity, including adjustments to course load expectations and alignment of the sabbatical policy with peer institutions; they also suggested exploring options for leveraging University resources to support TST faculty research activity.

The August 18, 2021 Faculty Assembly (FA) specifically encouraged further collegial conversation in Research and Teaching Area (RTA) collegial group and assistance with individual grant support. Monthly RTA meetings have been added to the academic calendar, and a new section on faculty research interests will be added to the website. It suggested a comparison of research supports, including teaching loads and sabbatical policies, across member colleges; this data must be gathered. The FA identified the major obstacle to research as large administrative loads that TST faculty carry.

Leads	Time Frame	Resources needed	Governance, Organizational and Policy Changes	Other comments
Lead: TST ED Consult: FA, SEC, MOA Committee of BOT Confirm: FA, member college governing boards for changes in faculty policies	Intermediate (2-3 years, given some significant faculty load change proposals)	Analysis, SEC, Governing boards	In member colleges	Research comparing supports across member colleges needed; Goal should be an overall plan for supporting faculty research; New conversations needed prior to MOA negotiations

6. The reviewers recommended clearer communication regarding the graduate faculty appointment process and suggested ways to improve the process itself.

This recommendation intersects with conversations that have been in process for more than a year. A revision of the 2015 Policy for Academic Appointments has been sent to the principals and graduate directors for conversations in individual faculties in September 2021. The proposal is ready to move through the usual academic committees; with adoption this fall. In addition, TST is planning for an online portal for TST and graduate appointments that will facilitate gathering the correct information from member colleges.

Leads	Time Frame	Resources needed	Governance, Organizational and Policy changes	Other comments
Lead: TST ED Consult: SEC, Graduate Appointments Committee (GAC) Confirm: AC	Immediate (six months)		Revision to guidelines was worked on in 2020-2021	Conversations have been largely concluded; policy revision can go to SEC and faculty for comment, to AC meeting in September and October

7. The reviewers strongly recommended a proactive approach to increasing diversity, of all forms, within the TST community. They encouraged TST to prioritize diversity in their recruitment and support of students, faculty, and staff.

We are engaging in further research and analysis about our strengths and weaknesses in this area. In conversation with SEC last spring, we discovered that individual schools have significant efforts that have not been shared consortium-wide. We are contracting with our auditors, Grant Thornton, who will conduct an audit of efforts in which the member colleges are already engaging independently and help us to devise a hiring policy connected with item 9, below. Our analysis of curriculum will be connected with #2, above.

Lead	Time Frame	Resources needed	Governance, Organization and policy changes	Other comments
Lead: TST ED Consult: SEC, FA, BOT Confirm: BOT and college governing boards	Audit: immediate (six months); strategic plan (2 years); Implementation involves ongoing commitment; yearly activities	Funding; Conversation is significant in member colleges. Time to create collaboration.	Culture more than policy; strategic plan	Research needed that compares what individual colleges are currently doing; from this "audit," a master plan can be developed in relationship to

				Student Enrollment Management, Hiring, and Intercultural Competency
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8. The reviewers recommended strengthening the position of TST Director and working to fund an independent budget for TST's central administration.

This represents two different recommendations, as the position of the role and authority of the TST Director has been complicated by governance and cultural, in addition to economic issues.

The reviewers' most far-reaching proposal is to amend the Acts of Parliament and corporate documents to federate TST so that TST is its own degree granting institution (along the model of the Graduate Theological Union, the closest comparator to TST). While the TST Governance Committee has taken steps to strengthen central administration, *we do not believe that, in our Canadian context, this highly time-consuming proposal would improve quality or otherwise lead to a simplified TST*. Parties consulted do agree with the reviewers that finding *other* ways to simplify TST would benefit students, faculty and staff and increase the quality of the educational experience.

TST wishes to note that TST reviewers commented significantly on the structure of TST but did not comment in the review on the creation of the Graduate Centre for Theological Studies (GCTS), the central unit that administers the graduate degrees. The GCTS was originally set designed to mirror a university division. In practice, the structure is not quite suited to a separately incorporated, social capital corporation that aligns with University of Toronto's standards but is constituted by a consortium of member colleges. (See UTQAP, Appendix D1, Emerging Questions for Enhancement).

Several governance changes in the last year are designed to support the TST Director. The Governance Board of Trustees has renamed the TST Director as Executive Director and the Graduate Director as Associate Director, Graduate Programs, in a collaborative model with new job descriptions. The TST Executive Director (TST ED) now is responsible for graduate faculty appointments. The TST ED works with the Senior Executive Council (SEC), which is now a formal committee of the BOT, charged with the management of human and other resources. It works in bicameral relationship with the newly reconstituted Academic Council, which as of September 2021 will primarily be made up of faculty and CAO's (who have nonvoting status on the SEC). While the TST ED is primarily responsible for faculty issues and the AD, GP is primarily responsible for student issues, both work on policy and consult on complicated situations. The TST Executive Director does not directly manage GCTS faculty resources (as was originally projected but never successfully enacted) but brings the needs of TST to the SEC, who then respond by allocating

faculty resources to meet those needs. By formalizing the SEC, TST can revise and redistribute the responsibilities of the Curriculum Committee, whose current mandate has frustrated community members and the committee alike. A proposal to redistribute the Curriculum Committee responsibilities between the SEC and faculty Research and Teaching Areas will be forthcoming in the immediate (six month) time frame.

Lead, Consultation, Confirmation	Time Frame	Resources needed	Governance, organizational or policy changes	Other comments
Lead: TST Governance Committee, Consult: TST ED, SEC, RTAs Confirm: Academic Council	Immediate (six months)	Time and Conversation	Curriculum Committee functions redistributed to the SEC (who manage faculty course loads) and to the RTAs (collegial teaching grounds)	Proposal to be presented in early Fall

Governance changes to strengthen the TST Director—including a title change to TST Executive Director—have already occurred. Cultural issues and economic issues will be discussed, in part, as the search for the next director is launched in Fall 2021.

Lead	Time Frame	Resources needed	Governance, Organization and Policy Changes	Other Comments
Lead: BOT (Governance and Chair) Consult: SEC, AC Approve: BOT	Governance: immediate. Cultural and Financial: long term	For independent funding: New Advancement Committee	Director's Authority: A reorganization that strengthens the Executive Director has been approved; a proposal for funding needs to be considered	Really two recommendations: one was organizational and the other is financial.

9. The reviewers recommended development of a long-range plan, including a plan for faculty complement renewal, and offered a number of suggestions to inform future planning at TST.

SEC discusses faculty renewal regularly, but a longer term, collaborative plan, that includes diversity planning, must start in collaborative Strategic Enrollment Planning and Management so that we know what we are planning for. These conversations have begun in SEC.

Lead	Time Frame	Resource needed	Governance, Organization and Policy Changes	Other Comments
Lead: TST Registrar and TST ED; Consult: SEC, AC, TST Registrars Confirm: SEC, BOT	Intermediate— 2-3 years	Staff time; funding for consultation	Unknown	We began conversations last year about Strategic Enrollment Planning and Management—a necessary first step before determining an overall faculty renewal plan; need time in SEC devoted to this planning

10. The reviewers made a number of comments and suggestions regarding the academic and financial relationship between TST and the University of Toronto while acknowledging the complexities of TST’s consortium model. They suggested ways to strengthen the relationship between the two institutions that may inform the Memorandum of Agreement renewal process.

The committee that will renegotiate the MOA between the TST member colleges and the University of Toronto is being formed. Negotiations will be concluded by July 1, 2022. We expect each side to bring to the table its concerns and expectations, and we will address items from the UTQAP review at that time. This process continues with a yearly joint committee meeting at which any emerging concerns are addressed.

Lead	Time Frame	Resource needed	Governance, Organization and Policy Changes	Other comments
Lead: MOA Committee Consult: SEC, TST Finance Committee Confirm: BOT	Immediate – six months			in the last year the GRATE formula and the formula of in- kind contributions of member colleges has been under review

I submit this response on behalf of the Toronto School of Theology and its member colleges.

Sincerely,



Pamela Couture
Toronto School of Theology Executive Director

3. Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

This section will be inserted after AP&P by the VPAP office using language verbatim from the approved Report of the meeting.

4. Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers praised the TST consortium, commenting that the high quality of the conjoint programs is “evident and unimpeachable”; they remarked that TST “sets a standard for quality in theological education in Canada, and is one of very few institutions that can aspire to this same profile internationally;” they commended the high level of faculty and student engagement in all programs, and noted that “students value small courses, extensive access to engaged faculty, and a vital combination of intellectual enquiry and professional experience”; finally, they praised the quality and the spirit of cooperation demonstrated by TST personnel, observing that despite its complexity, TST “continues to function well as a result of the good will and talent of a large number of people.” The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: implementing more rigorous entrance criteria for the conjoint programs; reducing the number of degree programs, with increased development of sub-specializations; continuing with revisions to the D.Min; prioritizing student financial aid as a major goal and providing consistent levels of financial support across the member colleges; exploring strategies to support faculty research productivity; providing clearer communication regarding the graduate faculty appointment process; undertaking a proactive approach to increasing diversity across the TST community; strengthening the position of TST Director, and working to fund an independent budget for TST’s central administration; developing a long-range plan, including a plan for faculty complement renewal; and strengthening and clarifying the relationship between TST and the University of Toronto in ways that might inform the MOA renewal process. The Dean’s Administrative Response describes the Faculty, unit and programs’ responses to the reviewers’ recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5. Monitoring and Date of Next Review

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs on the status of the implementation plans, due midway between the year of the last and next site visits.

The next review will be commissioned for a site visit to take place no later than eight years from March 2021.

6. Distribution

On **date**, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the TST Executive Director, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Executive Director provided the link to the heads of the TST member colleges.

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan - DRAFT

1. Review Summary

Programs Reviewed:	Anthropology – General, BA (Hons): Major, Minor Anthropology – Society, Culture & Language, BA (Hons): Specialist, Major Archaeology, BA (Hons): Specialist, Major, Minor Environmental Anthropology, BA (Hons): Minor Anthropology – Evolutionary, BSc (Hons): Major Anthropology, MA Anthropology, MSc Anthropology, PhD
Unit Reviewed:	Department of Anthropology
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Richard L. Burger, Department of Anthropology, Yale University 2. Thomas J. Csordas, Department of Anthropology, UC San Diego 3. Laurie A. Wilkie, Anthropology Department, UC Berkeley
Date of Review Visit:	October 28 & 30, 2020
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 26, 2021

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: January 12-13, 2012

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Programs

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Well conceptualized undergraduate programs

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Ensuring that BSc students have the same exposure to issues around knowledge production and ethics as students from other program options

2. Graduate Programs

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Excellence in graduate education; “incredibly high” rates of competitive external funding for graduate students

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Finding ways to foster stronger links within doctoral cohorts
- Reviewing the major research paper requirement for the master’s programs

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Top tier status of Department relative to others in Anglophone anthropology
- Excellence in research; “incredible growth” of faculty research funding

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Ensuring that permanent faculty are teaching substantively at the undergraduate level

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- “Impressive” array of international learning opportunities for students
- High morale

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Ensuring that the student funding model is aligned with the program’s goals for students and faculty, and international student enrolment
- Exploring ways to enhance Tri-Campus communication and collaboration

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Terms of reference; Self-study; Previous review report including the administrative response; Access to all course descriptions; Access to the curricula vitae of faculty.

Consultation Process

Dean, Acting Vice-Dean Academic Planning, Associate Dean Unit-Level Reviews, Faculty of Arts & Science; Department Chair, Associate Chairs Undergraduate and Graduate; Tri-campus Chairs; Department Faculty; Undergraduate and Graduate students; Administrative staff; Chairs of relevant cognate units: School of the Environment, Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, Study of Religion, Art History, & History

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Admission requirements for the learning outcomes of the programs are appropriate
 - ▶ Recent efforts to attract more majors by creating more inclusive requirements seem appropriate
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Faculty have paid significant attention to curriculum and pedagogy as result of 2012 review
 - ▶ Major seems to be appropriately structured to develop student learning at appropriate levels
 - ▶ Course sequencing for the evolutionary and social cultural emphases demonstrate logical intellectual ordering, and build upon lower level courses in appropriate ways
- Innovation
 - ▶ Experiential learning, different modes of delivery and experimentation with alternate formats part of ongoing, sustained efforts to keep curriculum current
 - ▶ Particularly impressive access to hands-on experiential learning for students in sociocultural track
 - ▶ Parallel courses in medical anthropology taken from a sociocultural and evolutionary perspective noted as unique and exciting
- Accessibility and diversity

- ▶ Commendable addition of new courses and re-vamping of existing courses to examine impacts of settler colonialism and centre Indigenous perspectives, and strive to meet demands for anti-racist approaches
- ▶ Recognition of anthropology's role in Canada's Reconciliation efforts noted as guiding the development of new courses and reimagining existing courses
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Methods used for evaluating student achievement of defined learning outcomes and degree-level expectations are effective and appropriate, especially in students' final year of the program
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Undergraduates very appreciative of faculty attention to pedagogy, and innovative delivery modes in courses
 - ▶ Students appreciate undergraduate advisor's efforts on their behalf

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Specialist and major programs in Archaeology identified as having inherent delivery issues:
 - Some concerns raised that goals of specialist are unclear, and that program may not be necessary, given existence of major and minor
 - Issues arising in Archeology major from classes offered outside the department having differing course numbering systems, making it difficult to sync course progressions appropriately
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ In COVID context, students expressed concern that there was no longer an appropriate balance between course expectations and time spent on coursework, noting that remote course delivery and coordination of group projects can be difficult and time-consuming
 - ▶ Some students report experiences of climate difficulties in certain classrooms

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Students express desire for a clearer footprint for some course offerings, in particular related to the Archaeology major, where courses are housed within other departments with different disciplinary demands for language proficiency from anthropology
 - ▶ Students and some faculty feel the theory course in social anthropology track could come earlier
 - ▶ An upper division course that might serve as useful capstone for all graduating seniors could be on ethics/anthropology in the world

- ▶ Courses that build on Indigenous ways of knowing and alternate historical narratives/perspectives are likely to find growing audiences

2. Graduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Admission requirements for learning outcomes of the programs are appropriate
 - ▶ Admission statistics indicate that very competitive students come to U of T
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Qualifying exams appear to be appropriate benchmarks, and doctoral defense provides a final assessment of work
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students pleased by department's greater attention to professionalization, and commended recent workshops supported by the department, which also emphasize possible career opportunities outside of academia
 - ▶ Graduate students generally report an engaged and dedicated core of faculty who appreciate them and are concerned about their well-being, and positive relationships with staff
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ Placement in academic positions is extremely impressive, and a number of graduates are now tenured in some of the best departments in the world
- Student funding
 - ▶ Department appears to have been extremely creative and fair in their distribution of available graduate funds
 - ▶ Students appreciative of graduate program's quick financial response to issues arising from COVID pandemic

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Overall numbers of applicants has declined, though reviewers note that this has been experienced by Social Sciences broadly on an international level
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students express frustration that while subsidized housing is available for married students, there is no access to affordable housing for younger single students
 - ▶ Graduate students report instances of neglectful mentoring, with faculty sitting on dissertation chapters for long periods without providing feedback

- ▶ Students also report some unequal treatment of mentees advised by some faculty members, and instances of student bullying, noting “a hostile climate for some students”
- ▶ Archaeology program flagged as space where women felt vulnerable, particularly in field settings, with deliberate microaggressions, and sexism
- ▶ “Constant fear about one’s financial security...negatively impacts student experience, no matter how fine a program is”
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ Doctoral time-to-completion has increased since last review; though reviewers assess this issue as interconnected with high cost of living in Toronto, rather than indicative of problems with program curricula or expectations
- Student funding
 - ▶ Archeology faculty noted that increased time to completion for their students could be related to students taking contract positions to supplement pay
 - ▶ Most significant factor shaping doctoral completion rates is economic vulnerability associated with living in Toronto
 - ▶ Reviewers felt strongly that, “Compared to other programs of the same caliber, that the funding package was simply not competitive with peers”
 - ▶ Different financial models between the three campuses “seems to put the St. George campus at a disadvantage”
 - ▶ Paying tuition while on research leave seems an undue burden on grad students

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Student funding
 - ▶ To remain competitive, U of T will need to find ways to improve housing situation for unmarried students, and reduce tuition fees for students no longer taking courses as they complete research and writing phases of their degrees

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Department clearly energetic, impactful and competitive with top programs in North America and beyond
- Research
 - ▶ Tri-campus model for graduate program provides scope and quality of faculty research that is difficult to compete with for single-campus graduate programs
 - ▶ Faculty are highly productive and successful in getting external funding
 - ▶ Faculty frequently publish in high-impact journals and well-respected university presses; citation indices compare with best departments in the world

- Faculty
 - ▶ Hiring of new and increasingly diverse generation of scholars across campuses has brought new energy to graduate programs, created new synergies around discussions of decolonization, restitution and EDI, and introduced an exciting emergent strength in medical anthropology

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ St. George component of graduate faculty facing upcoming retirements of key members in areas of archaeology and linguistic anthropology
 - ▶ Some concern among faculty subgroups that social cultural group vastly outnumbers others and could, if they wished to, override needs and proposals of other groups, although it was acknowledged that social cultural group has been a supportive collaborator
 - ▶ Mentoring for junior faculty is very uneven, with some members noting they had been assigned disinterested or neglectful mentors

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ To remain successful at the undergraduate and graduate level, there must remain critical mass of faculty in archaeology and linguistic anthropology subfields, while maintaining appropriate distribution among professorial ranks
 - ▶ Consider whether recruitment of mid-career faculty would be appropriate in units that experience the loss of very senior members to retirement

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Generally very collegial relationships among tri-campus graduate faculty members, within and between subgroups; “it is impossible to overstate what a welcome and rare state of affairs this is within the discipline of anthropology”
 - ▶ Reviewers very impressed with the breadth and depth of collaborations with cognate faculties, departments and units
 - ▶ Department staff are outstanding, work well together and exhibit high morale
 - ▶ Strong and advantageous relationship with the Royal Ontario Museum
 - ▶ “The anthropology department and faculty are clearly deeply integrated into the broader university fabric.”

- ▶ Publication and research records of faculty (and list of adjunct faculty) indicate broad range of associations and networks that enhance department's teaching programs
- ▶ Some faculty are coordinating with government on truth and reconciliation efforts, and a number serve on boards and in governance of professional organizations
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Chair has done excellent job of balancing conflicting interests and demand for resources between the St. George undergraduate programs and across the tri-campus graduate program
 - ▶ Department appears to be doing a great deal with available resources
 - ▶ Additional course offerings in medical anthropology have been rewarded with growing enrolments
 - ▶ Noteworthy absence of concerns around space allocations; evidence of well-tended and furnished spaces designed to facilitate research, study and community-building among department members
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Programs under review have rich history of excellence in training of undergraduate and graduate students by world-class faculty whose cutting-edge research spans breadth of anthropological theory, method and topics
 - ▶ Department is a thriving place of undergraduate and graduate learning, research and teaching
 - ▶ Broad array of quickly rising junior and mid-level faculty who demonstrate great leadership potential
 - ▶ Department advantaged by being situated within world class university with impressive library and research holdings, further enhanced by resources of tri-campus consortium
 - ▶ All programs are consistent with the University's mission and Faculty/unit's academic plans
- International comparators
 - ▶ Graduate and undergraduate placements are impressive and compare very favorably to the most competitive and highly ranked anthropology departments
 - ▶ Department is clearly the top-rated program in Canada, consistently in the top 10-12 in North America and the world

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Quality of the graduate program largely dependant on willingness of the three campuses to take into account each other's needs; some faculty expressed frustration at ways other campuses were perceived as going in their own directions in recruitment, at the detriment of the broader cohesive program
 - ▶ Graduate students report lacking sense of belonging to broader departmental community, due to spread out nature of campuses and difficulty of travelling between them

- ▶ Undergraduates report frustration with departmental conflict resolution processes, noting lack of transparency and that resolutions overwhelmingly favour faculty
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Department sometimes hampered by large number of outstanding faculty citizens who are drawn into administrative work for the broader university—at cost of work within the department
 - ▶ Reviewers noted complex, challenging, obstacles that come with Chair role, and that it would be easy for an inattentive leader to precipitate the demise of an outstanding set of programs
 - ▶ With upcoming retirements, department may face challenges around enrolment, and maintaining high levels of excellence achieved in grant and contract generation

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Some institutional arrangement warranted to bring leaders of tri-campus graduate programs together, to explicitly discuss long-term strategy and strategic recruitment plans
 - ▶ Building committees that can oversee and respond to climate issues in department would be helpful
 - ▶ Greater transparency regarding conflict resolution processes would be helpful
 - ▶ Explore further deepening relationships with Environmental Sciences, as the department continues to develop area of medical anthropology
 - ▶ Capitalize on and amplify complementary strengths with the Department of Religion
 - ▶ Further strengthen relationship with ROM, and explore possibility of greater participation in teaching by curators, and development of more museum-based courses, internships and research opportunities for students across all levels
 - ▶ Reviewers note importance of productive community building across ranks through mentoring for department, and that it is essential for diverse junior faculty to be supported towards tenure
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Future success of the programs depends on smooth leadership transition and careful attention to who will next serve in this role
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Decision-making about resources, and composition of faculty hires will critically shape the department's ability to provide continued leadership in anthropology
 - ▶ Modifications to mentoring practices for graduate students and junior faculty will ensure success of University EDI initiatives
 - ▶ Growing strength in medical anthropology (and current discussions around a proposed minor) is an exciting and potentially generative space for new research and teaching synergies among department faculty; inclusion of a Global Health component could add to this generative potential
 - ▶ A plan for addressing potential retirements in key areas is crucial to maintain program excellence in coming years

- ▶ “The financial precarity of living in Toronto on current stipends that negatively impacts student experience is an ongoing structural problem that needs to be decisively addressed at a level of administration above the department”
- ▶ Department has many researchers doing outstanding and exciting research which University Advancement could work to promote
- ▶ “[T]he department deserves to be provided the resources it needs to continue [its] high level of excellence as it faces a period of faculty transition and rising costs of graduate education over the next 5-10 years”



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

September 14, 2021

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
University of Toronto

Re: UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Anthropology

Dear Professor McCahan,

Along with the faculty, staff and students of the Department of Anthropology, I am pleased with the external reviewers' assessment of the Department and its undergraduate and graduate programs: Anthropology – General, H.B.A. (Major, Minor); Anthropology – Society, Culture & Language, H.B.A. (Specialist, Major); Archaeology, H.B.A. (Specialist, Major, Minor); Environmental Anthropology (Minor); Anthropology – Evolutionary, H.B.Sc. (Major); Anthropology (M.A., M.Sc., Ph.D.). The reviewers noted the Department's programs' "rich history of excellence in the training of undergraduate and graduate students by a world-class faculty whose cutting-edge research spans the breadth of anthropological theory, method and topics as represented in the broader discipline."

The quality of these programs notwithstanding, as per your letter dated May 4, 2021, the review report raises a number of issues and challenges. I am writing to address the areas of the review report that you identify as key. The responses to these items and implementation plan are separated into immediate- (six months), medium- (one to two years), and longer- (three to five years) term, along with who will take the lead in each area. Where appropriate, I have identified any necessary changes in organization, policy, or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them. The Dean's office has discussed the reviewers' comments through consultation with the Chairs of the Department of Anthropology to develop the following implementation plan incorporating the reviewers' recommendations.

Implementation Plan

The reviewers recognized that innovation in curricular content and delivery will be vital to the Department's future success; they recommended continued development of course content in medical anthropology, global health, alternate historical perspectives, and Indigenous ways of knowing, and highlighted experiential learning and experimentation with alternate instructional formats as part of ongoing efforts to keep curriculum current.

Immediate- to Medium-term response: The Faculty approved a joint tenure-stream position in Indigenous Archaeology in 2020 to be shared between Anthropology and the Centre for Indigenous Studies. A search is currently underway. The addition of this faculty member will enable Anthropology to develop new courses in Indigenous ways of knowing and alternative historical perspectives at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The Faculty also has approved a job search in Biocultural Medical Anthropology, which will empower Anthropology to expand their offerings in medical anthropology and global health. This search will be conducted in 2021-2.

In conjunction with the anticipated expansion of faculty in this area, the Department is also drafting a proposal for a new minor program in Medical Anthropology. The establishment of this minor program will allow students to focus on medical anthropology and global health courses.

Enhancing student experience through the expansion of experiential learning is one of the key strategic initiatives in the Faculty's 2020-25 Academic Plan. To expand opportunities, we established the Experiential Learning & Outreach Support (ELOS) office, which provides administrative, pedagogical, and partnership development support for experiential learning activities. We have also recently appointed a Faculty Advisor on experiential learning. The EL Faculty Advisor is working closely with ELOS to provide strategic guidance and support to academic units interested in expanding or launching experiential learning programming.

The Department of Anthropology is actively engaged in the experiential learning landscape (for example, in 2020, just prior to the pandemic, it ran an International Course Module on North American Archeology and it also provides hands on field work experience through its intensive Summer Archeology Fields School program). The Dean's office has also connected the Department of Anthropology with ELOS to explore new opportunities in experiential learning as part of the Faculty's larger commitment to enhancing the student experience in this area.

The reviewers noted comments that the Archaeology Specialist program goals are unclear, and that the Specialist "may no longer be necessary" given other offerings within the Department.

Immediate-term response: The Department will review the Specialist program to assess the program learning outcomes and consider its value within the spectrum of Anthropology programs to determine whether to restructure or close it.

Medium- to Longer-term response: The Department has begun the process of undertaking a comprehensive review of all archeology undergraduate programs, which they anticipate will be complete in one to two years. The Dean's office will also connect the Department with the Curriculum Development Specialist, based in the Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education, and support this curricular review with additional resources offered by the Teaching and Learning Office within the A&S Office of the Dean.

Students in the Archaeology Major expressed confusion regarding the progression of courses in the program, particularly with courses offered in cognate departments.

Immediate-term response: The Department will review the Major program to ensure that progression through the program is clear to students. The Department will also work with the Department's Communications Assistant to create a schematic diagram that will help students navigate program requirements and pathways.

The reviewers observed that current graduate funding packages are not competitive with peer institutions, and noted the link between increased Ph.D. time-to-completion and students' need for supplementary income while in school.

Immediate-term response: The Dean's Office has paid considerable attention to graduate funding packages in recent years and has focused particularly on elements of graduate student income that are independent of work hours (such as base funding and award top-ups). Effective 2021-22, extra funds given to Departments for successful student external awards *must* be passed directly on to awardees. Increasing the benefits that accrue to high-value awardees raises the likelihood that they will opt out of TA and RA work and progress more rapidly on their research.

In addition, since the Department of Anthropology recently separated the St. George Chair position from the Tri-Campus Graduate Chair positions, the Tri-Campus Graduate Chair can focus more attention on graduate students' learning experience and funding.

Medium- to Longer-term response: The Vice-Dean, Graduate Education (VDGE) will communicate with the incoming Tri-Campus Graduate Chair of the Department of Anthropology to ensure that they are aware of, and implementing, funding mechanisms that best support student success. To that end, the office of the VDGE recently developed guidelines for departments on best practices to support graduate funding and has begun communicating these best practices at department-specific workshops. The Dean's office will schedule a workshop with Anthropology in the coming year.

The reviewers raised concerns regarding mentoring of graduate students and junior faculty, noting that effective mentoring for these groups will contribute more broadly to the success of equity, diversity, and inclusion missions of the University.

Immediate- to Medium-term response: As a strategic priority of the Faculty's five-year plan (2020-2025), the Faculty is firmly committed to improving equity, diversity and inclusion among students, staff and faculty. Facilitating progress through the ranks is an important plank in this strategy. To that end, the Faculty added new training for chairs and directors in 2020-21 to ensure that EDI is supported within departments. Furthermore, as a new component of the annual activity report, chairs and directors are now evaluated on their progress in enhancing EDI within their unit. Many units, such as the Department of Anthropology, established EDI committees.

As part of the Anti-Black Racism Task Force recommendations (received and accepted by the University March 31, 2021), the Faculty of Arts and Science is conducting a search for a senior lead on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. In the coming year, senior leadership within the Faculty will work with the EDI Standing Committee, which includes broad representation from across the Faculty, to review and recommend modifications to policies and procedures to facilitate progress through the ranks for underrepresented faculty.

In terms of mentoring more generally, the Dean's office is launching a new Massey Junior Faculty Fellowship program for faculty new to Arts & Science in the past two years (2020 and 2021). Through an array of programming, from social to career-oriented, we will nurture a diverse cross-disciplinary community of junior faculty, who will benefit from peer-to-peer mentoring, in addition to the designated mentor they are assigned within their department. In addition, we are creating a new position within academic HR to support faculty professional development, including support for mentorship. When filled, that person will work with units like Anthropology to support effective mentoring.

Within the Department, all junior faculty are assigned a senior faculty mentor. To offer more lines of support, both the Chair and Graduate Chair plan to meet individually with all pre-tenure faculty to help ensure they are receiving effective mentoring.

The Dean's Office will also ensure that the Department connects with the School of Graduate Studies' new Centre for Graduate Mentorship and Supervision, which is launching this Fall. The Centre's mandate is to act as a "focal point for supports, learning, and outreach aimed at promoting excellence in graduate mentorship and supervision to supervisees, supervisors, and other members of the graduate community."

The reviewers conveyed comments from graduate and undergraduate students regarding climate difficulties in some classrooms, with reports of bullying, micro-aggressions, and sexism; they noted that the Archaeology program was singled out as being a space where women felt vulnerable, particularly in field settings. Undergraduate students commented that departmental conflict resolution procedures were opaque, and that resolutions overwhelmingly favour faculty members.

Immediate-term response: The Dean's office has connected the Department with the Director, High Risk, Faculty Support & Mental Health in Arts & Science to ensure that students and faculty are aware of the University's policies and processes on dispute resolution. The Director can, for example, hold a workshop on complaints and concerns and how they should be addressed.

The Department has recently developed guidelines for best practices in field settings, with the input of its graduate students. The Graduate Chair will consult with the Director, High Risk, Faculty Support & Mental Health in Arts & Science, seeking feedback on these guidelines and further resources to ensure best practices are firmly entrenched in the culture of the department. Furthermore, the Chairs will be convening meetings with student leadership to better understand the nature of the conflicts that the reviewers identified.

The reviewers commented that faculty complement planning and strategic decision-making about resources will be critical in shaping the department's ability to continue to provide leadership in the areas of Archaeology and Linguistic Anthropology.

Immediate-term response: The Faculty instituted a new layer of Unit-Level Academic Planning this past year, in which Departments produce a five-year academic plan in the year following the completion of the UTQAP review process. The Department of Anthropology will undertake this planning process in 2021-22. The unit-level academic plan is a forward-looking document that both articulates a department's academic plans over the following five years and also highlights progress made on the implementation plan identified in the UTQAP administrative response. Complement planning and resource allocation are two key elements addressed in the unit-level academic plan. Senior academic and administrative leadership within the Dean's Office will meet with the Department's leadership to discuss their unit-level academic plan and provide guidance and feedback. This exercise will be especially valuable for Anthropology as it develops its five-year complement plan across all of its sub-disciplines.

The Department sought approval for a tenure-stream linguistic anthropologist position through the Faculty Appointments Committee (FAC) this past winter (2021), but it was unsuccessful. The FAC includes representation across the three sectors (Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences) and from the Colleges. The FAC reviews all requests for new positions once per year and makes recommendations to the Dean regarding which requests should be granted. The FAC's broad perspective is important as it is necessary to consider all requests relative to the needs of the entire Faculty, not a single department on its own.

The Department did successfully hire a 2-year teaching-stream CLTA (starting July 2021), who will offer a variety of undergraduate linguistic anthropology courses.

Medium- to Longer-term response: The Department is optimistic that the current search for a senior Indigenous Archaeologist will help provide leadership in the area of Archaeology.

The reviewers note that the quality of Anthropology graduate programs is dependent on informal tri-campus communication and cooperation, and recommend a more formal arrangement between the campuses to coordinate recruitment plans and long-term strategy.

Immediate-term response: The Department's recent split of the St. George Chair and the Tri-Campus Graduate Chair positions offered an opportunity to also change the structure of communication between the campuses. The four Chairs (Graduate Chair, and St. George, UTM, and UTSC Chairs) plan to meet monthly to confer on a range of topics, including complement planning, to ensure that each campus's hiring plan contributes to the coherence of the graduate program.

The Faculty's new Unit-Level Academic Planning process is also expected to have a positive effect on communication flows, as consultation among all stakeholders is a necessary component of the exercise.

The Dean's office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the Chair, as well as the A&S Unit-Level Academic Planning process. A brief report to the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, midway between the October 28 & 30, 2020 site visit and the year of the next site visit, will be prepared.

The year of the next review will be no later than the 2027-28 review cycle.

To conclude, we appreciate that the external reviewers identified the Department of Anthropology's strengths and noted areas for development. The Department has already begun to move forward with plans to address the recommendations as presented by the reviewers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Woodin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Melanie Woodin
Dean and Professor of Cell and Systems Biology

cc.

T. Max Friesen, Graduate Chair, Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Arts & Science
Holly Wardlow, St. George Undergraduate Chair, Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Arts & Science

Gillian Hamilton, Acting Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science
Daniella Mallinck, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Andrea Benoit, Academic Review Officer, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science

3. Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

This section will be inserted after AP&P by the VPAP office using language verbatim from the approved Report of the meeting.

4. Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers noted the programs as the top-rated in Canada and competitive internationally; they praised the department's rich history of excellence in training students; the world-class, highly productive faculty; the scope and quality of research facilitated by the graduate tri-campus model; the renewed energy and discussions around EDI; the emergent strength in medical anthropology; the addition and modification of courses to centre Indigenous perspectives and adopt anti-racist approaches; the curriculum adjustments in response to the previous review; the impressive experiential learning opportunities; the outstanding staff and high morale; the Chair's excellent leadership; the remarkable faculty collegiality; the relationships and collaboration with cognate units and community partners; and the well-designed and maintained departmental space. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: prioritizing innovation in curricular content and delivery; addressing concerns regarding both a lack of clarity in the goals of the Archaeology Specialist, and progression within the Archaeology Major; addressing concerns around graduate funding packages; prioritizing effective mentoring of graduate students and junior faculty; addressing student reports of climate difficulties in some classrooms; making strategic decisions regarding resources and faculty complement planning; and pursuing a more formal arrangement between campuses to coordinate recruitment plans and long-term strategy. The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty, unit and programs' responses to the reviewers' recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5. Monitoring and Date of Next Review

The Dean's office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the Chair, as well as the A&S Unit-Level Academic Planning process. A brief report to the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, midway between the October 28 & 30, 2020 site visit and the year of the next site visit, will be prepared.

The year of the next review will be no later than the 2027-28 review cycle.

6. Distribution

On **date**, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to the Chair of the Department.

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan - DRAFT

1. Review Summary

Programs Reviewed:	Italian, BA (Hons): Specialist, Major, Minor Italian Culture and Communication, BA (Hons): Minor Italian Studies, MA Italian Studies, PhD
Unit Reviewed:	Department of Italian Studies
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professor Eugenio Bolongaro, Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, McGill University 2. Professor Deborah Parker, Department of Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese, University of Virginia 3. Professor Deanna Shemek, Department of European Languages and Studies, University of California, Irvine 4. Professor Jane Tylus, Department of Italian Studies, Yale University
Date of Review Visit:	January 20-21, 2021
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 26, 2021

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: November 19-20, 2012

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Programs

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Undergraduate students' satisfaction with courses

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Going beyond traditional categories and period boundaries in designing undergraduate courses to mobilize critical thinking and trans-historical inquiry

2. Graduate Programs

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Revising the graduate program curriculum to make it consistent with the interdisciplinary and comparative direction of the profession
- Addressing the ongoing challenge of securing consistently high quality graduate applicants in a competitive funding environment

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Innovative teaching
- International reputation of graduate academic staff
- Exceptional research resources

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- The spirit of collegiality and cooperation within the Department and across campuses
- Well-conceived renewal of the Department's language curriculum
- Unusual strength and engagement of both undergraduate and graduate student associations

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Systematically identifying learning outcomes in course syllabi and program objectives to strengthen already fine course offerings
- Engaging in strategic growth through new faculty hires and building linkages with other programs
- Establishing a strategic plan for the next five to ten years
- Finding ways to facilitate increased dialogue across disciplines and fields, working collaboratively with other units, centres and institutes to mutual benefit

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Terms of reference; Self-study; Previous review report including the administrative response; Access to all course descriptions; Access to the curricula vitae of faculty.

Consultation Process

Dean, Vice-Dean Academic Planning, Associate Dean Unit-Level Reviews, Faculty of Arts & Science; Chair, Department of Italian Studies; Associate Chairs, Undergraduate & Graduate; Faculty; Undergraduate and Graduate students; Administrative staff; Chairs of cognate units: Cinema Studies Institute, Department of French, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, & Centre for Medieval Studies.

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Objectives
 - ▶ ITA programs seek to expose students from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds to a variety of courses on Italian literature, culture, cinema, and linguistics; they teach analytical skills, a deep understanding of Italian culture, and broad contexts for understanding works studied
 - ▶ Amply documented departmental learning outcomes, including a curricular map; program learning outcomes align well with U of T's overall goals
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Undergraduate courses open to all with no prerequisites (except for those with language requirements) and no minimum GPA for program admission, consistent with current practice across North America
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Specialist program complemented by Minor in Italian, Culture and Communications Studies Minor in Italian, and Italian Major
 - ▶ Specialized topics courses require students to examine disciplinary formations, methodological approaches, and theoretical underpinnings that govern their learning
 - ▶ Department currently considering a reconfiguration of Minor programs
 - ▶ 'Italian Canadian Literature' an excellent example of a course that could appeal to students from Ontario's large Italian-Canadian population
 - ▶ Love in the Renaissance, stands out as a positive example of course offerings moving in more thematic/conceptual direction

- Innovation
 - ▶ Program offers opportunities for learning beyond the classroom through extracurricular activities, lectures and films
 - ▶ Innovative extracurricular opportunities also include growing number of internships in Toronto, and the UT Study Abroad programs in Italy; these are highly sought by students and will be key to programs' future success
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Asian-Canadian, SE Asian and East Asian students make up roughly half of students enrolled in ITA language courses
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Student interviews and survey results indicate high quality instruction, dedicated faculty and high student satisfaction
 - ▶ Students praise the welcoming departmental atmosphere, that is conducive to learning and to generating enthusiasm for learning Italian
 - ▶ Students are very appreciative of opportunities for learning outside the classroom (although these have recently been impacted by the pandemic)
 - ▶ Some undergraduates report that graduate student instructors are passionate, effective and "relatable"

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Objectives
 - ▶ Since process of identifying learning outcomes in course syllabi is still underway, students are not yet experiencing full benefits
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ "Staggering" undergraduate enrolment decline in recent years
 - ▶ Changing demographics in Toronto (where Italian no longer offered in majority of high schools) has led to decline in Specialist enrolment, which was designed with secondary-school teachers in mind
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Curriculum has not been overhauled for more than 20 years
 - ▶ Students express desire for courses that offer more speaking opportunities
 - ▶ Students express interest in more courses on topical subjects
 - ▶ Majority of undergraduate courses are focused on literary works
 - ▶ Tenured faculty in FAS do not necessarily teach introductory courses in their disciplines
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ "Mixed" undergraduate assessment of graduate student instructors, with some reports of inconsistent information regarding assignments and poor communication

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Objectives
 - ▶ If recommended curricular revisions are implemented, a rethinking of program outcomes will be necessary

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ “[A] thorough review of course offerings in ITA is overdue”
 - ▶ “While the committee vigorously supports the Program’s commitment to historical breadth, we suggest that updating courses on historical materials could attract more students”
 - ▶ Consider designing courses to include specific occasions for conversation, and conversation-based assignments, particularly at 200 and 300 levels
 - ▶ Reviewers strongly encourage offering more courses with topical foci and drawing on other media
 - ▶ Integrate tenure-stream faculty with language teaching and/or lower-level culture courses to foster continuity and community for students moving through program levels
- Innovation
 - ▶ Continue to expand and develop internship and research opportunities; current plan to expand Italian-Canadian internship program beyond Italian community would attract greater range of stakeholders and potentially lead to still more opportunities for students
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ More effort should be made to appeal to Asian-Canadian, Southeast Asian and East Asian student population through course offerings
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Resume and expand extracurricular activities that give students opportunities to speak the language and build community

2. Graduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Department offers internationally recognized graduate program with long and distinguished history
- Objectives
 - ▶ Department has done excellent job of making explicit the objectives of its graduate programs, learning outcomes and expectations, and methods for assessing student achievement
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Graduate student enrolment has remained fairly constant, though numbers are down slightly from 2016
 - ▶ MA and PhD requirements are designed for applicants who have completed UG major or MA in Italian Studies, respectively, which is consistent with department’s current historical coverage model
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Attractive 1-year Italian Studies MA program is unique in Canada

- ▶ Significant change has been made towards enhanced flexibility and cross-disciplinarity, by increasing number of grad courses that may be taken in other departments
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ High level of student satisfaction with quality of teaching in Department and the support from advisors
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ Strong student performance in time-to-completion
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ Available figures show more than 50% of graduates employed in academic or teaching positions, and 40% in other fields
 - ▶ Of the graduates in academic/teaching positions, 16 hold positions at universities in Canada, the US or Italy; 2 teach in Ontario secondary education; those in other fields work for Ontario Civil Service, Italian Trade Commission, Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, and in publishing
 - ▶ Reviewers note that while the information available on postgraduate employment is not complete, “the picture one derives from these data is on balance positive”
- Student funding
 - ▶ Enviable level of internal funding available to graduate students

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Department has been slow to adapt to an evolving environment
- Objectives
 - ▶ Learning outcomes for MA are extremely broad and seem barely distinguishable from those of PhD
 - ▶ PhD learning outcomes are also framed in very broad terms and likely overambitious
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ As a result of converging trends, reviewers note that currently even the best applicants rarely possess level of specialization that traditional graduate programs have required for admission
 - ▶ Admission rates “perhaps a little high”, though this may be justified by department’s status as the only in Canada to offer a formal PhD in the field
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ PhD program’s coverage model focused on national tradition is no longer tailored to contemporary state of discipline, or current academic job market
 - ▶ Course work required for both MAs seems too heavy to be completed in a single year, especially given 90-hour teaching assistant contract as part of student funding package
 - ▶ 4-year term for PhD completion is unrealistic, and course load seems too demanding
 - ▶ Latin reading competency requirement is more related to outdated coverage model than to actual needs of PhD students
 - ▶ Many students expressed dissatisfaction with required methodology course (ITA1000H)

- ▶ Some graduate students indicated that additional work associated with Goggio Chair can be a burden, especially when course is perceived as unrelated to their research agendas
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Reviewers note that graduate student lapses in classroom practices may be largely due to inadequate pedagogical preparation
 - ▶ Reviewers note lack of support given to graduate students in becoming marketable professionals within and outside academic environment
 - ▶ Reviewers did not have opportunity to meet with current MA students and thus have no first-hand knowledge of their experience of program
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ Contemporary academic job market in Italian Studies is such that over last 9 years only 50-60% of PhD graduates have found teaching positions in academic setting

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Prioritize innovation, and develop creative alternative to coverage model that still informs presentation, structure and delivery of all grad programs
- Objectives
 - ▶ Reformulate graduate learning outcomes in tandem with restructuring of graduate curriculum and program delivery, with enhanced emphasis on elements such as problem-based learning and practicum
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Admission requirements for both graduate programs should be realigned as department makes updates to programs
 - ▶ Increase flexibility of admission requirements with greater focus on cross-disciplinary skills and competencies pertinent to students' areas of interest
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Department must find ways to creatively re-imagine the graduate curriculum to move in the direction taken by the Italian Studies discipline in recent years
 - ▶ Conduct thorough review of graduate curriculum with view to definitively abandoning coverage model for one more flexible, cross-disciplinary and topic driven, and consistent with current state of discipline and needs and aspirations of contemporary graduate students
 - ▶ Reduce number of courses for MA and PhD programs, to allow students to better balance study and teaching responsibilities
 - ▶ Re-examine viability of MA thesis option to ensure that it will be available only to students with very clear idea of their scholarly interests; MA thesis work should be given more weight in the curriculum
 - ▶ Revisit requirement for all students to achieve reading knowledge of Latin
 - ▶ Revise ITA 1000H curriculum in collaboration with graduate students; reconsider cogency of including pedagogical component in the course

- ▶ Find ways to integrate expectations for graduate students to take courses offered by the Goggio Chair into regular course load
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Rethink PhD general exam structure to be less burdensome, more flexible, and to address students' specific areas of interest and curricular lacunae
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Implement formal training of graduate students in language teaching and in pedagogy more generally
 - ▶ Department must find ways to assist PhD students in successfully transferring skills and competencies acquired to a non-academic career path
 - ▶ Implement activities (such as mentoring, workshops on resumé and CV preparation, grant proposal writing, creating a job portfolio, etc.) to train graduates how to best present themselves to range of potential employers

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Department boasts distinguished group of faculty at the top of their fields in terms of research productivity and professional leadership
 - ▶ “[U of T’s] Italian Studies faculty is unquestionably pulling its weight as a scholarly community”
- Research
 - ▶ Faculty remain highly visible in leadership roles in the discipline, from editing entire book series, to chairing of major professional organizations
 - ▶ Department faculty organize impressive number of conferences and direct and advise a high number of dissertations
 - ▶ Faculty productivity is remarkable, given Department’s diminishing FTEs
 - ▶ Department produces scholarship in drama, cinema, poetry, historical and applied linguistics, studies of the novel, political movements and other areas, effectively offering a rich array of curricular offerings
- Faculty
 - ▶ Still a good representation of chronological coverage in current configuration of tenure-stream faculty
 - ▶ Promising recent hires, including two tenure-stream faculty in areas recommended by previous external reviewers (medieval studies and cinema/media studies); another recent teaching stream hire has secondary specialization in gender and sexuality studies
 - ▶ New positions in global early modern Italian and race and transnational cultural studies will be vital to program’s efforts to increase cross-disciplinary collaborations
 - ▶ “The committee was immensely heartened by its conversations with the newest faculty, who all voiced energy, creativity, and hope in the future of Italian at UT. All of them seem poised for distinguished careers.”
 - ▶ One recent hire has begun to address the department’s gender imbalance

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ Several faculty in professional leadership roles are scheduled to retire soon
 - ▶ Reviewers note unusually high reliance on CLTA appointments in program delivery
 - ▶ “An important area the Department does not cover but that commands high visibility today, is contemporary theory and philosophy”
 - ▶ Department has no female full professors and no non-White faculty

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ A more diverse faculty (in terms of academic preparation and cultural background) would contribute to a greater variety of course offerings
 - ▶ Department urged to pay serious attention to diversity factors in hiring and programming, “while avoiding both tokenism and essentialism”
 - ▶ Consider options for CLTAs to “change streams,” as they become truly integral to the future directions of the Department
 - ▶ Consider additional hire in contemporary theory and philosophy, which could complement searches currently underway in globalism, and current faculty working in queer studies

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Goggio Chair and Iacobucci Centre are outstanding vehicles for cultivating relationships with vibrant cultural communities in Toronto and beyond
 - ▶ Contributions of UTM faculty are very important to graduate programs, summer instruction, and in some ways to Departmental administration
 - ▶ Positive connections with the Columbus Centre, Italian Cultural Institute, Toronto International Film Festival and Italian Contemporary Film Festival, as well as with local schools
 - ▶ Innovative and successful new postdoctoral program, and promising opportunities for agreements with European universities
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ ITA blessed with highly professional and efficient staff members who run department and attend to its financial needs; division of duties seems appropriate
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Reviewers commend FAS Dean’s commitment to supporting a distinguished future for ITA – visible in current recruitment efforts for two new tenure stream positions

- ▶ Department designing promising programming on Italian-Canadian culture including queer studies through the Iacobucci Center, with proposed subfield in cultural studies; “these are important, forward-looking developments”
- International comparators
 - ▶ Largest Italian program in North America that remains “a giant among its peers”, despite downward trend in humanities and European language enrolments since 2008; “Program remains a beacon of the field on both sides of the Atlantic (and beyond) and as such should be empowered to thrive”
 - ▶ Research records of the majority of faculty are impressive and on par with those of major Italian Studies departments elsewhere
 - ▶ PhD placements more or less consistent with those of other universities

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ “Morale has clearly been a problem in the department in recent years - and perhaps for longer”
 - ▶ “One of the more serious observations, which we heard several times, is that there was both systemic misogyny and racism in the Department.”
 - ▶ Increasing attraction of cross-appointments harbors danger of “burnout” and “exploitation of affected faculty”
 - ▶ Lack of strong, systematic relationships and affiliations with other units
 - ▶ Significant tension between graduate students who come to the Department from Italy and those who don’t, with the perception that Italian students are more highly valued and given privileged access to resources, opportunities (as well as program admission)
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Reported lack of “ideal” office space for graduate students, and relatively small common space
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Limited progress on addressing recommendations made in previous review, many of which are still very relevant
 - ▶ Programs’ emphasis on chronological coverage of three major periods of Italian literature (medieval/Renaissance, Baroque/Enlightenment and modern/contemporary) is overdue for re-examination
 - ▶ Department facing upcoming challenges around leadership succession, due to seniority gap in faculty complement and “culture of mistrust” among existing faculty
- International comparators
 - ▶ “Even as PhD applications and students enrolled in undergraduate courses... have declined elsewhere in North America...the drop at UT seems particularly precipitous – perhaps because it had much further to fall in the first place”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Strengthen Goggio Chair and Iacobucci Centre, and extend their reach within the local community to increase Department's visibility and impact
 - ▶ Achieving a harmonious collaboration with UTM will be an important factor in the future of Italian at U of T
 - ▶ Implement formalized process of consultation between Chairs of cross-appointing units to ensure that faculty are not inequitably burdened
 - ▶ Department urged to strengthen relationships with cognate units, in particular with language and literature departments
 - ▶ Address tension between Italian and non-Italian students through open and frank discussion involving faculty and students
 - ▶ Enhance alumni and local community outreach; explore possibility of named chair through alumni funds
 - ▶ 2012 recommendation of a faculty retreat to plan future departmental directions remains pertinent, and should involve students and cognate units
 - ▶ Low departmental morale appears related to perceived lack of transparency; develop clear and public guidelines to address key governance mechanisms and decisions
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Faculty express desire that the leadership of committees and appointments to Graduate Chair and Undergraduate Chair rotate more regularly than they have in the past
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Reviewers stress importance of maintaining and revitalizing a flagship program in North American Italian Studies
 - ▶ Given enrolment decline, program must find ways to prosper on new scale, in new configurations
 - ▶ Reviewers strongly recommend addressing outstanding recommendations from previous review
 - ▶ A rigorous review of offerings is overdue; faculty possess a wealth of experience and expertise that could be mobilized for a thorough refreshment of course offerings
 - ▶ Reviewers note that department has been introducing more conceptually/ theme based courses, and strongly encourage them to continue moving in this promising direction
 - ▶ Department urged to think purposefully about training all tenure-stream faculty for leadership roles
 - ▶ It is essential that members of the leadership team "cooperate very closely with each other and conduct themselves in the most transparent manner possible"
 - ▶ "It is clear that ITA must emerge from this review process with a clear mission and a commitment to moving their curriculum, departmental governance, and mentoring of their large graduate community into the 21st century"
- International comparators
 - ▶ In future planning, look to other departmental models that approach materials through a variety of frameworks, balance focus on chronological coverage with broader variety of cultural courses, and draw on different disciplines and media



2. Administrative Response & Implementation Plan

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

September 14, 2021

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
University of Toronto

Re: UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Italian Studies

Dear Professor McCahan,

Along with the faculty, staff and students of the Department of Italian Studies, I am pleased with the external reviewers' assessment of the Department and its undergraduate and graduate programs: Italian Studies, H.B.A. (Specialist, Major, Minor); Italian Culture and Communication (Minor); Italian Studies (M.A., Ph.D). The reviewers noted the Department of Italian Studies as "a flagship program in North American Italian Studies."

The quality of the program notwithstanding, as per your letter dated May 27, 2021, the review report raises a number of issues and challenges. I am writing to address the areas of the review report that you identify as key. The responses to these items and implementation plan are separated into immediate- (six months), medium- (one to two years), and longer- (three to five years) term, along with who will take the lead in each area. Where appropriate, I have identified any necessary changes in organization, policy, or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them. The Dean's office has discussed the reviewers' comments through consultation with the Chair of the Department of Italian Studies to develop the following Implementation Plan incorporating the reviewers' recommendations.

Implementation Plan

The reviewers noted that little progress had been made on several key recommendations from the 2012 UTQAP review, including those regarding curriculum updates, adequate pedagogical training for graduate students, and diversity of the faculty complement.

Immediate-term response: The Department acknowledges the overall pace of change but is pleased to report that the rate of reform in the areas of curriculum updates, adequate pedagogical training for graduate students, and diversity of the faculty complement has accelerated in recent years. Furthermore, a number of initiatives have taken place in the interval between conducting the self-study and now, and more are on the horizon. These changes are listed in the relevant sections below.

Medium to Long-Term Response: The Dean’s office will actively monitor progress on the implementation plan through ongoing meetings with the Chair, as well as through the A&S Unit-Level Academic Planning process, which will begin after governance in the coming year. While part of the unit-level plan will specifically address progress on the UTQAP implementation plan, the five-year unit-level plan largely offers a direction for the Department in all areas including faculty complement, curricula, and EDI.

The reviewers strongly recommended updates to the undergraduate and graduate curricula, noting that the emphasis on chronological coverage and historical periodization at both levels is no longer consistent with the current state of the discipline.

- *Undergraduate: the reviewers observed that a review and update of the curriculum is overdue, and that “the current curriculum still shows little evidence of the 2012 external review’s recommendation to go ‘beyond traditional categories and period boundaries.’”*
- *Graduate: the reviewers strongly recommended a thorough review of the MA/PhD curriculum “with a view to definitively abandoning the coverage model in favor of a more flexible, cross-disciplinary and topic driven model”; they also recommended a concomitant realignment of admission requirements for these programs.*

Undergraduate

Immediate-term response: While the Department was initially slow to evolve its undergraduate curriculum beyond traditional boundaries, the pace of recent change has quickened. In the past two years, the Department has offered a number of new courses that are non-traditional, with invigorating interdisciplinarity that may attract new students to the Department’s programs. There were three new offerings in 2019-20 on topics ranging from food and culture to detective fiction and two more offered for the first time this year: “Sex and Gender in Contemporary Italy” and “Topics in: Black Italian Literature.”

Medium-term response: The Department will undertake a fulsome curricular review of its undergraduate programs. The Dean’s office will connect the Department with the Curriculum Development Specialist, based in the Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education, and support this curricular review with additional resources offered by the Teaching and Learning Office within the FAS Office of the Dean.

Medium-term to Longer-term response: The Dean’s office has connected the Department with the Faculty’s Experiential Learning and Outreach Office to expand its experiential learning opportunities and identify potential internship possibilities, as part of the Arts & Science Internship program.

Graduate

Immediate-term response: The Department convened extensive discussions on the issue of

curricular structure within the graduate programs during the past year and the faculty currently remain committed to the importance of a “coverage” approach as they recognize that it best serves graduates of their program who obtain academic jobs. The Department knows that, in many cases, its graduates teach in institutions with few Italian Studies faculty members and consequently are tasked with teaching across the language and culture curricula. That said, the content of that coverage is currently evolving alongside the Department’s graduate course offerings. One particular area of evolution is in language pedagogy (noted below).

Medium-to-Longer-term response: The Department will establish a committee to develop a curriculum in language pedagogy at the MA and the PhD levels and revisit the structure and flexibility of their graduate programs more generally. Related to this is a reassessment of the admission requirements for the graduate programs to reflect these curricular changes.

The reviewers commented that graduate students do not receive adequate pedagogical training prior to teaching undergraduate courses.

Immediate- to Medium-term response: At the institutional level, the level of paid training for graduate student course instructors and teaching assistants recently increased under the 2021-23 collective agreement. In addition to the six hours of mandatory paid job training offered by the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation (CTSI) to new TAs and Course Instructors, and four additional paid hours available to experienced TAs and CIs, the University will provide an additional two hours of paid work-related training. This increased attention to training is welcomed and supported by both the Faculty and the Department.

In the past year and a half, the Dean’s office has greatly expanded pedagogical support for online education. We established the Online Learning Academy, which provides peer-to-peer coaching and mentoring for instructors (including graduate student course instructors (GCIs)) seeking support with online teaching and learning methods. Through regular webinars and drop-in hours, a community of experienced instructors provides support for instructors on a range of topics, from best practices and (online) assessment design to technical support. The value of these practices and pedagogical advice apply to in-person and hybrid teaching delivery as well, hence the OLA is working to elevate teaching and learning standards in the Faculty more generally.

The Faculty’s Teaching and Learning Office also offers pedagogical consultations with Faculty Liaisons. The Office of Teaching & Learning will connect with the Department of Italian Studies to ensure that graduate student course instructors receive all available pedagogical support and to explore pedagogical training options for future graduate student instructors. The University’s Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation, for example, offers specific supports for GCIs.

The Department sought to improve and enhance graduate student teaching training through a recent (2019-20) and thorough revision to ITA1000 “Methodologies for the Teaching and Study of Italian,” a mandatory course for MA and PhD students. Pedagogy receives greater attention in the revised course.

In 2020-21, under the supervision of the Department's Associate Chair Undergraduate, TAs were also given extensive training in producing pedagogical material for online teaching, including video lectures. The Department plans to continue providing this support following the return to in-person teaching as it provides invaluable experience in the use of new technologies in the classroom.

Medium-term response: The Department's committee reviewing language pedagogy programs at the graduate level (see above) will encompass pedagogical training among graduate students.

The reviewers recommended improving professional skills training for graduate students, to better prepare them for both academic and non-academic careers.

Immediate-term response: The Faculty offers professional skills training and support for doctoral students through its Milestones and Pathways program. To enhance the Pathways arm of the program, which provides students with professional skills and introduces students to the array of non-academic opportunities available in a given discipline, the Coordinator, Graduate Student Professional Development, will work with the Department of Italian Studies to develop a tailored "Pathways for PhDs" workshop, in which doctoral candidates explore and develop job materials for non-academic careers. These materials draw on Italian Studies alumni job placement experiences in order to explore possible career paths in this discipline.

The Director of Graduate Writing Support also offers unit-based writing instruction and support (an important professional skill in most occupations), in addition to broader sectoral workshops. For example, the Director is running a grant proposal writing workshop for students in Italian Studies in September. Workshops on cover letters and CVs are also offered.

The Faculty's programs supplement the many resources provided by the School of Graduate Studies (such as the SGS summer institute, which offers an intensive professional development program). We will work to ensure that the Department is aware of all opportunities for student professional development.

Medium to Longer term response: In addition to accessing Faculty and University resources (as above), the Department is expanding support for students that will enhance their job-readiness through the development of new research fellowships for an undergraduate and graduate student, as well as a series of paid fellowships for students undertaking fieldwork. The Department will also consult with Italian Studies departments in Canada and beyond our borders to investigate the possibility of developing a larger database of career outcomes for graduates of these programs and to develop resources concerning successful strategies to prepare graduate students for non-academic careers. The Faculty will offer support and guidance as needed. Financial support for related unit-specific initiatives, for example, is available to units through the Milestones and Pathways program.

The reviewers observed the lack of any female full professors, as well as the absence of any non-White faculty members, and strongly recommended that the diversity of the faculty

complement be considered in future hiring.

Immediate-term response: The Department is actively seeking to address historic homogeneity in its faculty complement by following current best-practices guidelines for diverse and inclusive recruitment. All members of the search committee are now required to complete unconscious-bias training, for example.

This attention to inclusive hiring has already led to improved diversity, as a higher proportion of recent hires have been female. In fact, two of the last three continuing appointments were women and the most recent hire is also a person of colour. Today, three of the six people with continuing appointments in the Department are women. It will take time to diversify the Department's complement across the ranks, because of its historic male dominance. See below for EDI initiatives within the Faculty that will further support diversity within the Department.

The reviewers recommended ways to ensure sufficient leadership in this area.

Immediate-term response: The Faculty of Arts and Science, alongside the University, is strongly committed to expanding diversity in our faculty complement, through active promotion of equity, diversity, and inclusion in recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of faculty. Indeed, enhancing EDI is one of the Faculty's priorities in our recently released five-year academic plan (2020-25).

We are advancing towards greater equity and diversity in a number of dimensions, drawing on and guided by the mandate created by the Anti-Black Racism Task Force recommendations accepted by the University in March of 2021. For instance, in order to ensure that chairs and directors are aware of our EDI goals, strategies to achieve them (such as best practices in recruitment), and the Provostial funding opportunities available for recruitment of Black and Indigenous faculty, the Vice-Dean, Faculty, Academic Life and Equity, gave several presentations on these topics in 2020-21 to chairs and directors. In the past year, units in the Faculty have been more active and successful in recruiting Black and Indigenous faculty. Additionally, Dean's representatives on search committees received enhanced EDI training to ensure that unconscious bias is minimized, and best practices are followed throughout the recruitment and hiring process.

Medium-term response: The Dean's Office will continue to implement the recommendations of the Anti-Black Racism Task Force. For example, the Faculty of Arts and Science is conducting a search for a senior lead on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. In the coming year, senior leadership within the Faculty will work with the EDI Standing Committee, which includes broad representation from across the Faculty, to review and recommend modifications to policies and procedures to facilitate progress through the ranks for underrepresented faculty.

Furthermore, as a new component of the annual activity report, chairs and directors are now evaluated on their progress in enhancing EDI within their unit.

The reviewers observed significant problems with Departmental morale and culture, stemming from a variety of internal and external factors, with graduate students in particular commenting on a “lack of trust and transparency” and “systemic misogyny and racism in the Department.”

Immediate-term response: Addressing these concerns is a priority for the Department and the Dean’s office. To that end, the Department recently undertook (in 2021) a comprehensive Workplace Culture and Climate review under the direction and guidance of the Director, High Risk, Faculty Support & Mental Health in the Faculty of Arts & Science. This consultative process yields a set of recommendations that are designed to improve the cultural health of the Department.

In addition to the Review, the Department also appointed an inaugural EDI committee in 2020. The committee developed its mandate, which was approved by the Department in 2021.

Medium-to-Longer term response: The Department Chair will undertake the process of implementing the recommendations of the Climate review. The Dean’s Office will support and monitor progress on the implementation plan.

The reviewers noted comments from both faculty and graduate students regarding perceptions of apparent preferential treatment of graduate students from Italy.

Immediate- to medium-term response: The Department will address this issue in the Workplace Climate Implementation Plan, which, as noted above, the Faculty will monitor and support.

The reviewers urged the Department to pursue and strengthen systematic relationships and affiliations with other units within the University, in the form of shared faculty appointments and joint courses; they also made recommendations to strengthen the Department’s impact and visibility within the local community.

Immediate-term response: The Faculty and Department strongly support expanding and strengthening interdisciplinary relationships within the University and the local community. Indeed, jointly held appointments are now much more common in the Faculty. This evolution is reflected in the Italian Studies Department, as its most recent tenure-stream hires are all cross-appointed.

The Department is also currently working on expanding its set of cross-listed courses with, for example, the Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies, Equity Studies, Women and Gender Studies, as well as several courses that are electives for Renaissance Studies and European Studies.

Medium-term response: The Department will continue to develop joint courses, focusing on units with cross-appointed faculty, in order to broaden the reach of its courses and faculty

beyond Italian Studies.

To broaden their visibility within the local community, the Department will continue to strengthen its connections to the Frank Iacobucci Centre for Italian Canadian Studies, whose mandate is to “promote awareness, understanding and research on the Italian Canadian community.” The new fellowships and future plans for internships, noted above, speak to the Department’s renewed commitment to strengthen community engagement.

The Dean’s office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the Chair, as well as the A&S Unit-Level Academic Planning process. A brief report to the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, midway between the January 20-21, 2021 site visit and the year of the next site visit, will be prepared.

The year of the next review will be no later than the 2028-29 review cycle.

To conclude, we appreciate that the external reviewers identified the Department of Italian Studies’ strengths and noted areas for development. The Department has already begun to move forward with plans to address the recommendations as presented by the reviewers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Woodin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Melanie Woodin
Dean and Professor of Cell and Systems Biology

cc.

Luca Somigli, Chair, Department of Italian Studies, Faculty of Arts & Science
Gillian Hamilton, Acting Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science
Daniella Mallinick, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
Andrea Benoit, Academic Review Officer, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science

3. Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

This section will be inserted after AP&P by the VPAP office using language verbatim from the approved Report of the meeting.

4. Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers noted that Italian Studies at U of T is the largest Italian program in North America and “a beacon of the field on both sides of the Atlantic (and beyond)”; they commended FAS’ commitment to supporting a distinguished future for the department; the innovative and popular opportunities for learning beyond the classroom; the enviable level of internal funding available to graduate students; the distinguished group of faculty at the top of their fields, and energetic, creative and optimistic new faculty; they highlighted the important contributions of UTM faculty; and finally the promising Italian-Canadian programming currently in development, including queer studies and a proposed subfield in cultural studies. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: prioritizing progress on key recommendations from the 2012 UTQAP review; making significant and overdue updates to the undergraduate and graduate curricula; ensuring graduate students receive adequate pedagogical training prior to teaching undergraduate courses; improving professional skills training for graduate students; carefully considering the diversity of the faculty complement in future hiring; addressing significant problems with departmental morale and culture; addressing faculty and student perceptions of apparent preferential treatment of graduate students from Italy; and finally strengthening systematic relationships and affiliations with other units within the University, as well as the department’s impact and visibility within the local community. The Dean’s Administrative Response describes the Faculty, unit and programs’ responses to the reviewers’ recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5. Monitoring and Date of Next Review

The Dean’s office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the Chair, as well as the A&S Unit-Level Academic Planning process. A brief report to the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, midway between the January 20-21, 2021 site visit and the year of the next site visit, will be prepared.

The year of the next review will be no later than the 2028-29 review cycle.

6. Distribution

On **date**, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to the Chair of the Department.

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan - DRAFT

1. Review Summary

Programs Reviewed:	Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations - Ancient, BA (Hons): Specialist, Major Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations - General, BA (Hons): Specialist, Major Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations - Medieval, BA (Hons): Specialist, Major Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations - Modern, BA (Hons): Specialist, Major Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, BA (Hons): Minor Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, MA Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, PhD
Unit Reviewed:	Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professor James P. Allen, Department of Egyptology and Assyriology, Brown University 2. Professor Paul M. Cobb, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, University of Pennsylvania 3. Professor Gottfried Hagen, Department of Middle East Studies, University of Michigan
Date of Review Visit:	December 3-4, 2020
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 26, 2021

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: February 16-17, 2012

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Programs

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Rich opportunities for learning outside the classroom

2. Graduate Programs

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Improving clarity and consistency around graduate comprehensive examinations
- Looking at times to completion which exceed University of Toronto norms but are lower than disciplinary norms

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Scope of faculty interests and teaching; vigorous faculty scholarship

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Evaluating the capacity of existing faculty to meet the demands of all facets of the program; developing a plan to increase faculty complement

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- High quality program in Department identified as “one of the premier units of its kind in the world today”
- Alert and engaged undergraduate and graduate students
- High morale; harmonious environment

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Addressing the quality of physical space to protect the archeological collections in the Department’s care

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Terms of reference; Self-study; Previous review report including the administrative response; Access to all course descriptions; Access to the curricula vitae of faculty.

Consultation Process

Dean, Acting Vice-Dean Academic Planning, Associate Dean Unit-Level Reviews, Faculty of Arts & Science; Department Chair, Associate Chairs Undergraduate and Graduate; Department Faculty; Sessional Lecturers and CLTAs; Undergraduate and Graduate students; Administrative staff; Chairs of relevant cognate units: Anthropology, Comparative Literature, Study of Religion, History, & Art History

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Program's structure, curriculum, length, learning outcomes and degree expectations are entirely appropriate and on par with other peer institutions
- Objectives
 - ▶ NMC's objectives in teaching and research are consistent with the University and Faculty's core mission
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Admission requirements for all programs appear to be entirely appropriate
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Curriculum is of high quality and appropriately structured at all levels
 - ▶ Significant curriculum mapping efforts and defined learning outcomes are evident
 - ▶ Highly successful recent initiative to better integrate quantitative methods into curriculum (particularly in archaeological fields)
 - ▶ University appears supportive of department's efforts to provide more continuity and higher pedagogical quality in language instruction, by having more language courses taught by language-teaching specialists, rather than graduate students and tenure-stream faculty
- Innovation
 - ▶ Reviewers commend NMC's active approach to generate integrative upper-year research projects for undergraduates
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Evaluation of student achievement at all levels, while conventional, seems appropriate and effective
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Undergraduate students express high satisfaction with quality of instruction
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ Quality of applicant/admitted students is entirely appropriate and consistent

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Curriculum is fairly traditional, tailored towards meeting needs of students with expressed prior interest in the field, rather than seeking to attract new students from other disciplines
 - ▶ The two undergraduates interviewed have interests primarily in the modern and contemporary Middle East, and feel that these interests are not being met
 - ▶ Reviewers surprised by light attention paid to language instruction in the self-study and site visit, despite consensus that strength in this field is core to department's mission
 - ▶ Scheduling of upper-level language courses creates conflicts with other courses, preventing many students from advancing as much as they would like
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Considerable discrepancy in real-world opportunities available (or advertised) to undergraduate students in the various subfields
 - ▶ NMC does not offer career counseling
 - ▶ Students critical of availability and flexibility of faculty, and lack of flexibility in the time schedule

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Students and faculty reported a need for greater transparency and flexibility in the course planning process
 - ▶ Programs would benefit from courses that guide students to more than one of the five core areas, with a thematic or comparative perspective
 - ▶ Faculty encouraged to consider additional ways to present courses to students, that that expand the breadth of coverage of issues facing contemporary societies
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Enhance opportunities for students (particularly of modern Middle East) to find local research opportunities, internships, work-study, and study abroad

2. Graduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ NMC's breadth of faculty makes its graduate program one with enviable potential and a producer of a new generation of leaders in their academic fields
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Admission requirements appear entirely appropriate

- ▶ NMC considers the MA largely as a ‘feeder program’ for the PhD level; most students admitted to doctoral program already have an MA; this is very appropriate given concerns about doctoral time to completion
- ▶ Unique position of NMC in Canada assures it can pick very best domestic applicants
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Graduate curriculum offered is comprehensive and rigorous
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Commendable departmental efforts to establish a robust mentoring program for PhD students

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Matters of funding, professionalization, and departmental culture currently prevent the graduate program from realizing its great potential
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Limitations on international graduate students result in NMC having to regularly turn away outstanding candidates
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Reviewers heard contradictory messages regarding accessibility of methods courses in related departments for NMC graduate students
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Satisfaction with the graduate program appears rather mixed, with some students voicing frustrations over faculty responsiveness and engagement
 - ▶ Students frustrated by lack of guidance towards professionalization, building portfolios through conference attendance, organizing workshops, and publication
 - ▶ Students and faculty find current system of TA assignments opaque, and many students end up with very little or no teaching experience by graduation
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ Increasing PhD time to completion rates highlighted as significant concern, though reviewers note that this may be a function of the academic labor market, which does not create incentives to graduate in a timely manner
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ NMC did not present any data on post-degree employment
- Student funding
 - ▶ Graduate funding for conferences is very limited

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Ensure that graduate students do not feel locked out of courses in cognate units that are relevant for their training
- Student engagement, experience and program support services

- ▶ Consider ways to better prepare students for changing conditions, by including training for non-academic employment from the start
- ▶ Ensure students are rotated through several courses as TAs, and that all students have opportunity to teach sections, even if not in their specialization
- ▶ Reviewers encourage NMC to work with FAS to find a way to let qualified graduate students teach their own courses
- ▶ Allow graduate students a voice in assignment of their primary advisor; make explicitly clear that requests for a change from either side are always possible
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ Allow more flexibility regarding requirements, specifically the languages of scholarship, with an eye toward lowering time to completion
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ Reviewers feel strongly that unit should be tracking post-degree employment data if they are not doing so already
- Student funding
 - ▶ Increasing student stipends to compete with US institutions would lower NMC’s rate of rejections

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Research activity and output of NMC is outstanding, and compares very well with any peer institution, making NMC a highly visible institution, and desirable partner for collaborations
 - ▶ Many NMC faculty members are leaders in their respective fields
- Research
 - ▶ Faculty members’ books appear in prestigious series, they publish in leading international, peer-reviewed journals and serve on the boards of important journals, book series, and professional institutions
 - ▶ Although political developments in the Middle East have negatively impacted fieldwork conditions, including archaeological projects, NMC retains significant activity at several sites, with an international profile
 - ▶ NMC fortunate to have own archaeology lab, “an excellent and worthwhile institution”
- Faculty
 - ▶ Junior faculty in both tenure-stream and CLTA positions are poised to maintain excellent departmental profile
 - ▶ Pre-tenure faculty members feel welcome, supported, and protected from heavy service assignments; they note that tenure requirements have been clearly articulated and that they have been given the necessary resources to meet them
 - ▶ Commendable authorization of CLTAs for language instruction in Turkish and Arabic (though reviewers note this should be considered a temporary solution)

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ Pre-tenure faculty feel that NMC could do more to introduce them to the workings of the university, and related opportunities
 - ▶ CLTAs note concerns around contingency, fragility of positions, and a perceived lack of clarity regarding how CLTA positions might become tenure-stream

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ Use an upcoming staff review to explore ways to provide additional support to junior faculty members; a department-specific orientation could be of benefit
 - ▶ NMC encouraged to clearly and realistically articulate what steps, if any, are needed for a CLTA position to be converted to tenure-stream
 - ▶ NMC urged to rely on CLTAs primarily as a suppletive measure—for example, as substitute instructors for Chair or faculty members on sabbatical

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ As a multi-disciplinary area studies unit, NMC is well positioned to interact with a number of departments, such as Anthropology, History, and Comparative Literature; relationships are described as mostly productive and collegial
 - ▶ Partnership with ROM is a major advantage for the training of future archaeologists at undergraduate and graduate levels
 - ▶ NMC heavily invested in outreach, especially to Middle Eastern communities in Canada, and has enjoyed remarkable success in raising funds, most prominently for Persian Studies and for Ethiopian
 - ▶ Archaeology lab conducts regular outreach to local schools
 - ▶ Current chair's leadership highly praised at all levels
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Dedicated, high-quality staff
 - ▶ Department's financial health appears robust
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Department has well-deserved positive reputation for the wide breadth of its faculty, resources, and collaborative spirit
 - ▶ Range of language offerings is "truly impressive"
 - ▶ In every aspect, NMC is an intellectually exciting collective of faculty, staff, and students, which continues to make valuable contributions to its various fields
 - ▶ University should be commended for supporting and investing in NMC as evident from last review cycle, resulting in faculty expansion and move to a new facility

- ▶ Department leadership and faculty express great hopes for new location, noting its proximity to ROM and to upgraded lab space
- International comparators
 - ▶ One of the strongest departments of its kind in North America and the strongest in Canada
 - ▶ Unique in breadth of expertise and curriculum; showing every indication of moving from current position of excellence to one of true eminence
 - ▶ “There may not be another program on the continent that teaches Ethiopian, Syriac, Coptic, Ottoman Turkish, and Pahlavi on a regular basis in addition to the standard offerings of ancient and modern languages”

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Both undergraduate and graduate students report feeling largely removed from the life of the department, except as consumers of course content
 - ▶ Graduate students note lack of cohesion and community among themselves, and with the department as a whole
 - ▶ Students at all levels feel the need for an appropriate mechanism whereby their concerns can be conveyed to faculty and administration, and to conduct relevant work in the areas in which they are training
 - ▶ Faculty note that allocation of resources based on student numbers sets up competition between departments where cooperation would be more fruitful
 - ▶ Faculty note that cognate departments have not been forthcoming in cross-listing courses; however reviewers also flag that some NMC courses have also been open in the past only to students within the department
 - ▶ Reviewers note that while commendable, outreach activities seem largely left to the entrepreneurial spirit of individual faculty members, and not institutionalized
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Department often operates more like a cluster of smaller departments, circumscribed by its five core areas
 - ▶ Concerns raised that administrative boundaries (between departments, campuses, and stakeholder groups) prevent both individuals and the department from developing to their full potential
 - ▶ Undergraduate program does not currently have the same level of staff support as the graduate program (ie. a full-time administrative position)
 - ▶ Insufficient workspace for all graduate students to have their own desks
 - ▶ Current leadership structure seems to put a disproportionate amount of responsibility solely on the Chair; all staff report directly to the Chair, without an administrative supervisor
 - ▶ Premium put on higher enrolment appears to undermine opportunities to create personalized learning experiences in small classes
- Long-range planning and overall assessment

- ▶ Department faces challenges around cohesion, confronted with demand for wide disciplinary collaboration, while maintaining a deep area focus
- ▶ With regard to complement planning, the desire to maintain NMC's remarkable breadth is seen as working against creating new disciplinary perspectives
- ▶ Several faculty members expressed concern that their core areas would drop below critical mass due to possible upcoming retirements
- ▶ Sumerian and Hittite are notable absences in otherwise extremely impressive array of language offerings
- ▶ Instruction in Arabic limited to Modern Standard Arabic – no opportunity for non-native/heritage speakers to acquire colloquial variants
- ▶ Location of Hebrew instruction noted as “somewhat contentious”, with modern Hebrew taught in the Department for the Study of Religion

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Reviewers note significant potential benefits of enhanced academic and social integration; and urge leadership, faculty, and graduate students to engage in an open and sustained conversation to work towards a resolution
 - ▶ Reviewers encourage increased engagement of graduate students in the ancient fields with the modern Middle East, noting opportunity for development of intellectual community
 - ▶ Outreach work to the Toronto community may be helpful in identifying enhanced learning opportunities beyond the classroom
 - ▶ Prioritize opportunities for students when making decisions about course availability; cooperate with other departments in cross-listing and opening courses, both to NMC majors and those from other departments
 - ▶ Administration urged to enhance communication with cognate units, to ensure that increased openness in course cross-listing does not disadvantage NMC in terms of resource allocation
 - ▶ Include graduate students in the self-representation on the departmental website
 - ▶ Faculty urged to be more available and flexible to student needs than they are currently; develop explicit, department-wide agreement on best practices
 - ▶ Department encouraged to use overlaps and synergies between its various parts as sources of new knowledge and growth; “it is high time for faculty and students to be thinking as much as possible as members of one department rather than an assemblage of programs” through a sustained effort to engage all stakeholders
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Additional or enhanced staff positions would benefit the department
 - ▶ Administration of undergraduate program may require a full-time staff person, who might also provide more support for faculty in curriculum planning, to help address student concerns, and provide support for students seeking extracurricular learning opportunities

- ▶ Strengthen role of graduate administrator to serve as liaison between students and faculty/administration
- ▶ Consider creation of office manager position, who can relieve Chair of some administrative responsibilities and more equitably distribute tasks to staff
- ▶ Form standing Executive Committee of faculty representing all five program tracks to assist and consult with Chair in departmental business
- ▶ Provide workspace for all graduate students
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ NMC encouraged to think strategically and creatively about a reconfiguration for a modern faculty position, taking advantage of opportunities to bring in new disciplines such as anthropology, comparative literature, urban studies, environmental history
 - ▶ Expanding to bring data science and digital humanities into NMC via any new faculty position “makes eminent sense”
 - ▶ NMC encouraged to engage in broad departmental discussion about long-term curricular planning, responsive to innovative research and non-conventional student interests
 - ▶ Restructure and re-envision the curriculum to better engage with contemporary concerns
 - ▶ Department encouraged to support language instructors within and outside unit to establish forum to share experiences and professionalize language instruction
 - ▶ Housing all Hebrew instruction in NMC could make good sense intellectually and academically, “reflecting the original context of the language in the region.”
 - ▶ Include instruction in colloquial dialects in the Arabic-language curriculum
 - ▶ Unit and the University urged to partner to identify external sources of funding to support graduate study
 - ▶ Greater coordination between University Advancement and NMC’s entrepreneurial initiatives with local diasporic communities may prove fruitful



2. Administrative Response & Implementation Plan

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

September 14, 2021

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
University of Toronto

Re: UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations

Dear Professor McCahan,

Along with the faculty, staff and students of the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, I am pleased with the external reviewers' assessment of the Department and its undergraduate and graduate programs: Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations – Ancient, H.B.A. (Specialist, Major); Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations – General, H.B.A. (Specialist, Major); Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations – Medieval, H.B.A. (Specialist, Major); Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations – Modern, H.B.A. (Specialist, Major); Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations (Minor); Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations (M.A., Ph.D). The reviewers acknowledged the Department as “one of the strongest departments of its kind in North America and the strongest in Canada, with a well-deserved positive reputation for the wide breadth of its faculty, resources, and collaborative spirit.”

The quality of these programs notwithstanding, as per your letter dated May 25, 2021, the review report raises a number of issues and challenges. I am writing to address the areas of the review report that you identify as key. The responses to these items and implementation plan are separated into immediate- (six months), medium- (one to two years), and longer- (three to five years) term, along with who will take the lead in each area. Where appropriate, I have identified any necessary changes in organization, policy, or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them. The Dean's office has discussed the reviewers' comments through consultation with the Chair of the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations and to develop the following implementation plan incorporating the reviewers' recommendations.

Implementation Plan

The reviewers made several observations and recommendations regarding the undergraduate programs:

- *The reviewers encouraged the Department to reconsider the balance of undergraduate course offerings, to engage students with a wider range of disciplinary backgrounds or*

interests

- *They recommended expanding opportunities for undergraduate students to engage in research and other outside-the-classroom experiences.*

Immediate-term response: The Department is committed to continuing to evolve its diverse course offerings (which range across disciplinary perspectives, time periods, methodologies and geographies). The expertise of recently appointed faculty members will allow NMC's Undergraduate Affairs Committee to pursue the development of new offerings in Data Science and Archeology, Middle Eastern and Islamic Law, and Geography and the Environment, for example.

Expanding experiential opportunities for undergraduate students is one of the strategic initiatives in the 2020-25 Faculty of Arts & Science Academic Plan. To expand opportunities, we established the Experiential Learning & Outreach Support (ELOS) office, which provides administrative, pedagogical and partnership development support for experiential learning activities, including industry and community-engaged projects, field experiences, academic internships, paid work placements, and research and international opportunities. We have also recently appointed a Faculty Advisor on experiential learning. The EL Faculty Advisor is working closely with ELOS to provide strategic guidance and support to academic units interested in expanding or launching experiential learning programming.

Medium-term response: The Department will review the structure of its first-year offerings, in particular, and carefully consider the Reviewers' recommendation to consolidate their multiple first-year offerings into a single gateway course with coverage across the five core areas. A single course with sweeping breadth may engage students with a wider range of disciplinary backgrounds, as the reviewers suggest.

NMC is an historically strong advocate and partner in the Faculty's drive to promote experiential learning and welcomes the opportunity to work with the ELOS Director to expand its experiential opportunities (which under the current COVID conditions may take a few years to realize).

The reviewers observed that "many graduate students end up with very little or no teaching experience by the time they graduate."

Immediate-term response: The decline in undergraduate student enrolment, coupled with a gradual increase in the overall size of the graduate (PhD) program, has made it especially challenging to provide teaching opportunities to PhD students. To address the issue, NMC has begun assigning TA-ships to all incoming first-year PhD students, which will ensure that they complete their degree with more teaching experience. NMC's involvement in enhanced TA opportunities, such as the Writing-Integrated Teaching (WIT) and Quantitative Reasoning in the Humanities (QR) programs, also contributes to students' exposure to teaching pedagogy.

Medium-term response: Over the course of 2021-22, the Dean's Office will undertake a substantial review of department-specific admission targets for domestic graduate students. As

this process will likely lead to a new allocation algorithm, it may yield better alignment between undergraduate and graduate enrolment within departments.

The Faculty continues to offer a “Pathways for PhDs” workshop series, focusing on career exploration and skill translation for graduates beyond the academy. The Coordinator, Graduate Student Professional Development, will work with NMC to explore unit-specific resources and strategies to address this gap.

The reviewers noted increasing PhD time-to-completion rates as a cause for concern, and commented that more flexibility regarding requirements, specifically the languages of scholarship, may help to address the issue.

Immediate-term response: Time-To-Completion (TTC) for NMC is a concern for the Faculty. The Dean’s Office offers unit-specific support for TTC through its Milestones and Pathways program. The Milestones arm of the program offers activities to help graduate students stay on track and achieve their milestones. Unit-based graduate writing support, for instance, is one component of that program. Our Director of Graduate Writing Support holds workshops and writing groups to help students with grant applications and dissertation writing (for instance).

Arts & Science has made a recent change in graduate funding designed to encourage students to apply for external awards and reduce their time to completion. As of 2021-22, we now require Departments to pass on all award incentives (e.g., top ups and TA relief) to domestic holders of major awards. TA relief directly rewards them with more time for their research.

NMC encourages faculty to include funding for their students in their research grant budgets and ensures that funding ‘top ups’ are passed directly to students in their funding packages. In addition, the Department has taken a more proactive role ensuring that faculty meet regularly with their student advisees, requiring signed progress reports, and it has facilitated the convening of more graduate seminars for students to present their research and receive constructive feedback.

Regarding language requirements, a critical facet of doctoral training in NMC, the Department will continue to consider more effective ways of assisting students in achieving this important program requirement.

The reviewers flagged faculty concerns regarding obstacles to inter-departmental cooperation, and recommended increased cross-listing of courses between NMC and cognate units.

Immediate-to-Medium term response: NMC will work to ensure that there is regular, clear, and active communication between the department chairs, particularly regarding undergraduate courses, which will better ensure that all are aware of cross-listing opportunities.

In their comments regarding faculty complement planning, the reviewers encouraged NMC to “think strategically and creatively” about expanding into new disciplinary areas, while also acknowledging the value of comprehensive coverage in existing core areas.

Immediate-term response: NMC is committed to developing and pursuing interdisciplinary and computational research opportunities (e.g., the Digital Humanities), while continuing to bolster research and training in the cultures, histories, languages and literatures of the Near and Middle East.

Medium-term response: The Faculty instituted a new layer of Unit-Level Academic Planning this past year, in which Departments engage in a consultative process to produce an academic plan in the year following the completion of the UTQAP review process and discuss that plan with senior academic and administrative leadership in the Dean’s office. The unit-level academic plan is a forward-looking document that both articulates a department’s planned future directions over the following five years and also highlights progress made on the implementation plan identified in the UTQAP administrative response. Complement planning is a central component of the plan.

The reviewers suggested that faculty members felt there was confusion around complement planning and the basis on which decisions were made to hire faculty to non-continuing CLTA appointments, or to tenure stream positions. This included a sense of lack of transparency around the potential for faculty in CLTA positions to compete competitively for tenure stream positions.

Immediate-term response: Departmental hiring priorities do not necessarily translate into tenure-stream positions because new tenure-stream positions are allocated at the Faculty level. All requests for new positions across the Faculty are submitted to the Faculty Appointments Committee (FAC), which includes representation across its sectors (Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences) and from the Colleges. The FAC reviews all requests for new positions and makes recommendations to the Dean regarding which requests should be granted. In a given year, there are many more requests than available positions. In cases where a department’s request is not granted, they can request permission to hire a non-continuing CLTA. Hence, tenure-stream aspirations sometimes result in CLTA positions. As mentioned above, the Unit-Level Academic Planning process will include faculty complement planning as a key feature and will facilitate clear articulation of the Department’s complement plan over the five years of the plan.

The reviewers highlighted departmental cohesion as a significant issue, and noted several barriers to integration among the department’s various stakeholders. They also report that students at both levels commented on feeling “removed from the life of the department.”

Immediate-term response: NMC’s exceptional interdisciplinary range and diversity is both its greatest strength and presents its most significant challenge. Seminars, lecture series, and social events that attempt to transcend the Department’s disciplinary ‘silos’ have met with some success and will continue to be supported with Department resources. Such community-building

activities and events will also help to address student concerns about their lack of involvement in the intellectual life of the Department. Curriculum, such as a common core ‘gateway’ course (see above), that better integrates NMC’s diverse range of disciplinary fields and programs is critical and will be a priority of the Department’s curriculum planning efforts. Faculty appointments that are truly interdisciplinary (as specified above) will also bring greater cohesion over time.

The reviewers noted that the department’s leadership structure places a considerable amount of responsibility solely on the Chair, and identified other areas in which additional administrative support would benefit the department.

Immediate-term response: The Faculty, through its Administrative Human Resources Office, is working with the Department to conduct a complete review of its administrative staff requirements.

The Dean’s office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the Chair, as well as the A&S Unit-Level Academic Planning process. A brief report to the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, midway between the December 3-4, 2020 site visit and the year of the next site visit, will be prepared.

The year of the next review will be no later than the 2027-28 review cycle.

To conclude, we appreciate that the external reviewers identified the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations’ strengths and noted a few areas for development. The Department has already begun to move forward with plans to address the recommendations as presented by the reviewers.

Sincerely,



Melanie Woodin
Dean and Professor of Cell and Systems Biology

cc.

Timothy Harrison, Chair, Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, Faculty of Arts & Science

Gillian Hamilton, Acting Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science

Daniella Mallinck, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Andrea Benoit, Academic Review Officer, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science

3. Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

This section will be inserted after AP&P by the VPAP office using language verbatim from the approved Report of the meeting.

4. Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers praised the department as “unquestionably the best of its kind in Canada, and in some ways the best in North America”; they commended the University’s support of the Department in response to the last review, through faculty expansion and an upcoming move to a new facility; the high-quality curriculum with extensively mapped course learning outcomes; the “truly impressive” range of language offerings; the outstanding research activity and output; they note that pre-tenure faculty report feeling welcome and supported, with tenure requirements clearly articulated; departmental staff are strong and dedicated; and finally, the reviewers highlighted NMC’s significant investment in outreach and success at raising funds, most prominently for Persian and Ethiopian studies. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: reconsidering the balance of undergraduate course offerings, to engage students with a wider range of disciplinary backgrounds or interests; expanding opportunities for undergraduate students to engage in research and other outside-the-classroom experiences; enhancing graduate student teaching opportunities; addressing increasing PhD time-to-completion rates with more flexible requirements; increasing cross-listing of courses between NMC and cognate units; thinking strategically about expanding into new disciplinary areas; addressing faculty confusion and a perceived lack of transparency around complement planning; enhancing departmental cohesion and integration; and considering additional administrative support to reduce the burden on the Chair and generally benefit the department. The Dean’s Administrative Response describes the Faculty, unit and programs’ responses to the reviewers’ recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5. Monitoring and Date of Next Review

The Dean’s office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the Chair, as well as the A&S Unit-Level Academic Planning process. A brief report to the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, midway between the December 3-4, 2020 site visit and the year of the next site visit, will be prepared.

The year of the next review will be no later than the 2027-28 review cycle.

6. Distribution

On **date**, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to the Chair of the Department.

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan - DRAFT

1. Review Summary

Programs Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Education and Community Development (MEd, MA, PhD) • Educational Leadership and Policy (MEd, MA, EdD, PhD) • Higher Education (MEd, MA, EdD, PhD)
Unit Reviewed:	Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Jim Hearn, University of Georgia • Professor Nancy Kendall, University of Wisconsin, Madison • Professor Susan Robertson, University of Cambridge
Date of Review Visit:	November 4-6, 9-10, 2020
Date presented to AP&P:	October 26, 2021

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: March 1-2, 2012

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant program strengths:

- Innovative qualities and reputation of specific programs
- Strong international reputations of individual faculty
- High quality applicants
- Adult Education & Community Development: “exceptionally student-focused program”; well-integrated opportunities for learning beyond the classroom and opportunities for action research
- Educational Administration: program focus reflects current international policy and research themes
- Higher Education: strong courses in administration

Opportunities for program improvement and enhancement:

- Reducing the number of degrees offered by the unit and establishing substantive differentiation amongst them
- Rationalizing course offerings including the development of common PhD, EdD and MA seminars to enhance student learning and research opportunities
- Developing a more structured research methods curriculum
- Developing a common understanding about comprehensive examinations across the department’s programs
- Assigning a research supervisor at admission
- Resolving the discrepancy between the numbers of registered and active students
- Renewing faculty at the junior level
- Developing strategies to ensure all faculty apply for research grants on a regular basis
- Developing a shared faculty vision of the Department’s collective purpose and identity, and committee and administrative structures to support this vision
- Higher Education program: developing strategies to improve student success in external funding competitions

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Terms of reference; Self-study and appendices; Previous review report including the administrative response(s); OISE Academic Plan 2017-2022, and the department's academic plan; Access to all course descriptions; Access to the curricula vitae of faculty.

Consultation Process

Faculty, students, administrative staff and senior program administrators, as well as members of relevant cognate units, representatives of alumni, and community partner organizations and institutions.

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Programs (n/a)

2. Graduate Programs

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ LHAЕ programs are nationally and internationally renowned
 - ▶ Department has made real and impactful progress towards addressing recommendations from previous review
 - ▶ Adult Education and Community Development (**AECD**): Unique, impressive program with very strong commitment to critical research and community engagement
 - ▶ Educational Leadership and Policy (**ELP**): Program has shown impressive capacity to maintain its mission, vision, and quality while rapidly diversifying program options, expanding course offerings, and growing its student population
 - ▶ International ELP field (EdD) is “a superb offering for international leaders”
 - ▶ Higher Education (**HE**): Commendable use of student cohorts to facilitate learning, careful curriculum mapping, and commitment to authentic assessment
- Objectives
 - ▶ LHAЕ takes seriously the need to educate students as excellent researchers
 - ▶ AECD's distinctive and appropriate program mission – to engage adult and community learners in building knowledge for a more democratic world – is illustrated in the range of courses offered, an ongoing commitment to critical theory and pedagogy, and in work with communities inside and beyond the University
 - ▶ ELP's mission, objectives, and learning outcomes are internally well-aligned and well-integrated into the missions and strategic priorities of LHAЕ, OISE, and the University

- ▶ HE's mission, vision, and values are appropriate and evident in evolving curricular structure, faculty research, and local, national, and international engagements
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Admission requirements for all three programs and their degrees are appropriate and consistent with international best practices
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Significant improvements in curriculum and programming since last review
 - ▶ Curriculum designs align with program learning outcomes
 - ▶ Shared research methods courses and cross-specialisation opportunities contribute to overcoming cultural and historical boundaries between programs
 - ▶ AECD: Successful development of degree pathways, offering flexibility for full and part-time students at the Master's and Doctoral level
 - ▶ AECD: PhD curriculum enables flexibility and customisation to student needs
 - ▶ AECD: Commendable diversity of teaching practices noted as central to the overall program vision
 - ▶ AECD: Changing structure of course offerings, with fewer courses enrolling more students, is appropriate given recent rationalising of the total number of staff
 - ▶ ELP: Programs emphasize students' knowledge, research literacy (MEd) or methods (all other degrees), and flexibility in course enrolment
 - ▶ ELP has worked carefully to incorporate input from various stakeholders, including alumni, into quality improvement efforts
 - ▶ ELP: Students appreciate opportunities to participate in faculty research projects; strong linkages between research and teaching are evident
 - ▶ ELP: MA program "could serve as an excellent bridge into the PhD," providing students with a solid basis in the field and in research methods
 - ▶ HE: Program requirements and learning outcomes cover key areas of theory, policy, and practice, and encompass alternative approaches to research design and analysis.
 - ▶ HE: Curriculum design prepares students to exercise agency as researchers, leaders, and practitioners and to engage as active, ethical citizens in their areas of expertise
 - ▶ HE: "appears to be well ahead of most of its peers in its attention to learning outcomes specification and assessment"; faculty have abundant data to inform decision-making and continuous program quality enhancement
- Innovation
 - ▶ ELP is a leader in developing innovative online/hybrid and geographically-based learning opportunities, expanding access to new practitioner populations and fostering scholarly inquiry on school practices and outcomes locally, nationally, and globally
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Collaborative Specializations have helped with departmental integration, and were described as 'essential', 'generative', and 'loci of creativity and innovation'
 - ▶ AECD: Students value the range of critical perspectives offered in the program and opportunities to undertake a community practicum or international study

- ▶ ELP: Students reported that classes are excellent and bring together theory, practice, and evaluation in ways that model the power of research and practice to inform one another
- ▶ HE: Doctoral students described the program as a great fit and appreciate the blend of coursework and experiential learning
- ▶ HE: Program proactively addressing concerns regarding course coverage and student advising, “with likely resulting enhancements to quality”
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ AECD: Time to completion rates across all programs are in line with LHAE, OISE and the University
 - ▶ ELP: Rapid growth in fields/specializations and modes of delivery fuelled by multiple program innovations and expansions, particularly in the practice-oriented Master’s and Doctoral tracks
 - ▶ HE: data on applications, enrolments, time to completion, student evaluations, and related indicators are all quite strong
- Quality indicators – faculty
 - ▶ AECD: “Student evaluations of courses are very positive indeed, and all faculty and staff involved should be congratulated”

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ ELP: Program is reaching an inflection point with challenges including significant changes in the student population, a very high number of program options and delivery modes, very high faculty supervisory loads, and inability to meet international demand for ELP’s research-focused programs. These challenges impact student accessibility, diversity, and experience, and they place significant and unsustainable labor burdens on staff and faculty.
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ ELP: Overlap in core courses for the Master’s programs and EdD/PhD programs simplifies some aspects of teaching but may create additional pressures related to course size and quality
 - ▶ ELP: Students noted the need for more advanced courses for doctoral students, and a desire for more research opportunities and professional skills to support non-academic careers
 - ▶ ELP: Reviewers express concern that International ELP field within the EdD program “will not train the next generation of educational researchers, nor will it result in international students learning alongside their Canadian peers”
- Innovation
 - ▶ ELP: Increase in online program offerings raises questions of whether varying availability of full/part-time and online delivery options for different student populations impacts accessibility and equity

- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Multiple interviewees noted that Black and Indigenous students, faculty, and staff require more representation and support than they receive
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Some students expressed concerns about the academic advisor assignment and thesis supervisor pairing processes, and about perceptions of inequitable RA opportunities across the Department
 - ▶ Reviewers note potential challenges in building a shared sense of community and culture of engagement with increasing part-time enrolments and growing numbers of program pathways
 - ▶ Reviewers note tension between students' need for consistent and regular advising and faculty members' heavy advising loads; with some students feeling that they do not have full or effective access to their advisors
 - ▶ HE: Some student concerns regarding high levels of faculty turnover and inconsistent course offerings
- Quality indicators – faculty
 - ▶ Reviewers express concerns regarding instructional equity and quality given rapid increases in the number of sessional instructors, but note the lack of other options given current constraints on hiring tenure-track faculty
- Student funding
 - ▶ LHAE faces “severe restrictions” in accepting MA and PhD students due to funding stipulations; reviewers note that the limited funding model for the MA “hinders the program’s ability to fulfil its research training mission or to serve as an effective pipeline into the PhD program”
 - ▶ Faculty commented that the shift toward self-funded practitioner programs has real implications for accessibility and equity, and teaching patterns
 - ▶ Reviewers observe that student financial support is low but comparable in most cases to that available for students in similar programs at OISE and the University

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ ELP: Ensure that program relationships and quality of student experience do not decline due to program expansion, rising enrolments, and increased demand for limited resources; reviewers note that “continued growth likely cannot occur through increased efficiencies alone”
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ ELP: Consider whether leadership requirement for EdD admission provides enough flexibility to effectively reach international applicants interested in a doctoral degree
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Consider developing a range of advanced qualitative and quantitative research methods courses to support MA and PhD students across programs
 - ▶ Ensure that required and elective courses are offered on a predictable, reliable schedule

- ▶ Clarify and consider consolidating/rationalizing the large number of Master's and Doctoral-level program pathways, while continuing to offer flexibility for full and part-time students
- ▶ AECD: Consider ways to include research training as part of the MEd program for students wishing to pursue doctoral studies
- ▶ AECD: Consider offering some courses during the summer session to enable students to move through programs more rapidly
- ▶ ELP: Program enhancements to consider include clearly delineating supervision requirements, ensuring core courses achieve learning outcomes; conducting annual student surveys; and expanding professional development opportunities
- ▶ ELP: Assess the direction and quality of students' program pathways, including collecting information on which elective courses are most often pursued by students in each degree track, determining the rate at which various courses are offered within the program, and identifying courses or specializations outside of ELP to which students might be directed
- ▶ HE: Continue building and maintaining instructional, advising, and mentoring capacity to meet student demand
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Explore new mechanisms to admit international students to MA and PhD programs
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Conduct an annual survey to inform development of diverse and appropriate assessment practices
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Establish a cross-program working group, including students, to assess part-time and online/hybrid program pathways to ensure consistent program quality, student engagement, and sense of community
 - ▶ Review academic advisor assignment and thesis supervisor pairing processes to ensure equity in information, opportunities, and outcomes
 - ▶ Consider a central communications process to share information about mentoring opportunities with all students
 - ▶ HE: Develop and expand external relations and communication efforts, including dissemination of research findings, in order to further enhance research support and recruitment, and influence policy and practice
 - ▶ HE: Invest in more intensive alumni fundraising efforts to support students and program development, as well as the growth of a distinctive, ongoing sense of community within and beyond the program
 - ▶ Consider developing supervision requirements/guidelines to ensure a consistent supervisory experience for all students
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ Monitor whether time to completion is impeded (or not) depending on whether students enter a PhD program after completing an MEd or an MA program
 - ▶ Consider strategies to stabilize MA program yield

- Student funding
 - ▶ ELP: Consider expanding support for PhD students to successfully apply for external funding opportunities.

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ LHAE faculty are highly regarded both nationally and internationally and are well-positioned to help students build their professional networks
- Research
 - ▶ Many faculty are deeply involved in important basic and applied research, successfully securing funding from a wide range of sources, and publishing in well-known outlets
 - ▶ Range of faculty research projects provides the basis for research-informed teaching and enables students to extend their research experiences
 - ▶ Centre for the Study of Canadian and International Higher Education, associated with LHAE, is a respected centre for scholarly research
 - ▶ Faculty research addresses pressing conceptual and policy concerns of the field and their work is well-cited and influential
- Faculty
 - ▶ Faculty have a range of expertise in adult and community work in different formal and non-formal learning settings, with diverse knowledge systems and methods for researching a range of issue areas
 - ▶ Faculty play key roles in a variety of professional organizations and publications and are regularly called on nationally and internationally for their expertise.
 - ▶ Faculty research profiles, outputs, and impacts match or exceed other comparable national and international institutions
 - ▶ HE: Faculty appreciate that the challenges the program faces are being addressed via the recent and planned faculty hires, and noted their strong commitment to achieving more diversity among the adjunct faculty as well as tenure-line faculty

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Research
 - ▶ Intensive pressures to teach and advise students is likely to impact the time and attention faculty are able to put into their research agendas
- Faculty
 - ▶ Distribution of Doctoral and Master supervision varies across faculty members, with some carrying very large supervisory loads

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
 - ▶ Consider providing support for research collaborations, both cross-program and with external partners; reviewers note a number of “Grand Challenges” models that might be of interest
- Faculty
 - ▶ “The faculty and staff replacement plan must, at a minimum, be followed to maintain the department’s capacity to deliver existing programming”; planning for further growth would prepare the program for any expansion opportunities
 - ▶ Consider long-term impacts of heavy teaching, advising, and service loads in light of faculty research commitments
 - ▶ Areas of faculty expertise to consider expanding include refugee education, immigration and education, indigenous education, health and education, and family-school relationships

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Relationships in the department were consistently described in positive terms within and across stakeholder groups; “We were struck by the extent to which people described their colleagues as working to support one another even as they navigated expanding demands with few increases in resources”
 - ▶ “Faculty, staff, and students all indicated in their interviews that program culture was extremely supportive, that people communicated well and without fear, and that the program was administered very competently”
 - ▶ Department Chair highlighted as doing a great deal to support a shift in departmental culture
 - ▶ External organizations were highly complimentary about their relationships with LHAE, and about students’ contributions to their work
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Program leaders noted effective cross-program communication and planning due to regular meetings and the strengths of the current chair
 - ▶ Department stakeholders supported the organization of the department into three programs and three collaborative specializations, and commented that communication functioned well and resources were equitably distributed
 - ▶ Administrative staff undertake a demanding range of work; “They are extremely professional and are committed to the department”
 - ▶ New investments in the OISE building are intended to upgrade the quality of the space
 - ▶ Faculty, students, and staff generally expressed that the infrastructure and technology support that they have is sufficient for their work

- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Overall, LHAE has a well-deserved national and international reputation for excellence
 - ▶ Department has been largely successful in navigating the complexities of creating a united administrative unit; rationalizing distribution of work between the department and each of the three programs; creating a broadly supportive departmental culture; creating rich opportunities for leaders, faculty, staff, and students to connect and engage across programs; supporting innovative new degree pathways that enable student growth; and beginning to address staffing shortages
 - ▶ Reviewers were impressed by the unit's efforts to contribute to education internationally, through research and consulting
- International comparators
 - ▶ Across comparator institutions, AECD benchmarks well; program "has a mixture of excellent faculty with a strong commitment to engaged research, offers critical teaching, and has an impact on the communities with which it engages and on student academic formation"
 - ▶ ELP "is clearly the most recognized program of its type in Canada, and one of the top programs globally"
 - ▶ HE: "By any measures we can identify, the program is clearly the most internationally-recognized and distinguished higher education program in Canada"

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Concerns expressed about the lack of university understanding of, or support for, LHAE's (and OISE's) excellence, and about communication between OISE and the University; "there generally did not appear to be many opportunities for collaboration or synergies"
 - ▶ Residual reporting structures can disrupt information flow between LHAE, OISE, and the University and cause delays and misunderstandings
 - ▶ Some faculty commented on feeling they are not sufficiently valued in LHAE or OISE, and that their considerable experience has been overlooked
 - ▶ Internal and external relationships will experience increased strain if demands continue to increase without more resources
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Enrolments have increased significantly since last review with no corresponding increase in staff and faculty; department "appears to be understaffed in relation to expanding demands for student support and program development, management, and assessment"
 - ▶ Reviewers note concerns about the financial resources available to LHAE, the pressure to increase student numbers without additional resources, and the mechanisms available to increase departmental revenue

- ▶ Relatively low levels of staffing and resources for collaborative specializations despite being noted as “absolutely essential to the intellectual work of students and faculty”
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ “The greatest long-range planning challenge appears to be related to increasing demands for student enrolment, coupled with few increases in resources”
 - ▶ Resource shortfalls cause difficulty in launching new initiatives and have meant that decisions about academic programming are shaped by financial imperatives
 - ▶ “Students, faculty, and staff navigating injustices related to indigeneity, race, gender/sexuality, and poverty continue to face particular difficulties that are not always fully understood or effectively responded to”
 - ▶ University decision to require funding for all PhD students and first-year MA students has significantly limited international student recruitment

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ “Expanding faculty and staff is a necessity for quality growth to continue, as is investment in staff development and advancement, and faculty research and teaching”
 - ▶ Conduct a business systems audit with the goal of further smoothing and strengthening cross-program processes and reducing communication lags
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ If additional resources are not available, any additional growth should be carefully considered in terms of impact on the quality of programming, program culture, and departmental relationships and work environment
 - ▶ Form a working group to explore approaches to diversifying revenue streams and to raise funds for departmental priorities through mechanisms other than adding new degrees or expanding student numbers
 - ▶ Establish a cross-program and/or cross-departmental working group to deepen understanding and create an action plan to address issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the areas of research, teaching, outreach, institutional organization, hiring/admissions, and labor relations
 - ▶ Continue to support diversity in recruitment of faculty, staff, and students
 - ▶ Reviewers advise caution regarding the pace of change, noting that additional efforts to centralize aspects of the department should be limited in range and implemented slowly
 - ▶ Succession planning for departmental leadership roles
 - ▶ Self- or government-funded international students would bring in much-needed revenues and ensure the international nature of the cohort and the international reputation of the program

2. Administrative Response & Implementation Plan

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
OISE | ONTARIO INSTITUTE
FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION

Glen A. Jones, Ph.D.
Professor and Dean

Professor Mark Schmuckler
Acting Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
Office of the Vice-President and Provost
University of Toronto

June 25, 2021

Re: Administrative Response to the 2019-2020 External Review of the Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education and its programs

Dear Professor Schmuckler,

Thank you for your request for the administrative response to the external review of the Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education (LHAE) and its programs, and for the summary of the review.

The review took place during the 2019-2020 academic year; however, the site visit—originally scheduled to take place from March 26-27, 2020 was deferred due to the pandemic and took place virtually, from November 4-10, 2020. Broadly consultative and inclusive – involving the participation of faculty, staff and students – the self-study process allowed members of the department to reflect on their achievements and challenges while considering the next phase of the department’s development. I would like to thank the LHAE leadership, faculty, staff, and students for embracing the review as an opportunity for reflection, and for demonstrating a collective commitment to the department’s continued success. We are also appreciative of the contributions of external reviewers, professors Hearn (University of Georgia), Kendall (University of Wisconsin-Madison) and Robertson (University of Cambridge), for their consultation with us in November 2020; their report represents a thoughtful review of the challenges and opportunities facing the department. What follows is our response to the points raised (in italics) in your letter dated April 15, 2021. The administrative response was developed in consultation with Professor Nina Bascia, LHAE Chair, and reflects key elements of the unit response.

- *The reviewers observed that the cost of the funding commitment that supports MA and PhD students, including international students, has effectively led to decreased enrolments in these programs and increased enrolment in self-funded, practice-oriented MEd and EdD programs, and limits international student recruitment. This has consequences for student diversity and potentially on the international reach and reputation of LHAE programs.*

Students accepted into most research-stream programs (MA and PhD) receive funding from their department and/or Faculty; however, while the number of students in funded programs has remained relatively stable, the student funding model has made it challenging for OISE to increase enrollment in the research-stream programs, especially of international students. Based on the targets that are set annually for research-stream programs, each of OISE’s four academic departments can only admit one international student per year. If the student or department is able to secure external funding, additional international students could be admitted. Previously, OISE’s international students in funded programs have been successful in securing other sources of funding, mainly from their home government; however, that has been more difficult in recent years, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic when some governments decided to postpone or suspend their graduate scholarships programs.

The limited number of international students in research-stream programs is due to the lack of provincial funding; specifically, the absence of provincial grant funding for international students. Several years ago, the government introduced a policy that allowed universities to admit and receive provincial grants for international PhD students, similar to domestic PhD students; however, this policy was retracted in 2018.

Relatedly, increasing the recruitment and enrolment of international students in non-funded professional programs (MEd and EdD) is an important strategy for OISE for two reasons. Firstly, under its *Innovative and Transformative Pedagogy* focusing theme, OISE's Academic Plan 2017-2022 calls for redefining existing and developing new EdD programs in order to differentiate this professional degree from the PhD degree, and renew its reputation and relevance for a broad range of education leaders. The plan also envisages rethinking and redesigning our MEd programs by developing new foci and related course clusters, and by modifying the delivery where applicable using the technology to enhance the viability of this professional degree, and improve access for domestic and international students. Secondly, growing enrolment of international students in non-funded professional programs is an important budget strategy, which allows OISE to balance its budget and ensure resources in support of its academic goals.

Implementation Plan

(a) Immediate to Medium-Term Actions (Dean's Office, Department)

Increasing the diversity of our student population in all programs, and identifying more efficient mechanisms for student financial support are important priorities outlined in OISE's current Academic Plan.

Related to the international student recruitment and funding, in collaboration with the Office of Associate Dean, Programs and the Office of the Registrar and Student Services (ORSS), a staff position to support the departments with recruitment and retention of international students, including identifying sources of funding for international students was established within the ORSS. In the winter term of 2021, OISE introduced a policy that allows for more flexibility regarding admitting international students in research-stream programs. The policy encourages departments to optimize the use of partial scholarships and internal resources to increase the number of international students. Additionally, a subcommittee of the OISE Programs Strategic Advisory Group (OPSAC) will be established to review current and investigate new mechanisms for providing student financial support and identify means of increasing the share of student funding provided through external research grants and fellowships.

Related to student diversity, OISE's Academic Plan includes a strong commitment to increasing the diversity of our faculty, staff and students in order to better reflect the communities we serve, which, along with our commitment to equity and social justice, continues to be an important priority for all of our departments and units. Specific initiatives to support recruitment and retention of students from underrepresented populations are described below (pp 6-7). The department of LHAE participates in these OISE-wide initiatives while continuing to review and refine its recruitment and admissions strategies, and engage in program innovation to further diversify its student population and increase enrolment of international students.

- *The reviewers note comments from students that high faculty advising loads can lead to a feeling that they do not have full or effective access to their advisors; some students also expressed concern/confusion over the processes of advisor assignment and thesis supervisor pairing.*

Accessible and supportive departmental advisors, supervisors, and staff are vital to enabling students to excel in scholarship and become successful professionals. In this regard, the department endeavors to follow the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) general regulations and supervision guidelines according to which,

students in the thesis-based programs are admitted with a faculty advisor clearly identified at the time of admission. This allows a student to seek initial guidance while considering a faculty member whose research program best aligns with their research interests and who can serve as a most suitable supervisor. Normally, the advisor later becomes a formal supervisor; however, circumstances can change along the trajectory of a student's journey impacting the ability to secure a supervisor and contributing to uneven supervisory loads. Specifically, the problem occurs when a student's area of study shifts during their 2nd year of the program, which is normally the time by which a supervisor should be identified and a supervisory committee established. Other reasons could include change in relationship with the initially identified faculty advisor; a leave of absence from studies due to financial, personal, or health issues; faculty retirements/departures; student transfers into programs other than those originally enrolled in, etc. As noted, these issues can create difficulties for students in finding supervisors and impact faculty workloads.

Implementation Plan

(a) Immediate to Medium-term Actions (Department)

Advising and mentoring of students is at the core of student experience within OISE and most faculty have study groups that embrace students, provide supports and promote peer mentorship. The department is exploring ways to address the problem of uneven faculty workload including rethinking its admission strategies between the various degrees offered, and engaging in a strategic and fiscally responsible faculty renewal planning. For the 2021-2022 incoming cohort, the department will review existing and provide clearer information regarding the difference between faculty advisor and supervisor, the timing, and the process for securing a supervisor. The department also invites faculty from other departments at OISE who have a specific interest in supervising or serving on a thesis committee in LHAE to consider cross-appointments. Additional assistance to current PhD students is being offered by Office of the Associate Dean, Programs through the Thesis in Motion initiative where a senior OISE faculty member provides mentoring to students who struggle through the thesis writing phase.

In addition to the recent and upcoming faculty hires in the department that are expected to contribute to a redistribution of the supervisory load, the department hopes to utilize to a greater extent the SGS Progress Tracker, which is a relatively new online data management tool that tracks supervisory committee meetings, progress reports, and project milestones at the graduate level. In the meantime, a closer monitoring of the required annual meeting of the supervisory committee and the student, as well as a faculty meeting to discuss students at risk will be applied. It is expected that, over the next two years, these initiatives will improve issues related to supervisory capacity within the department.

- *The reviewers identify growing enrolments coupled with resource shortfalls as LHAE's "greatest long-range planning challenge," observing that enrolments have increased significantly since 2012 while staff and faculty complements have not.*
 - *They noted rapid increases in the number of sessional instructors with corresponding concerns about instructional equity and quality, and recommended that faculty and staff complement plans be developed to support any further growth in LHAE programs.*

In order to continue to offer outstanding graduate programs while maintaining flexibility in the face of budgetary challenges and changes to programs, OISE relies on a diversified academic staff including tenure-stream and teaching-stream faculty with continuing appointments, contractually limited term appointment faculty (CLTA), part-time faculty and sessional lecturers. Additionally, cross-appointed faculty from other divisions within the university, as well as a number of adjunct faculty and emeriti professors support OISE programs.

Sessional lecturers are hired by course rather than by annual or continuing appointment, fluctuating in number from session to session. All three LHAE programs rely on a number of CLTA faculty, in order to ensure program continuity and capacity. All three programs also rely on sessional lecturers, which has been exacerbated by the combination of the reduction in faculty complement, the increase in student enrolment, and an increase in specialized programs (e.g., new fields, cohorts) intended to increase program accessibility, quality and innovation. In addition to being experienced educators and practitioners, sessional lecturers appointed in the department meet the requirements of the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) to teach at the graduate level. Furthermore, the process for hiring sessional lecturers is highly selective; the department has a pool of excellent educators to draw from many of whom have made sustained contributors to the department's programs over many years.

Implementation Plan

(a) Immediate to Medium-term Actions (Department, Dean's Office)

The department is committed to ensuring the intellectual quality of student experience through program structure and faculty research, and one of the strategies in this regard is access to core faculty. All students, including MEd, have core faculty, and not only sessional lecturers, teaching many of their courses. MEd students have the possibility of completing a coursework-only option or coursework plus Major Research Paper (MRP) option. MRP students, MA and doctoral students must select their research topics and complete their research projects under the careful guidance of core faculty.

Under its *Building our Community* focusing theme, OISE's Academic Plan 2017-2022 calls for identifying ways to engage and support our non-continuing instructors and faculty, acknowledging their contributions and the critical work they do. It is expected that the department's programs will continue to rely to a certain extent on expertise and input from practitioners in the field of education, such as schools and school boards, and the department will continue to engage them in teaching especially in professional programs while balancing staffing by hiring faculty in continuing tenure-stream and teaching-stream positions. In all three LHAE programs, the intent is to guide students to understand and become skilled in making theory-practice connections, so there is not a strong divergence between "academic" and "field" instructors and between continuing faculty and contract instructors.

In collaboration with the Dean's Office, strategic and principled faculty renewal planning will be critical for the department and will need to shift from the replacement-only focused model of faculty hiring to a program-needs focused model. Hiring tenure-stream and teaching-stream faculty in continuing positions will be prioritized in order to strengthen the programs and maintain balanced academic staffing within the department. To that effect, in 2019-2020, the department hired an Assistant Professor in Postsecondary Finance and Student Success. In 2020-2021, two new tenure-stream faculty were hired in the department effective July 1, 2021 including: Assistant Professor, Critical Adult Education; and Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership, Policy and Social Diversity. The search for Associate Professor, Higher Education Leadership and Administration was not successful and will continue in 2021-2022. Pending approval, the department also has plans for a search in Adult Education for Equity in Organizations and Communities. If successful, these searches will strengthen the continuing faculty complement within the department.

- *The reviewers commented on the wide range of pathways through several programs and suggested considering the effectiveness of each for supporting its target groups of students, and consolidating where possible, in light of the additional scheduling and administrative overhead in offering them.*

The department's three programs with their multiple degrees and fields all share a commitment to excellence in academic and professional training in education, educational leadership, policy, and practice. The 2011-2012 review of the department also recommended clearer differentiation between degrees, as well as curricular coordination across multiple degrees and program areas. To this end, since the last review, the department made important changes to its programs including renaming the Educational Leadership and Policy program in 2013-2014 (formerly Educational Administration), and eliminating the coursework plus thesis option from its MEd degree in 2016-2017 in order to ensure a clearer differentiation between the professional MEd degree and research-stream MA degree.

Over the past five years, in response to the goals and priorities outlined in OISE's Academic Plan 2017-2022, the department developed and implemented several program innovations including the redesigned Doctor of Education (EdD) in Educational Leadership and Policy (2017-2018) featuring the 'thesis – dissertation in practice' as the culminating component of the program. In 2018-2019, a new field in International Educational Leadership and Policy within the ELP (EdD) was added. This innovative cohort option for working professionals is delivered online with short in-person summer institutes. In 2018-2019, the Higher Education program changed the name and focus of one of its fields from "Health Professional Education" to "Education in the Professions" to better reflect a broader scope of professional education research and scholarship and interest of professional educators.

Implementation Plan

(a) Immediate to Medium-term Actions (Department)

Over the past five years, the department has invested tremendous energy and resources to improve its programs and create new specializations. These initiatives have increased the number of students, which leads the department into the next phase of faculty renewal planning that will sustain the excellence in research and scholarship, while supporting quality of its academic programs. Departmental leadership intends to work with programs to review current changes and continue to act on academic priorities identified in OISE's Academic Plan. For example, following the successful modification of the Educational Leadership and Policy program's EdD and the addition of the new internationally focused field within the EdD, the Higher Education program will explore the possibility of modifying the curriculum of its EdD degree. Given that the Adult Education and Community Development program does not have an EdD degree, the program faculty will consider developing an Adult Education focused EdD or a field within one of the department's existing professional doctorates. In the spirit of enhancing its outreach to more targeted student populations, the department will also review and consider changes to its existing for-credit certificate programs, as well as encourage the development of informal learning opportunities such as a summer leadership institutes for postsecondary leaders.

Implementation Plan

(b) Immediate to Medium-term Actions (Dean's Office)

In recent years, the Office of Associate Dean, Programs started two initiatives that enhance inter-departmental collaboration and ensure a more systematic approach to program planning including: (1) the creation of the Student Experience Committee comprised of students, faculty and staff with a mandate to promote and support the development and implementation of student-centred initiatives and services that enhance the student experience at OISE: and (2) the establishment of the aforementioned OISE Programs Strategic Advisory Committee (OPSAC) comprised of Associate Chairs, Academic Coordinators, Graduate Liaison Officers, and other individuals at OISE involved in the planning and delivery of academic programs.

The mandate of OPSAC is to advise on issues that have the most significant impact on the development and delivery of OISE's programs, including ensuring that our programs continue to be strong and relevant in terms of their content and learning outcomes, and that they are sustainable and meet the needs of students. Over the next two years, a subcommittee of OPSAC will be formed to review the research courses across OISE in order to ensure a solid foundation in research methodology for students in research-stream programs (MA & PhD). The subcommittee will review existing research methods courses, identify duplication and gaps/areas for course development with a view to increasing the number of and access to quantitative and qualitative research methods courses for all research-stream students consistent with the decentralized budget model at OISE.

- *The reviewers noted difficulties faced by BIPOC students in the areas of research, teaching, outreach, institutional organization, hiring/admissions, and labor relations, and recommended establishing a working group to deepen understanding of these difficulties and create an action plan for addressing them.*

As mentioned above, in addition to OISE's longstanding commitment to equity and social justice, the Academic Plan 2017-2022 calls for increasing the diversity of our faculty, staff and students in order to better reflect the communities we serve. Specifically, the plan includes an objective to "ensure appropriate admissions, recruitment and retention policies, based on clearly identified goals, in order to increase diversity among students" including Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour, as well as individuals from other underrepresented groups.

Implementation Plan

(a) Medium-term to Long-term Actions (Dean's Office, Department)

In 2017-2018, OISE's Diverse Recruitment and Admissions Working group (DRAW) released a report on outcomes of the OISE Applicant Survey, which was distributed to the departments to help identify and address applications and admissions process issues that may inhibit diversity. Drawing on findings from this report, the Office of Associate Dean, Programs established a committee of faculty, students and staff from across OISE's departments and units who are involved in student recruitment and admissions activities. The Diverse Recruitment Committee's mandate is to develop a comprehensive recruitment strategy designed to increase the pool and quality of applicants with a view to enhancing participation of students from underrepresented groups, as well as international students in all programs. In addition to the already mentioned staff position in the Office of the Registrar and Student Services that supports recruitment and retention of international students, the Indigenous Education Liaison staff position was created within the Office of the Dean to provide administration and coordination support for Indigenous activities including Indigenous student recruitment and retention.

With a view to realizing OISE's commitment to increasing the diversity of our community and ensuring that equity is evident throughout all institutional practices and at every level of engagement, OISE's [Guiding Principles on Equity and Diversity](#) inform all decisions and initiatives, including recruitment, hiring, retention of faculty and staff. Relatedly, increasing unconscious bias training among search committees and providing professional development to faculty and staff about understanding our responsibilities for preventing anti-Black/anti-Indigenous racism and harassment will help support OISE's commitment to enhancing the diversity of our community. Furthermore, the Dean's Office works collaboratively with the Dean's Advisory Council on Indigenous Education (DACIE), the Indigenous Education Network (IEN), and the Black Faculty Caucus to increase participation of under-represented groups. Of note is the development of a proposal to establish a Centre for Black Studies in Education which, in addition to research, will support

the needs of Black faculty, staff and students, and assist the OISE community in addressing anti-Black racism. It is expected that this proposal will receive governance approval in 2021-2022. Additionally, advancing the level of scholarship and bursary support available to our Black students through the OISE Black Excellence Education Initiative, will help remove financial barriers to success for Black students and support students conducting anti-Black racism research. These initiatives are intended to establish and support a critical mass of diverse scholars and graduate students at OISE and the department of LHAE actively participates in and contributes to these initiatives while working on the department-specific initiatives aimed at increasing diversity. For example, in October of 2020, the department established the anti-Black Racism Working Group comprised of students, faculty and staff. This group has already identified and begun planning for a number of initiatives for the 2021-2022 academic year, focusing on issues related to research, teaching, mentoring and outreach. The department's faculty and staff are committed to persisting in making social diversity a priority in all hiring and student admissions.

- *The reviewers noted the recommendations from the 2012 review regarding departmental integration and coordination of curricula across degree programs, and observed that the department has made “real and impactful progress” towards addressing them. However, they commented that “goals, learning objectives and plans for change or growth were rooted in the subdisciplines of the programs, not an overarching departmental vision.” While their conversations with stakeholders suggested that “a comfortable balance had been found between program and department structures,” some of the above issues around complement planning, student support, and staffing might be considered in relation to department integration and coordination.*

The recommendation from the 2012 review regarding the need for greater integration, collegiality and cohesion across the department's three programs has been addressed in several ways but remains a work in progress. Over the last eight years the department has sought to find and maintain the right balance between the uniqueness and autonomy of each of the department's three programs while also establishing synergies and areas of integration. Key examples of the department's progress on this front range from all-faculty departmental meetings with agendas focused on cross-program curriculum planning and related discussions, as well as peer-to-peer research presentations highlighting the exciting works of newer and more seasoned faculty members. These strategies have had a positive effect on collegiality, cohesion and have helped to foster a number of other initiatives such as growing faculty participation across each of the collaborative specializations housed within LHAE, and an increase in cross-program faculty membership on master's and doctoral thesis committees.

Implementation Plan

(a) Medium-term to Long-term Actions (Department)

The 2019-2020 LHAE Self-study outlined a number of themes and goals at the department level that represent a starting point for developing more detailed plans and strategies. These include: (a) strengthening research and deploying strategies to enhance research funding such as augmenting the grant proposal writing process; (b) continuing to enhance coherence, collaboration and communication within and across the department's three programs; (c) engaging in a principled and strategic faculty renewal planning that meets emerging program needs; and (d) enhancing student experience (e.g., community building, academic support especially for the department's growing number of part-time students). Over the next three years, the department will revisit its current vision to ensure that it reflects the department's current state of development, its identity and values. Further, the department will develop detailed action plans to act on and implement each of the above outlined goals and will monitor their progress annually and updating actions as necessary.

The Dean's Office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the department leadership. A brief report to the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, midway between the Fall 2020 site visit and the year of the next site visit, will be prepared. The next review of the department and its programs will be in the 2027-2028 academic year.

We trust that this response addresses the main areas raised by the reviewers. Please contact me if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glen A. Jones', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Glen A. Jones, PhD
Professor and Dean
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

Cc: Professor Nina Bascia, Chair, Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education
Professor Normand Labrie, Associate Dean, Programs

3. Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

This section will be inserted after AP&P by the VPAP office using language verbatim from the approved Report of the meeting.

4. Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers praised LHAE's well-deserved national and international reputation for excellence; their success in navigating complexities following the 2012 OISE restructuring; their significant improvements to curriculum and programming; Collaborative Specializations' perception as "absolutely essential to the intellectual work of students and faculty"; they highlighted faculty's significant volume of high-quality research and contributions to Canadian and international policy and practice; they described departmental culture as extremely supportive and communicative; they praised the AECD program's distinctive dual focus and the ELP program's impressive capacity to maintain quality while rapidly evolving; finally reviewers note the Higher Education program as "clearly the most internationally-recognized and distinguished higher education program in Canada", and commend its careful curriculum mapping, and assessment methods that focus on the skills and expertise required in fields that students will enter upon graduating. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: exploring strategies to increase student diversity, including international students, in all programs, and identifying efficient mechanisms for student financial support; addressing student concerns around faculty advising loads, and confusion around advisor assignment and thesis supervisor pairing processes; addressing long-range planning challenges around growing enrolments coupled with resource shortfalls; developing faculty and staff complement plans to support any further growth in LHAE programs; considering the effectiveness of and potentially consolidating the wide range of pathways through several programs; establishing a working group to deepen an understanding of and create a plan to address difficulties faced by BIPOC students in the areas of research, teaching, outreach, institutional organization, hiring/admissions, and labor relations; and considering issues around complement planning, student support and staffing in relation to departmental integration and coordination. The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty, unit and programs' responses to the reviewers' recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5. Monitoring and Date of Next Review

The Dean's Office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the department leadership.

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs on the status of the implementation plans midway between the Fall 2020 site visit and the year of the next review/site visit.

The next review of the department and its programs will be commissioned to take place in the 2027-2028 academic year.

6. Distribution

On **date**, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the Dean of OISE, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to the Chair of the Department.

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan - DRAFT

1. Review Summary

Programs Reviewed:	Molecular Genetics & Microbiology, BSc: Specialist, Major (FAS) Molecular Genetics & Microbiology – Genetics Stream, BSc: Specialist (FAS) Molecular Genetics & Microbiology – Microbiology Stream, BSc: Specialist (FAS) Molecular Genetics, MSc Genetic Counselling, MSc Medical Genomics, MHSc Molecular Genetics, PhD
Unit Reviewed:	Department of Molecular Genetics
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Temerty Faculty of Medicine
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professor Michel Bouvier – Département de Biochimie et de Médecine Moléculaire, Université de Montréal 2. Professor David Litchfield – Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry, Western University 3. Professor Michael Snyder – Department of Genetics, Stanford University
Date of Review Visit:	February 8-9, 2021
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 26, 2021

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: October 19 – 20, 2015

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Programs

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Impressive number and breadth of undergraduate courses, including praiseworthy new online course in genetics
- Undergraduates have very high opinion of their education, and are highly appreciative of interactions with professors and research opportunities

2. Graduate Programs

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Uniquely strong master's degree program in Genetic Counseling that attracts brilliant students
- Large, strong Ph.D. program with excellent camaraderie despite being spread across different labs

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Improving time-to-completion for Ph.D. students

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Terrific center of research with an extraordinarily high international reputation and impressive international awards
- Faculty are very involved in education, with strong programs in undergraduate teaching and training of Ph.D. students

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Extremely strong department that is a gem of Canadian science and education
- High morale and cohesiveness among individual department members and staff

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Adjusting Department's limited role in education of MD students, given importance of molecular genetics in understanding human health and disease
- Engaging in consideration of faculty renewal to maintain currency in areas of strength and support programmatic directions
- Providing refreshed and consolidated laboratory spaces to retain top faculty, accommodate any additions to the complement, and keep apace with facilities at institutes

- Examining the sustainability of the unit’s current financial model, the fundraising efforts to support the Department, and the funding structure for international graduate students

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Confirmation/Agreement Letter; Terms of Reference; Self-Study Report; Faculty CVs; Schedule; Previous Review Report (2013-14), the Joint Decanal and Chair’s Responses, and FAR-IP; Dean’s Report 2020; Temerty Faculty of Medicine’s Strategic Plan (2018-2023); University of Toronto Towards 2030; University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process; Access to all course descriptions

Consultation Process

The reviewers met directly with the following individuals/groups via Zoom:

Temerty Faculty of Medicine

1. Dean, Temerty Faculty of Medicine and Vice Provost, Relations with Health Care Institutions
2. Vice Dean, Strategy & Operations
3. Vice Dean, Clinical & Faculty Affairs
4. Chair
5. Vice Chair
6. Associate Chairs
7. Senior Advisors to the Chair
8. Program Coordinators
9. Faculty
10. Graduate Students
11. Postdoctoral Fellows
12. Lab Technicians
13. Research Associates
14. Administrative Staff
15. Executive Director, Office of Advancement

Faculty of Arts & Science

16. Vice Dean, Academic Planning
17. Associate Dean, Unit-Level Reviews
18. Associate Dean, Teaching & Learning
19. Undergraduate Students

University of Toronto

- 20. Dean, Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering
- 21. Cognate Chairs and Directors

Industry

- 22. Research Institute Leaders

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Objectives
 - ▶ Program requirements and learning outcomes are appropriate and align with undergraduate degree-level expectations
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ No concerns identified regarding admission requirements
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Curriculum is appropriate and reflects current state of discipline
 - ▶ Research-intensive nature of training environments are notable, particularly in BSc specialist programs; opportunities to conduct undergraduate research projects promotes high level of critical thinking
- Innovation
 - ▶ In Major programs, students can construct own inter-disciplinary curriculum of study
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Assessment of learning consistent with defined learning outcomes and degree-level expectations, and comparable to related programs at other institutions
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ High student satisfaction; they value research experiences and recognize transferable skills acquired through these experiences
 - ▶ Students appreciate interdisciplinarity of Major programs, and perceive this as benefiting achievement of career development goals
 - ▶ Students appreciative of ongoing faculty efforts to ensure that curriculum keeps pace with disciplinary advances
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ Students successful within programs, and at finding suitable positions and/or further training opportunities
 - ▶ Quality of students judged to be very high by faculty participants

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Students identify some content overlap between courses
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students in Major programs feel unable to take advantage of same research experiences as Specialist students

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Review course curriculum to minimize redundancy; overlap could likely be minimized with more frequent consultation between instructors

2. Graduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Graduate programs administered by the Department of Molecular Genetics are thriving
- Objectives
 - ▶ Program requirements and learning outcomes are appropriate and align with graduate degree-level expectations
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Reviewers identified no concerns regarding admission requirements for any of the programs
 - ▶ Enrolment in all programs remains very strong, with a dramatic increase in research-based MSc and PhD Molecular Genetics program enrolment
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Curriculum is appropriate and reflects current state of discipline
 - ▶ Research-intensive nature of training environments noted as major strength, particularly in MSc and PhD programs in Molecular Genetics
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Graduate Students Association has created EDI committee
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students express high level of pride and satisfaction regarding quality of training and mentorship, and feel that programs are attentive to student concerns
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ Students successful within programs, and at finding suitable positions and/or further training opportunities
 - ▶ Based on academic performance and accomplishments, students are of very high quality

- ▶ Quality of students judged to be very high by faculty participants

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Concerns raised around scheduling courses and research rotations in relation to optimizing student progression
 - ▶ Students express desire for courses aligned better with student interests (rather than faculty interests); in this regard, microbiology was highlighted as a theme that was under-represented in course offerings
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Faculty participation in student supervision/mentorship inconsistent, with some members overburdened, and potential deficiencies in quality of some student/supervisor relationships
 - ▶ Students report that IDP (independent development plan) process is primarily student driven, with insufficient faculty participation
 - ▶ Students express interest in expansion of career development opportunities, particularly related to non-academic careers
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ Time to completion for thesis-based graduate programs remains high (though reviewers note this issue has undoubtedly been impacted by the pandemic)
- Student funding
 - ▶ Student stipends cited as a concern by faculty and students, with implications for EDI, and compounded by high cost of living in Toronto

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Review course curriculum to align with student needs/interests
 - ▶ Students in MHS in Medical Genomics suggest that practicum training might be extended
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Reviewers emphasize importance of monitoring student progression and ensuring that supports are available to address student concerns and/or needs
 - ▶ Enhance career development programs (including IDP) for graduate students
- Student funding
 - ▶ Address student stipends to remove barriers and promote EDI

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Department boasts a very strong complement of expertise available to deliver its programming across the areas of study
- Research
 - ▶ Exceptional record of research performance; among the best in relation to national and international comparators
 - ▶ Strong enrolments speak to strength of vibrant research activities being maintained by faculty
 - ▶ Outstanding level of research activity, and faculty members generally very well-funded and highly productive
 - ▶ Excellent research programs of several faculty routinely attract highly qualified postdoctoral fellows, who make indispensable contributions to research and training missions of department members

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ Concerns expressed that microbiology is not well represented in current faculty complement

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Programs supported by rich intellectual environment and strong relationships with Hospitals/Research Institutes that host vibrant research programs
 - ▶ High morale and sense of connectedness among faculty, students and staff, despite fact that department members are distributed across numerous distinct sites
 - ▶ Chair lauded within and beyond the Department for efforts to maintain strong relationships with cognate units and Institute partners
 - ▶ Department well represented in broader inter-disciplinary research initiatives within Toronto research community
 - ▶ Notable leadership in international exchanges in Asia; excellent program for exchange of students and research collaboration has been established with Chinese institutions
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Department has recently modified leadership portfolio and established Associate Chair of Educational Programs and Partnerships, with a significant focus on EDI

- ▶ Department has effectively utilized resources that have been allocated to support its programs; it is evident that Faculty and Department have worked together over past 5 years to maintain financial stability
- ▶ Effective deployment of additional resources to enable recruitment of 2 tenure-stream and 2 teaching-stream faculty
- ▶ Space considerations identified in last review have been addressed with relocation of 16 research labs to MaRS and 2 other labs in renovated space within Medical Sciences Building
- ▶ Department's research performance has been outstanding and programs have flourished under leadership of current Chair
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Department continues to sustain outstanding research and training programs that are recognized nationally and internationally
 - ▶ Department and its programs are evolving to reflect recent dramatic changes within the discipline, and the expanding role of molecular genetics across many medical fields
 - ▶ Stakeholders take pride in programs and actively engage in ongoing processes of quality improvement
 - ▶ Department offers variety of programs that reflect Molecular Genetics' intersection with numerous fields, and expanding role across many Medical disciplines
 - ▶ All programs are consistent with U of T's mission and academic plans of the Department and Faculty
 - ▶ New MHSc program in Medical Genomics reflects one noteworthy outcome of investment in the Department
 - ▶ Department well positioned to continue to provide leadership in biomedical research and education both within and beyond the Temerty Faculty of Medicine
- International comparators
 - ▶ All programs conform to the norms of the discipline both nationally and internationally
 - ▶ "Based on overall research performance and impact and the quality of the training programs, the Department of Molecular Genetics is amongst the very best in Canada/North America and internationally"

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Postdoctoral fellows report impression of "falling through the cracks", since they are neither treated as staff nor as students
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Given recent dramatic expansion of graduate program enrolment in recent years, resources (including program administration) seem inadequate
 - ▶ Reviewers note some issues relating to move of research labs to MaRS and distribution of graduate training at distinct sites:
 - Administrative offices now separated from majority of core faculty

- Gaps identified both by students and by faculty related to appointments and oversight of students at different sites
- ▶ Although significant improvements have been made since previous review, space concerns remain; lack of space perceived as impediment for new recruitments
- ▶ Research funding concerns raised in relation to sunseting of CIHR Foundation program, as many investigators within the Department are supported by Foundation grants
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Recent and potential retirements suggest “clear needs for recruitment”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Establish program for postdoctoral fellows to enhance inclusion and career development
 - ▶ Consider adding representatives from Institutes (such as SickKids or Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum) to Departmental Executive Committee to further strengthen ties, and potentially facilitate recruitment and space considerations
 - ▶ Biomedical Engineering has expressed interest in stronger ties with core Department
 - ▶ “Although the exchanges [with Chinese institutions] have been complicated by the pandemic and the current political situation, the program is perceived positively and there was a feeling that it should continue because it could represent a signature program for the University”
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Considering scale and complexity of unit and its programs, ensure adequate administrative support is provided, especially for the graduate program
 - ▶ Reviewers propose that “contingency funding to mitigate the impact of short-term funding instability will be a sound long-term investment”
 - ▶ Space concerns need to be addressed
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Consider expanding MSc in Genetic Counselling to meet anticipated demand in the field, and provide opportunity for new revenue generation
 - ▶ Microbiology and computational biology highlighted as possible areas to prioritize in faculty complement planning, and coordination between core and affiliated centres will be important

Patricia Houston, MD MEd FRCPC
Acting Dean and Vice Dean, Medical Education

September 17, 2021

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
Division of the Vice-President & Provost
University of Toronto

Dear Susan,

DEPARTMENT & GRADUATE PROGRAMS
[Joint Decanal Response | Faculty of Arts & Science and Temerty Faculty of Medicine](#)

On behalf of the Temerty Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto, we would first like to thank the reviewers, Professors Michel Bouvier, David Litchfield, and Michael Snyder, for a fulsome and rigorous review of the Department of Molecular Genetics on February 8-9, 2021. On behalf of Temerty Medicine, we would also like to thank Professor Tim Hughes, Interim Chair, former Chair, Professor Leah Cowen, the administrative staff, the departmental Executive Committee, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the outstanding self-study report. We also wish to thank the numerous administrative staff, trainees, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided invaluable input.

The reviewers reflected that *“The Department of Molecular Genetics was lauded as a ‘gem of Canadian science and education’ when it underwent an external review in 2015. Based on our assessment of the materials that were provided to us for review, our consultations through the course of the 2-day review and the reputation of the Department and its members, we concur with that assessment.”* Temerty Medicine greatly appreciates the insightful and comprehensive report provided by the reviewers. It serves as an invaluable guide for future strategic directions and program enhancements of the Department of Molecular Genetics. We are in full agreement with Professor Hughes’ response of the Interim Chair. After consultation with him, we have developed the following response and implementation plan.

- 1. Reviewers’ Comment:** *There are clear needs for recruitment as several retirements have occurred in recent years with more predicted in the foreseeable future. ...Faculty recruitment is warranted.*

Decanal Response: Coordination with affiliated centres/institutes is already standard practice. Specifically focused coordination between the Department and the leadership of affiliated centres will ensure that faculty recruitment priorities are mutually guided and reflect educational and research priorities. In the immediate term (6 months) the Department will contact leadership in affiliated nodes to discuss recruitment priorities and where expertise in specific areas requires expansion or renewal.

- 2. Reviewers’ Comment:** *The lack of space is perceived as an impediment for new recruitments....Space considerations need to be addressed.*

Decanal Response: The Department is presently reviewing optimization of space and office usage in MaRS 15/16. In the immediate (6 months) and medium (1-2 years) terms the Department will be coordinating with the Donnelly Centre for space for computational biology recruitment. Additional consideration of space rental and review of current space allocation in MSB may also facilitate faculty recruitment.

3. **Reviewers' Comment:** *Ensure adequate administrative support is provided (especially for the graduate program).*

Decanal Response: Given the scale and complexity of the Department, as well as the significant expansion of programs in recent years, the administrative team responsible for the graduate and undergraduate research programs is quite small and has not grown proportionally. In the medium (1-2 years) the Department's plan to augment the administrative team with a PhD-level coordinator who will oversee activities related to graduate life, curriculum, student recruitment, and address time to completion of studies will be very helpful.

4. **Reviewers' Comment:** *Address student stipends (to remove barriers/promote EDI).*

Decanal Response: Stipend considerations should be addressed within the Harmonized Student Agreement of the Temerty Faculty of Medicine. The Department is reviewing the graduate student stipend and the findings will create a platform for discussion among the relevant stakeholders, including students, faculty supervisors, the Vice Dean, Research & Health Science Education, and cognate Departments in the Temerty Faculty of Medicine in the immediate term (6 months).

5. **Reviewers' Comment:** *Remain attentive to student times to completion (which will be facilitated by improved tracking of student progression).*

Decanal Response: The Department has already implemented several modifications to address the long times to student completion of graduate studies. These modifications include targeted focus during student committee meetings, revision of the didactic portion of the curriculum, increased administrative oversight, and enhanced access to faculty mentors. Further modifications in the immediate term (6 months) will include clarification of departmental expectations for student projects and faculty supervision, compression of the student seminar series, and earlier discussion of graduation and career plans during student program advisory committee meetings. In the medium term (1-2 years), the proposed addition of a PhD-level coordinator as discussed in the response to Comment 3 will facilitate administrative oversight and tracking of student milestones.

6. **Reviewers' Comment:** *Review course curriculum to minimize redundancy and align with student needs/interests.*

Decanal Response: To minimize potential overlap and redundancy, in the immediate term (6 months) the Department will expand its Undergraduate Curriculum Committee from two to six members who span disciplines, faculty stream, and teaching stage. In the immediate (6 months) to long (3-5 years) term the committee will work collaboratively with course coordinators and other programs Departments to minimize redundancy. Concurrently, regular review of curricular maps and syllabi will be implemented. To facilitate this, we support the Department reaching out to the Curriculum Development Specialist, based in the Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education, to assist with this curricular review and curriculum mapping.

7. **Reviewers' Comment:** *Enhance career development programs (including IDP) for graduate students.*

Decanal Response: To enhance career development programming, the Department will refresh an Associate Chair position to focus on 'Communications, Careers, and Alumni Relations' in the immediate term (6 months). As noted in the response to Comment 3, the Department will explore recruitment of an administrative staff member who will work with this faculty coordinator to strengthen career development programming. To complement these initiatives, in the medium (1-2 years) to long (3-5 years) terms the Department will reinstate monthly career development workshops, and will use the alumni database to enhance networking and placement.

8. **Reviewers' Comment:** *Establish a program for postdoctoral fellows to enhance inclusion and career development.*

Decanal Response: Addressing the unique concerns of postdoctoral fellows across the Temerty Faculty of Medicine, including the need for enhanced inclusion, mentorship, and opportunities for career development and leadership training, has been identified as a priority need. Accordingly, the Vice Dean, Research & Health Science Education is developing a program specifically for postdoctoral fellows across the Temerty Faculty of Medicine that will focus on mentorship, social connection, career

development, and leadership training. In addition, the Department will create an Individual Development plan in the medium term (1-2 years) that postdoctoral fellows and their supervisors will complete annually.

9. **Reviewers' Comment:** *Consider expansion of the MSc in Genetic Counseling to meet demand within the field.*

Decanal Response: Enrolment in the program was recently expanded from four to six students per year. Any further expansion of the program would require very careful consideration of potential impact on student training and experience, accreditation requirements, and budgetary and resource implications for affiliated hospitals, particularly The Hospital for Sick Children, the main partner.

10. **Reviewers' Comment:** *Engagement of Institutes with Executive committee (which may facilitate recruitment and space considerations).*

Decanal Response: Leaders of affiliated institutes—namely, The Hospital for Sick Children, Ontario Institute for Cancer Research, and the Donnelly Centre—are appointed to the Department, facilitating collaborations between the Department and affiliated centres. As noted in the responses to Comments 1 and 2 above, enhanced collaboration between the Department and partner institutes will facilitate faculty recruitment and appointment.

11. **Reviewers' Comment:** *Concerns were raised in relation to the sunseting of the CIHR Foundation program since many investigators within the Department of Molecular Genetics are supported by Foundation grants.*

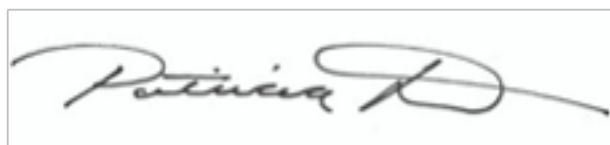
The Department will provide biannual financial projections to faculty with research funds managed by the Department and will continue to encourage faculty engagement in the Temerty Medicine pre-review and bridge funding mechanisms in the immediate term (6 months).

The next UTQAP review of the Department of Molecular Genetics is scheduled in 2026-27. In 2024 we will follow up with the Chair on the implementation of the external reviewers' recommendations and, later that year, provide you with an interim report on the status of the implementation plan.

Sincerely,



Melanie Woodin, PhD
Dean
Professor, Department of Cell & Systems
Biology
Faculty of Arts & Science



Patricia Houston, MD, MEd, FRCPC
Acting Dean and Vice Dean, Medical Education
Professor, Department of Anesthesiology & Pain
Medicine
Temerty Faculty of Medicine

cc: Lisa Robinson – Vice Dean, Strategy & Operations, Temerty Faculty of Medicine
Justin Nodwell – Vice Dean, Research & Health Science Education, Temerty Faculty of Medicine
Randy Boyagoda – Vice Dean, Undergraduate, Faculty of Arts & Science
Gillian Hamilton – Acting Vice Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science
Andrea Benoit – Academic Review Officer, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Anastasia Meletopoulos – Academic Affairs Manager, Office of the Dean, Temerty Faculty of Medicine
Daniella Mallinick – Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice Provost, Academic Programs
Tim Hughes – Interim Chair, Dept. of Molecular Genetics, Temerty Faculty of Medicine

3. Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

This section will be inserted after AP&P by the VPAP office using language verbatim from the approved Report of the meeting.

4. Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers praised the department as amongst the very best in the world, noting that it is evolving to reflect recent, significant changes in the discipline; they commended the thriving graduate programs and the research-intensive nature of the department's training environments, noting the availability of student research experiences as a major feature of the programs; they commented on the outstanding record of faculty research performance, the rich intellectual environment and strong relationships with area hospitals and research institutes; and finally they highlighted the high morale and cohesion among faculty, students and staff, and the indispensable contributions to faculty research and training made by post-doctoral fellows. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: minimizing overlapping undergraduate course content through enhanced consultation between instructors; improving course and research rotation scheduling to optimize student progression; further expanding career development opportunities; consider expanding the Genetic Counselling M.Sc. program to meet anticipated demand in the field; enhancing communication with and support for post-doctoral fellows; identifying strategies to address short-term research funding instability that may result from the discontinuation of the CIHR Foundation grant program; prioritizing coordination between core faculty and affiliated centres to assist with determining complement planning priorities; ensuring sufficient administrative resources to support the Department's graduate programs and students; finding ways to address space concerns in the short term; and addressing concerns around graduate student stipends, with implications for equity, diversity and inclusion. The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty, unit and programs' responses to the reviewers' recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5. Monitoring and Date of Next Review

In 2024 the Dean will follow up with the Chair on the implementation of the external reviewers' recommendations and, will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs by December 2024 on the status of the implementation plans.

The next UTQAP review of the Dept. of Molecular Genetics will be commissioned in 2026-27.

6. Distribution

On **date**, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the Dean of the Temerty Faculty of Medicine, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to the Chair of the Department.

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan - DRAFT

1. Review Summary

Program Reviewed:	Master of Science in Physical Therapy, M.Sc.P.T.
Unit Reviewed:	Department of Physical Therapy (PT)
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Temerty Faculty of Medicine
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Cathy Arnold – School of Rehabilitation Science, University of Saskatchewan • Prof. Bruce Greenfield – Dept. of Rehabilitation Medicine, Emory University • Prof. Marguerite Wieler – Dept. of Physical Therapy, University of Alberta
Date of Review Visit:	December 3-4, 2020
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 26, 2021

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: November 19–20, 2013

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- One of the leading physical therapy programs in North America and internationally
- Successful curricular innovations include the implementation of inter-professional education and social accountability content
- Admirable, high quality student research projects address questions of interest to the physical therapy community
- Extraordinary faculty research productivity
- Impressive network of collaborative relationships within the University and across external organizations

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Engaging in a strategic planning process, mapping out future objectives
- Implementing new program evaluation processes, reducing the demand on students while still eliciting quality input
- Identifying new sources of revenue
- Exploring alternative organizational structures for the Rehabilitation Sciences

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Confirmation/Agreement Letter; Terms of reference; Self-Study Report (including latest PEAC and CAPTE accreditation documents); Faculty CVs; Schedule; Previous Review Report (2013-14), the Dean's and Chair's Responses, and FAR-IP; Dean's Report 2020; Temerty Faculty of Medicine's Strategic Plan (2018-2023); University of Toronto Towards 2030; Access to Quercus with PT's online learning and teaching resources; Access to all course descriptions

Consultation Process

The reviewers met directly with the following individuals/groups via Microsoft Teams:

1. Dean and Vice Provost, Relations with Health Care Institutions
2. Vice Dean, Strategy & Operations
3. Interim Vice Dean, Research & Innovation
4. Interim Chair

5. MScPT Program Director and Ontario Internationally Educated Physical Therapy Bridging (OIEPB) Program Director
6. MScPT Associate Program Director and Director of Clinical Education & Community Affairs
7. MScPT Trainees
8. OIEPB Program Students
9. Executive Committee Members
10. Core Faculty
11. Research Institute Leaders
12. Academic Practice Leaders
13. Rehabilitation Sector Chairs and Director
14. Temerty Faculty of Medicine Advancement Officers
15. Administrative Staff

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Program(s) (n/a)

2. Graduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ MScPT is a strong program with a holistic focus on scholarship, clinical education skills and service; well-aligned with the mission and vision of both the Temerty Faculty of Medicine and the University
- Objectives
 - ▶ Program design and curriculum are aligned with Department's values and strategic priorities
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Admissions requirements are consistent with national best practices for Physical Therapy programs
 - ▶ Sound admission/recruitment process attracts highly qualified students who successfully complete the program and find work in the profession
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Clearly articulated program requirements and learning outcomes are aligned with the *Competency Profile for Physiotherapists in Canada*; curricular standards met or exceeded accreditation guidelines from Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada
 - ▶ 2019 curriculum revisions, developed around three pillars of critical thinking, inquiry mindset and professionalism, have resulted in a "creatively imagined and integrated two-year curriculum" with appropriate increases in complexity and comprehensiveness through the program

- ▶ Active engagement of researchers in curriculum delivery reinforces program pillars of critical thinking and inquiry mindset
- ▶ Participation in formal, qualitative and quantitative mentored research projects with research faculty, clinical faculty and scientists prepares students as “innovators of new knowledge”; research projects cover a diverse range of topics including clinical, health science, biomedical and population health research
- ▶ Revised curriculum includes ongoing integrated experiential learning providing opportunities to apply theory to practice
- ▶ Continuous program evaluation process ensures initiatives are undertaken to review and enhance the program quality; faculty meet regularly to evaluate student outcomes and assessment methods, address issues and challenges related to program content, and to identify strategies to improve integration
- ▶ Program-level feedback mechanism is a positive and collaborative method to consolidate student and instructor feedback about substantive issues for review and recommendations to departmental committees
- ▶ Clinical instructors with teaching roles help to bridge didactic and clinical experiences; strong clinical partnerships support experiential learning opportunities for students
- ▶ Vibrant continuing educational program may be further strengthened by experiences with developing and delivering remote content during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Innovation
 - ▶ Recently revised curriculum is integrative, relevant, and innovative
 - ▶ Well-respected, sought-after and successful OIEPB program is “a flagship program of the department” providing comprehensive training for internationally educated physical therapists, with subsequent benefits for the national healthcare system
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Impressive attention to assessment of progressive learning outcomes; methods include a mix of practical skills assessment, reflective assignments, small group and inter-professional activities, and critical thinking case-based exams
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Commendable encouragement and support for students to have projects published in peer review journals or presented as posters in professional meetings; aligns with programs’ three foundational pillars
 - ▶ Opportunities for student research include clinical research internships, engagement in knowledge translation strategies, presenting at rounds, participating in research teams, and attending conferences
 - ▶ Students praised senior leadership and faculty for their mentorship and support
 - ▶ Successful mentorship program connects MScPT students in their final year with recent graduates, supporting students’ professional development
 - ▶ Adequate resources for students requiring physical or mental health accommodations

- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ Reviewers found universally positive outcomes measures attesting to the effectiveness of the curriculum, underscored by high average grades across all academic units, high licensure pass rate, and high graduation rates
 - ▶ High average GPA among applicants (85%) and competitive admissions process (10:1 ratio of applicants to admission offers), indicate program’s strong reputation
 - ▶ High retention and graduation rates: graduation rate of 98% or above since 2016; fewer than 10% of students per year have delayed graduation since 2013
 - ▶ High quality of the educational experience is supported by survey data, evidence of meeting PEAC accreditation standards, success on the National Exam (PCE) and previous UTQAP reviews
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ Since 2013, MScPT graduates have an impressive 100% employment rate 6 months after graduation
 - ▶ Notably successful OIEPB program has high completion rates and 100% employment rate for those who pass the national exam
- Student funding
 - ▶ Student funding support is available, including support for travel and housing during clinical placements as deemed appropriate

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Lack of formal peer-to-peer feedback mechanism for instructors, which would support effective mentorship of teaching
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Strong competition and “unknown bias” of processes such as CAP and CASPer may disadvantage diverse applicants in the admissions process
 - ▶ Information regarding access and equity services not consistently identified on course syllabi or in student-facing learning management system
 - ▶ Time and resource constraints noted as potential challenges to achieving Department’s goals with respect to EDI in recruitment, admissions, teaching, and research
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Student handbook and departmental website of limited use; reviewers noted that students may not be aware of all of the support resources available to them

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Objectives
 - ▶ Implement a regular review and feedback mechanism to discuss and evaluate strategic priorities, accomplishments, opportunities and threats

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Monitor and evaluate the impact of recent curriculum revisions
- Innovation
 - ▶ Ongoing faculty and stakeholder curricular reviews to remain current with rapid innovations in the discipline, including telerehabilitation, use of machine learning algorithms, use of large dataset for outcome measures
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Ensure that the Department’s mission, values and goals, as well as the Faculty’s goal to “cultivate and bring to life ideas that impact scholarship and society through unprecedented collaboration drawing in the diverse voices of our research, learning and clinical network,” are applied across the program
 - ▶ Take actions to increase equity for diverse applicants, including:
 - Review the admission process from a social accountability lens
 - Examine the diversity of the accepted pool vs the applicant pool, and the diversity of the applicant pool in comparison to provincial demographics
 - Consult with other University departments and other Canadian PT programs to investigate methods of enhanced recruitment, admission and retention of Indigenous PT students as well as other marginalized groups
 - ▶ Department has observed a recent increase in the number of students requiring accessibility accommodations; reviewers recommend enhanced communication and resources for students with diverse needs
 - ▶ Consider creation of an EDI-focused committee within Temerty Medicine or the Rehabilitation Sector
 - ▶ Consistently provide information regarding access and equity services on course syllabi and in student-facing learning management systems
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Revise student handbook and departmental website to ensure that students receive important information regarding program requirements and available support resources
 - ▶ Support students’ use of available counselling and mental health support resources
 - ▶ Work closely with the Rehabilitation Sector Leadership Team to ensure Physical Therapy students’ access to soon to-be-established Temerty Medicine resources for Indigenous students
- Student funding
 - ▶ Monitor future funding access for lower-income students within the context of other EDI and social accountability initiatives
 - ▶ Maintain an active donor and alumni program, and encourage continued efforts to secure Physical Therapy specific bursaries and scholarships

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Opportunities for interprofessional collaborative practice, education, and research creating and reinforcing interprofessional competencies are shared by faculty and students
- Research
 - ▶ Departmental research themes were updated after the 2013 review to include new themes of educational scholarship research and knowledge translation and health services research in rehabilitation; the scope, quality and relevance of PT researchers and research activities, focused within the updated research themes “are a main strength and deserve to be highlighted”
 - ▶ Faculty research foci encourage a “highly collaborative” culture across research themes
 - ▶ Reviewers note impressive research funding obtained by department faculty, noting in particular the actual dollars received, the number of grants held, and the variety of sources of funding; Tri-council funding applications and success rates provide “further evidence of an engaged and productive research culture in the department”
 - ▶ Very high research productivity reflected in peer-review and other publications; PT Department contributes significantly to University’s status as a global leader in Rehabilitation research
- Faculty
 - ▶ Complement of existing tenure-stream and teaching-stream faculty brings significant depth and breadth to the Department
 - ▶ Departmental leadership and faculty demonstrate clear commitment to supporting educational opportunities as part of their vision and mission; all core faculty contribute to MScPT program’s educational agenda via formal teaching, student and junior faculty mentorships, and training PhD and postdoctoral students through the Rehabilitation Science Institute
 - ▶ Faculty teaching development programs offered at departmental, Rehabilitation Sector, Faculty and University levels, to prepare faculty for effective teaching
 - ▶ Number of individuals who hold/have held salary awards or a research chair provides further evidence of the quality and strength of the research faculty
 - ▶ Strong commitment to professional activities, including participation as journal reviewers and editors, grant reviewers for national and international agencies, guideline panels, and holding positions on local, national and international committees/foundations
 - ▶ PT faculty collaborate with other Rehabilitation Sector colleagues and departments via the Center for Interprofessional Education (EDU:C).

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Research
 - ▶ Departmental website is lacking in providing accurate and up to date faculty research profiles and knowledge translation activities; Department and individual researcher web pages “did not truly capture the outstanding work being done”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
 - ▶ Further efforts to showcase faculty research accomplishments, and to package research from faculty and students “in a more inspirational way”
 - ▶ Redesign departmental website and individual researcher pages to share and highlight research themes and knowledge translation activities
- Faculty
 - ▶ Conduct ongoing formal peer teaching reviews as an important component of teaching mentorship
 - ▶ Further support and enhance the Continuing Teaching Stream with more full-time positions
 - ▶ Pursue more Canada Research Chairs to further enhance Department’s research profile and reach

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Considerable evidence of the strength of the current leadership team and the Department, and their relationships with both internal and external partners
 - ▶ Rich, diverse and productive ecosystem of relationships and partnerships with external entities “an obvious strength of the department”; includes strong institutional and community bridges between academic and clinical worlds
 - ▶ PT administrative staff demonstrate impressive support, expertise, “and their very apparent commitment to the department”
 - ▶ Strong relationships between leadership, faculty, and staff provide a positive, collaborative environment within the Department
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Recent changes have given PT a stronger voice at decision-making tables within Temerty Medicine
 - ▶ New co-leadership governance model viewed as a “positive, transformative change” that has improved morale within the Department and led to increased and enhanced transparency, efficiency, communication, consultation and engagement

- ▶ Department's physical space includes access to discipline-specific labs, lecture theatres and small group rooms, as well as shared space with other rehabilitation sciences departments; co-location of research labs provides opportunities to foster informal and formal interaction and collaboration between research teams
- ▶ Department has embarked on a number of successful initiatives to augment base budget funding, including expansion of the Continuing Professional Development and the OIEPB programs
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Department's Strategic Plan identifies a vision, mission, values, priorities and initial goals and objectives to address each priority; the Plan has widespread support and aligns with Faculty and University strategic priorities
- International comparators
 - ▶ Fully accredited program compares favourably to other Canadian PT programs, with respect to curriculum and success on the national exam

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Optimizing utilization of space for teaching and research is an ongoing challenge; recently formed departmental space committee to consider options for space allocation and sharing
 - ▶ Reviewers note potential obstacles to expansion in program enrolment numbers, noting that expansion "may not be supported by the provincial government" and that current space availability would also be an issue if student numbers were to increase
 - ▶ OIEPB program is an important program offering, and a significant source of revenue for the Department; reviewers note risk that the program is grant-funded and does not have stable funding
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Reviewers note one risk of (otherwise successful) strategy of jointly funding tenure stream positions, that "it assumes the ongoing financial viability of the partner institutions"; using carry-forward dollars also noted as a financial risk to the ongoing viability of the Department
 - ▶ Reviewers note that MScPT program enrolment increases may be necessary to meet demand, and that the current enrolment cap "threatens future growth of the program and ultimately the future of the profession in the province"

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Explore unmet opportunities for collaboration and partnerships within the Rehabilitation Sector to support EDI, advance strategic plan initiatives, enhance inter-professional learning opportunities, and optimize new donor support resources

- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Address the potential threat of loss of financial support for the OIEPB program
 - ▶ “Advocate for removal of the enrollment ceiling cap”
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Consider additional teaching-stream hires to support innovative learning and advancement of emerging practice areas
 - ▶ Ensure commitment and availability of resources to realize goals and objectives of the Department’s Strategic Plan
 - ▶ Identify additional revenue sources to mitigate the risks of jointly funding tenure-stream positions with partner institutions



Patricia Houston, MD MEd FRCPC
Acting Dean and Vice Dean, Medical Education

September 14, 2021

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
Division of the Vice-President & Provost
University of Toronto

Dear Susan,

DEAN'S RESPONSE | UTQAP Review of the Department of Physical Therapy

On behalf of the Temerty Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto, I would first like to thank the reviewers, Professors Cathy Arnold, Bruce Greenfield, and Marguerite Wieler, for a fulsome and rigorous review of the Department of Physical Therapy on December 3-4, 2020. On behalf of Temerty Medicine, I would also like to thank Professor Susan Jaglal, Chair of the Department, the administrative staff, the Department's Executive Committee, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the outstanding self-study report. I also wish to thank the numerous administrative staff, trainees, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided invaluable input.

The reviewers identified many strengths of the Department, including *"a well-articulated academic strategic plan, a renewed integrative and innovative curriculum, a shared culture of respect for each other, strong clinical education leadership, engagement with the clinical community and innovative clinical education experiences integrated into curriculum, successful students who are supported in their learning environment, effective governance model with respected leadership who have a voice at appropriate decision-making tables, a unique and successful bridging program for internationally trained physical therapists, and an impressive faculty complement with a strong and diverse research track record."* Temerty Medicine greatly appreciates the insightful and comprehensive report provided by the reviewers. It serves as an invaluable guide for future strategic directions and program enhancements of the Department of Physical Therapy. I am in full agreement with Professor Jaglal's response of the Chair. After consultation with her, I have developed the following response and implementation plan.

1. **Reviewers' Comment:** *EDI: Establish actions to support the advancement of the strategic plan priority to foster Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, ensuring consideration and application to recruitment, admissions, curriculum and research. Seek collaboration from other departments, the TFoM, and the Rehabilitation Sector to develop an EDI committee.*

Decanal Response: Much work has already been undertaken to enhance equity in student recruitment and admissions. For several years, the Department of Physical Therapy has been a key participant in the Temerty Faculty of Medicine's Summer Mentorship Program, an intensive 4-week summer program designed to expose Indigenous and Black high school students to careers in the health professions. The Department has recently established a strong partnership with Temerty Medicine's Community of Support that provides intensive mentorship for post-secondary students from historically underserved communities interested in pursuing careers in health professions. The move of the Computer Assisted Profile (CAP) to an online rather than an in-person format has reduced economic barriers to application. All CAP questions are now reviewed through an equity lens, and a faculty member serves on the admissions committee as an equity advisor. Formalized education on implicit bias will now be offered for all members of the Department who participate in admissions.

'[Excellence through Equity](#)' in admissions is a priority of Temerty Medicine. The Excellence through Equity Working Group - Clinical Students Subgroup recently reviewed admissions processes and made a series of formalized recommendations regarding wise practices to enhance equity in admissions. The Chair of the Admissions Committee/Program Director is a member of this working group, and the Co-Chair of the working group is a faculty member of the Department of Physical Therapy. The Department of Physical Therapy Admissions Committee has committed to implementing the recommendations as they become available over the next 3 to 5 years.

At the broader Temerty Medicine level, a number of learners and faculty members from the Department of Physical Therapy serve on the Diversity Advisory Council, which brings together people engaged in equity work from across departments, hospitals, and the broader University of Toronto community.

2. **Reviewers' Comment:** *IMPROVE VISIBILITY: Redesign the website to improve information access for students, faculty and the public at large. Ensure that the updated research themes are on the website and improve the visibility and translation of research productivity to inform others of the excellent work accomplished.*

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION: Revise the student handbook and ensure resource information, academic requirements and advancement in the program are readily accessible, for example placing resource information directly on the website. Support students to utilize resources available to them for counselling and mental health support. Improve consistency of course postings and resource information for students on Quercus.

Decanal Response: The Department of Physical Therapy has already embarked on the process of redesigning the departmental website to improve communication with students, faculty, and the public. A working group has been established and is working closely with the Manager of Digital Communications at Temerty Medicine. The Department will hire a content manager to assist with website redesign and aims to launch the new site within the next year. The student handbook is concurrently being revised in consultation with student stakeholder groups to ensure that all needed information is readily accessible.

3. **Reviewers' Comment:** *BUDGET SUSTAINABILITY: Address the potential threat of loss of financial support to the OIEPB program. This is an important component of the Department sustainability and the loss would have substantial impact. Ensure stable budget support for programming over next 5 years and advocate for removal of the enrollment ceiling cap.*

Decanal Response: The Department has identified a number of avenues for increased revenue generation. These include continuing education programs for community practitioners and enhanced educational offerings for internationally educated physical therapists. The Department is establishing a working group with representatives from the clinical community to identify continuing education needs and gaps, with a 1-2 year goal of re-evaluating and re-designing the program to increase revenue. After the onsite review, the Department's Ontario Internationally Educated Physical Therapy Bridging Program (OIEPB) secured bridging funding for 6 months, and recently submitted an application to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development for the next 3-year funding cycle. The Department is actively working with the Advancement Office to identify philanthropic support for the bridging program.

4. **Reviewers' Comment:** *PARTNERSHIPS: Develop collaborative opportunities to engage with other Rehabilitation Sector Departments in order to advance strategic plan initiatives, enhance inter-professional learning opportunities and optimize new donor support resources targeted for Rehabilitation teaching and research.*

Decanal Response: Since the on-site review, the leaders of the Rehabilitation Sciences Sector units enhanced partnerships and collaborations to develop a strategic vision and to identify strategic priorities aligned with the broader Temerty Faculty of Medicine. The result is the four hallmark initiatives below:

- (i) Develop a "Virtual Rehab" Education, Practice and Research Centre
- (ii) Develop a Rehabilitation Sector strategy for implementation of best EDI practices in education and Research

- (iii) Re-envision the International Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation (ICDR) as a centre for collaborative interdisciplinary research and educational initiatives addressing issues of equity in Canada and the world
- (iv) Develop and implement a targeted communications strategy to reach local, national, and international audiences

The strategic vision for the “Virtual Rehab” centre is to conduct research to develop and implement novel technologies to modernize and revolutionize rehabilitation practice (e.g., use of AI in assessment) and to create a learning hub to facilitate the development of new opportunities/models of inter-professional clinical education. These two initiatives will embrace virtual rehab and ultimately address unmet needs locally and globally. The PT Department received seed funding from Temerty Medicine to develop a proposal for the Virtual Rehab Centre. An environmental scan which includes a literature review and interviews with key stakeholders will be completed by Summer 2021. This will inform the development of the proposal and an advancement plan in the following 6 months. The Department will leverage existing relationships with clinical partners to develop and build Virtual Rehab Learning Hubs within 500 University Avenue; within a year we expect to hold a symposium to launch the centre. The Department will continue to work with Advancement to obtain stable funding for the centre and its activities in the longer term. Within 3 to 5 years, we plan to establish the virtual care centre with an operational student clinic for clinical internships.

To systematically address EDI issues, the Rehabilitation Sector is working collaboratively to develop a sector strategy for implementation of best EDI practices in education and research. A working group with EDI leads from each of the RSS units has been established. They plan to develop the strategy in the next 6 to 8 months. Another notable example of collaboration across the sector was receiving support from the Education Development Fund to design a research course across the sector. This will result in a collaborative approach to a shared research curriculum (6 months-1 year) to be implemented in year 2 of the professional programs.

These strategic initiatives are well-aligned with Temerty Medicine’s renewed commitment to enhancing accessibility for all members of Temerty Medicine and the larger community. The Department of Physical Therapy and the other Rehabilitation Sciences Sector units are uniquely poised to lead this ground-breaking work.

The next UTQAP review of the Department of Physical Therapy is scheduled in 2025-26. In 2022-23 we will follow up with the Chair on the implementation of the external reviewers’ recommendations and, later that year, provide you with an interim report on the status of the implementation plan.

Sincerely,



Patricia Houston, MD, Med, FRCPC
Acting Dean | Vice Dean, Medical Education
Professor, Department of Anesthesiology & Pain Medicine

cc: Lisa Robinson – Vice Dean, Strategy & Operations
Justin Nodwell – Vice Dean, Research & Health Science Education
Lynn Wilson – Vice Dean, Clinical & Faculty Affairs
Anastasia Meletopoulos – Academic Affairs Manager, Office of the Dean
Daniella Mallinck – Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice Provost, Academic Programs
Susan Jaglal – Chair, Department of Physical Therapy
Sharon Switzer-Mcintyre – Program Director, MScPT, Department of Physical Therapy

3. Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

This section will be inserted after AP&P by the VPAP office using language verbatim from the approved Report of the meeting.

4. Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers praised the well-articulated academic plan that highlights a commitment to EDI; the renewed curriculum; the formal, mentored research projects available to students; the effective program unit level feedback mechanism; the successful, well-respected and sought-after Ontario Internationally Educated Physical Therapy Bridging Program (OIEPB); they noted the scope, quality, and relevance of department's research activities and impressive research funding; significant changes to the administrative and governance structure implemented since the last external review were reported as positive, transformative change that has improved greatly improved departmental morale; reviewers highlighted the strong ecosystem of collaboration and strategic partnership across the institution; and finally the very impressive outcomes for graduates, with 100% employment 6 months after graduation, since 2013. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: taking actions to make the MScPT admissions processes and outcomes more equitable and to support increased diversity of students entering the program; exploring opportunities for further growth in the program; enhancing partnerships to advance strategic plan initiatives, strengthen inter-professional learning opportunities and optimize new donor support resources; redesigning the departmental website and handbook to improve communications with students, faculty and the public; and identifying additional sources of revenue and ensuring stable funding for the OIEPB program. The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty, unit and programs' responses to the reviewers' recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5. Monitoring and Date of Next Review

In 2022-23 the Dean will follow up with the Chair on the implementation of the external reviewers' recommendations and, will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than December 2023 on the status of the implementation plans.

The next UTQAP review of the Dept. of Physical Therapy will be commissioned in 2025.

6. Distribution

On **date**, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the Dean of the Temerty Faculty of Medicine, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to the Chair of the Department.

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan - DRAFT

1. Review Summary

Programs Reviewed:	Rehabilitation Science, MSc, PhD Speech-Language Pathology, MSc, PhD
Unit Reviewed:	Rehabilitation Sciences Institute
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Temerty Faculty of Medicine
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	Prof. Alice Aiken, Vice-President, Research & Innovation, Dalhousie University Prof. William Miller, Associate Dean of Health Professions Education, Faculty of Medicine University of British Columbia Prof. Christopher Moore, Dean, College of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences, Boston University
Date of Review Visit:	April 7-8, 2021
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 26, 2021

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: October 8 – 9, 2015

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- Very strong faculty research profiles
- High quality of incoming students
- Impressive breadth and depth of elective offerings
- Unique and desirable specializations offered through the Collaborative Programs
- Close relationships with well-respected and well-recognized health and rehabilitation institutions create excellent opportunities for students to learn outside the classroom

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

The reviewers recommended that the following be considered:

- Reconsidering the program's curriculum and structure, including access to courses, research methods offerings, and translational research coverage
- Increasing international student recruitment to maintain the program's high quality and expand the RSI's impact on training and research in the field
- Further strengthening and maintaining relationships with cognate units and external institutions
- Reflecting on potential challenges associated with the Institute's new EDU:B structure

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Confirmation/Agreement Letter; Terms of reference; Self-Study Report; Faculty CVs; Schedule; Previous Review Report (2015-16), the Dean's and Director's Responses, and FAR-IP; Dean's Report 2019; Temerty Faculty of Medicine's Strategic Plan (2018-2023); University of Toronto Towards 2030.

Consultation Process

The reviewers met directly with the following individuals/groups via Microsoft Teams:

1. Dean and Vice Provost, Relations with Health Care Institutions
2. Vice Dean, Strategy & Operations
3. Director (on administrative leave)
4. Acting Director
5. Rehabilitation Sciences Sector Department Chairs (OSOT, PT, SLP)

6. Academic Affairs Committee
7. Faculty & Staff Development Committee
8. Communications & Community Relations Committee
9. Programs & Curricula Committee
10. Student Affairs Committee
11. Students – Rehabilitation Sciences & Speech-Language Pathology
12. Research – Interim Vice Dean, Research & Innovation; Vice President, Research, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital; KITE Institute Director; Head, Division of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre
13. Cognate Graduate Units
14. Directors of Collaborative Specializations
15. Full Professors
16. Associate Professors
17. Assistant Professors
18. Administrative Staff
19. Executive Director, Temerty Office of Advancement

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Program(s) (n/a)

2. Graduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall Quality
 - ▶ RSI trainees make substantial contributions that strengthen the output of their mentors, and enhance RSI's influence in participating disciplines
 - ▶ Collaborative Specialization directors commented on the excellence of RSI students
- Objectives
 - ▶ Ongoing integration of Rehabilitation Sciences and Speech-Language Pathology degree programs has great appeal in terms of shared degree objectives and with regard to providing structure for shared curricular objectives
 - ▶ Learning objectives are clear, appropriate and align with graduate degree expectations
 - ▶ Interdisciplinarity is very important among core disciplines as well as outside traditional rehabilitation sciences
- Admission Requirements
 - ▶ Student Affairs Committee reported that admissions processes are clear and collegial, with some flexibility for underfunded students as needed

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Curricular changes implemented in response to the previous UTQAP review include new courses in knowledge transfer, expansion of existing course content, and a new Rehabilitation Leadership Rounds seminar series
 - ▶ Recent efforts of “very engaged” curriculum committee have focused on curriculum updates, online teaching during the pandemic, ensuring courses are addressing evolving issues in equity, diversity and inclusion, and areas of student interest such as non-traditional career opportunities
 - ▶ Curriculum is designed and delivered in appropriate format
 - ▶ Courses taken outside the RSI, including at other departments or other universities, may be counted toward students’ degree programs
 - ▶ Guaranteed access for set numbers of RSI students in quantitative and qualitative methods courses offered by other University divisions
 - ▶ Impressive focus on teaching and learning quality control
- Innovation
 - ▶ Innovative learning outcomes are designed to prepare students for careers within and beyond academia
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Reports that applications from international students have increased
 - ▶ Noting that tuition for international PhD students is now the same as for domestic students, reviewers observe that this may help with international student recruitment
 - ▶ RSI doing well in prioritizing diversity and accessibility
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Rigorous evaluation of students leads to RSI’s excellent reputation
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students are engaged and proud to be part of their programs, and note feeling very supported by RSI in the direction of their studies
 - ▶ RSI student union focuses on supporting students with program engagement and on creating a positive social environment
 - ▶ Students noted that opportunities to be involved in the RSI in many different ways and to varying degrees is a strength of the department
 - ▶ Curricular changes implemented after last UTQAP review appear to be well received by students
 - ▶ Enthusiastic communications committee working on outreach, promotion, and metrics; reviewers note helpful inclusion of students on the committee
 - ▶ Positive marketing efforts include investments in website updates and additional communications support staff
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ High quality students are successful in obtaining prestigious scholarships
 - ▶ Time to completion is monitored as mandated by the Government of Ontario
 - ▶ Current students “are considered change agents given involvement in numerous philanthropic activities for a broad range of causes”

- Quality indicators – faculty
 - ▶ Faculty include 20 research chairs and hold fellowships in 25 societies
 - ▶ RSI faculty have won 30% of graduate teaching awards in the Temerty Faculty of Medicine
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ RSI alumni make “considerable impact” working within government institutions, and major teaching hospitals, as well as through commercialization via entrepreneurs
- Student funding
 - ▶ Internal funding available, particularly for people in equity-deserving groups

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Reviewers note concern regarding admissions requirement that incoming students have commitment from a faculty member with adequate funding, particularly that it disadvantages junior faculty in their efforts to attract and mentor students
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Student reports that some required course content is not relevant, or not particularly useful
 - ▶ Student concerns regarding availability of desired/required courses; reports of courses not being offered or students otherwise unable to enrol in courses needed for their area of study
 - ▶ “It remains unclear whether enhanced curricular offerings through RSI are a priority”
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students feel that MSc and PhD courses could be separated
 - ▶ Students would appreciate more courses taught by RSI faculty
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ Reviewers note that student satisfaction scores for some individual courses seem low
 - ▶ Reviewers note lack of clarity regarding average times to completion for Master’s and PhD programs
- Student funding
 - ▶ Faculty mention financial constraints as a challenge
 - ▶ Faculty stipend requirements noted as “the biggest impediment to growth of grad students in labs”; challenges include the cost of living in Toronto and the fact that TAs and RAs are not counted toward stipend requirements

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Consider alternative funding approaches, including providing ‘backstop’ funds to guarantee a student’s funding for their entire program “on the likely prospect that the mentor or student would secure funding in the reasonable future”

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Consider course themes to address student concerns that some course material is not relevant
 - ▶ Reviewers note curriculum review and refresh as a “critical area of growth” and recommend strategic curriculum development, with a focus on careers beyond academia
 - ▶ Develop roles for rehabilitation clinician scientists to participate in the curriculum
 - ▶ Work with hospital partners to model non-academic careers for students
 - ▶ Provide tangible incentives for department chairs to support shared course offerings; “A vibrant student community is highly valued by MSc and PhD students, who depend on their peers for acculturation into the scientific community, for exchange of ideas, and for creating and sharing a productive learning milieu”
- Innovation
 - ▶ Reviewers note industry partnerships as a possible area in which to develop experiential learning opportunities
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Consider alternative funding models to support the accessibility of RSI programs
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ “It is essential that incentives are in place for both student and supervisor for timely completion of degree”
- Student funding
 - ▶ Consider whether TAs and RAs could be included in funding packages
 - ▶ Seek additional fellowships from the University for student funding

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ “Excellent, exemplary and complementary composition of core and external faculty who cover a broad area of research and are productive and generally well funded”
- Research
 - ▶ Faculty are world leaders in research; U of T ranked first in North America for publications in Rehabilitation Science
 - ▶ Reviewers note that the World Health Organization reached out to RSI for consultation during the COVID-19 pandemic
 - ▶ External researchers attracted to RSI faculty due to the high quality of RSI students, and the interdisciplinary nature of RSI programs
- Faculty
 - ▶ Faculty members are very engaged in RSI’s scientific reputation
 - ▶ Faculty value diversity and feel it provides a rich experience for students
 - ▶ Early career researchers report feeling very welcomed and supported

- ▶ Faculty and Staff development committee provides “well-received” mentorship for new faculty
- ▶ Faculty recruitment efforts have been bolstered by international outreach, partnerships, and conference participation
- ▶ Faculty workshops instituted by RSI Faculty Development Committee have been well received
- ▶ Faculty development is built into the RSI’s strategic plan and can draw upon Temerty Medicine’s creation of a Research Entrepreneur in Residence program, and an EDI plan
- ▶ Early career faculty receive funding support for recruitment of two masters students
- ▶ Many RSI faculty are considered experts in commercialization of products that have significantly improved function and reduced disability

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Research
 - ▶ Expansion of clinical programs requires time and attention from faculty and administration, which challenges for RSI to fulfill its research mission
 - ▶ RSI itself is not able to provide research start-up funds for newly-hired faculty other than assistance with graduate student funding.
- Faculty
 - ▶ As an EDU-B, RSI has no permanent faculty; reviewers note this as a “primary challenge”
 - ▶ Reviewers note concern regarding inconsistency of clinical departments’ prioritization and allocation of faculty workload between clinical programs and graduate teaching and research within RSI; departmental workload practices may reduce incentives for faculty to teach and conduct research in RSI
 - ▶ Concern that requirement for up-front funding commitments by faculty disadvantages junior faculty in their efforts to attract and mentor students despite the financial support to partially fund/support the faculty members first 2 MSc students

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
 - ▶ Consider supporting team grant applications, particularly for junior faculty
 - ▶ Emphasize RSI’s interdisciplinary profile, including links to hospitals, in faculty recruitment efforts
- Faculty
 - ▶ Consider flexibility in up-front funding requirement for junior faculty, including an option to fund a PhD student instead of two MSc students
 - ▶ Harmonize faculty workload practices between RSI and clinical programs, with increased support for RSI’s teaching and research mission

- ▶ Reviewers note importance of mentorship senior faculty members
- ▶ Formal mentorship and other opportunities for building relationships with senior researchers would be helpful for junior faculty
- ▶ Consider whether clinical departments could each designate a “research grad coordinator” to support RSI administration
- ▶ Consider providing funding for hospital-based faculty to teach RSI courses

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ RSI has “vibrant, active” internal and external relationships, with representatives in numerous collaborative programs, local rehabilitation hospitals, and specialty oriented interdisciplinary hubs
 - ▶ Some cognate units report good involvement and strong alignment with the RSI; others acknowledge good future opportunity for shared instruction
 - ▶ Reviewers note many positive comments on effectiveness of RSI Mentorship circle and Townhall events; remote partners noted that using distance media for these engagements has been very helpful during the COVID-19 pandemic to help them to feel more connected with the RSI community
 - ▶ Staff seem very committed to RSI and staffing in administrative roles has been stable
 - ▶ Clinical program chairs all mentioned that the EDU-B model works well, noting that “cross-pollination among the three rehab professions and beyond is a real asset”
 - ▶ Interdisciplinarity with clinical programs and other University departments noted as a real strength
 - ▶ RSI faculty’s focus on integrated knowledge translation enables strong links with the local clinical community
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ RSI structure facilitates training and research interactions among interested faculty both within and outside host departments; participating faculty are drawn from across the University and the hospital network by the opportunity to mentor graduate students whose primary focus is rehabilitation related
 - ▶ Engagement of the current Senior Advancement Officer, as part of increased focus on the Rehabilitation Sciences Sector within the Faculty’s strategic plan, will enable additional opportunities for RSI program stability, early career investigator support, student recruitment, scholarships and international student engagement
 - ▶ Dedicated RSI Director position has enabled stability
 - ▶ Participating external faculty appreciate for RSI as a focal point for their interests that are often unrepresented in their primary departments
 - ▶ Student affairs committee has streamlined processes for admissions, awards etc.
 - ▶ Admirable amount of administrative support for RSI ensures that their trainees feel supported

- ▶ RSI's budget is "quite substantial" and supported by funds from other University sources
- ▶ RSI leadership is "a particular strength"
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ RSI appears well aligned with the University's mission, especially with regard to the intent of an EDU:B
 - ▶ RSI has done a superlative job in addressing its key objective of establishing a collaborative hub for research, scholarship, and advanced training
 - ▶ Participants consistently spoke of the high value they assign to the shared objectives and values of RSI in rehabilitation
 - ▶ Curriculum innovation currently in progress has brought the RSI community together and provides "a good model for how partnership can happen and grow"
- International comparators
 - ▶ Comparison with other programs in Canada and North America reveals an extraordinarily high level of productivity among RSI-affiliated faculty
 - ▶ "Unsurpassed" breadth of opportunities for graduate students, with active collaborations and interactions across a very broad range of areas and units
 - ▶ RSI's degree of interdisciplinarity, and its "large and extensive collaborative environment" are distinguishing characteristics among its peers

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Lack of incentives for faculty whose primary appointment is with an affiliated hospital to teach in RSI programs
 - ▶ Some comments that rehab hospitals outside of the University Health Network did not feel as closely aligned with RSI
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Reviewers note that the admissions and awards focus of the Student Affairs committee "seems to be a very narrow focus" and noted concern that the group described working separately on things rather than working together as a committee
 - ▶ Reviewers note that space is "limited and not ideal"
 - ▶ RSI lacks the financial resources to provide incentives for other units to teach in RSI programs; current arrangement relies on the "good natures of Department Chairs in prioritizing RSI curriculum, which disadvantages these highly talented students"
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Reviewers note that it is unclear how RSI's mission aligns with the Faculty of Medicine's
 - ▶ Reports that RSI faculty feel that the Faculty's emphasis is focused on the medical undergraduate program rather than the research graduate programs

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Consider ways to provide incentives for hospital-affiliated faculty to teach in RSI programs
 - ▶ Reviewers note that “interdisciplinarity is key to success” and recommend increased interaction and collaboration with other units, including formalized agreements to facilitate the development of shared courses
 - ▶ Consider expanding interdisciplinary outreach to include social sciences as well as international partners
 - ▶ Continue using distance media to support increased engagement with partners in remote hospitals
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ RSI Directorship has enabled program stability and “could use continued investment moving forward”
 - ▶ Consider potential roles for postdoctoral fellows in RSI, including teaching, mentorship, and supporting extracurricular activities
 - ▶ Optimize staff complement to address issue of staff workload and provide additional support in key areas such as recruitment
 - ▶ Additional space resources such as a dedicated meeting space would benefit RSI
 - ▶ Consider ways to optimize RSI’s organizational and financial structure within the Faculty of Medicine
 - ▶ Consider providing instructional funds to RSI tied to enrollments and program requirements, to allow the Institute to buy out faculty time from participating units and incentivize teaching in RSI programs
 - ▶ Consider expanded priorities for the Student Affairs committee, e.g., student wellness
 - ▶ Consider work-share arrangements to optimize available space
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ RSI is a sufficiently funded program that could benefit from additional investment to ensure continued status as a world leader
 - ▶ Leverage large pool of potential mentors to further expand RSI programs
 - ▶ Consider ways to incentivize sector-level faculty participation in RSI
 - ▶ A greater focus on community building, including small internal grant programs, career development activities, or RSI-housed shared resources, could provide immediate and substantial benefits



Patricia Houston, MD MEd FRCPC
Acting Dean and Vice Dean, Medical Education

September 14, 2021

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
Division of the Vice-President & Provost
University of Toronto

Dear Susan,

DEAN'S RESPONSE | UTQAP Review of the Rehabilitation Sciences Institute

On behalf of the Temerty Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto, I would first like to thank the reviewers, Professors Alice Aiken, William Miller, and Christopher Moore for a fulsome and rigorous review of the Rehabilitation Sciences Institute (RSI) on April 7-8, 2021. On behalf of Temerty Medicine, I would also like to thank Professor Angela Colantonio, Director, RSI, and Professor Yana Yunusova, Acting Director, RSI, the administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the outstanding self-study report. I also wish to thank the numerous administrative staff, trainees, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided invaluable input.

The reviewers reflected that “*Comparison with other programs in Canada and North America reveals an extraordinarily high level of productivity among RSI-affiliated faculty. The breadth of opportunities for graduate students is unsurpassed, with active collaborations and interactions across a very broad range of areas and units.*” Temerty Medicine greatly appreciates the insightful and comprehensive report provided by the reviewers. It serves as an invaluable guide for future strategic directions and program enhancements of the Rehabilitation Sciences Institute. I am in full agreement with the responses of Professors Colantonio and Yunusova as Director and Acting Director, respectively. The following response and implementation plan has been developed after consultation with them.

1. **Reviewers' Comment:** “*Participation in RSI activities relies heavily on the goodwill of administrators and faculty participants. The mission of RSI could be strengthened by incentivizing at the sector level faculty participation in RSI. For example, new hires might be approved with the stipulation that some agreed-to effort level in RSI is protected. The Director's influence would be enhanced with the capacity to further incentivize participation by faculty.*”

Decanal Response: RSI has expanded the number of graduate coordinator positions and is planning for the imminent appointment of 2 full-year graduate coordinators and an Associate Director position. Consideration is also being given to a second Associate Director position. As recommended, enhanced collaboration will be sought with Chairs of the cognate departments and Directors of affiliated research institutes to include RSI contributions in the annual faculty Progress Through the Ranks (PTR). In addition, consideration will be given to prioritizing student financial support for faculty who contribute to the educational and administrative activities of RSI.

2. **Reviewers' Comment:** *"Participants consistently spoke of the high value they assign to the shared objectives and values of RSI in rehabilitation. Some even recognize RSI as their primary intellectual home. Greater focus on community building might provide immediate and substantial benefit."*

Decanal Response: To address this concern, RSI is actively pursuing new opportunities for collaboration across the sector, such as through development of the Virtual Rehab Education and Research Centre. RSI is also working across the sector on shared initiatives to advance equity, diversity, inclusion, Indigeneity, and accessibility. To advance these goals, a cross-sector committee has been established and is pursuing initiatives related to communications. RSI will also aim to enhance partnerships with more affiliated research institutes, including those with a central focus on mental health and the wellbeing of marginalized populations. These partnerships will benefit from RSI's representation across departments in Temerty Medicine, and from University-wide collaborations with the Faculties of Kinesiology & Physical Education, Pharmacy, Nursing, Arts & Science, Engineering, and Music and from the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education.

Strengthening the RSI's community through partnerships dovetails with Temerty Medicine's strategic priority to develop rehabilitation research and clinical capacity. Together, the Vice Dean, Partnerships, RSI Director, and Rehabilitation Sciences Chairs will work towards enacting and communicating shared strategic initiatives.

3. **Reviewers' Comment:** *"It remains unclear whether enhanced curricular offerings through RSI are a priority. One faculty member noted that teaching in RSI is 'actively discouraged' given the burgeoning needs of the clinical programs in the cognate departments. If a shared didactic experience among RSI students is a priority, department chairs require tangible incentives to support these course offerings. A vibrant student community is highly valued by MSc and PhD students, who depend on their peers for acculturation into the scientific community, for exchange of ideas, and for creating and sharing a productive learning milieu." Students commented that core program courses are not always useful or available.*

Decanal Response: Curricular redesign and refresh is a key priority for RSI, which recently completed a comprehensive review of core curricula of the MSc and PhD programs in Rehabilitation Sciences. Accordingly, RSI formalized program objectives and implemented new elements to meet these objectives, including a review and re-alignment of course content, re-visioning and reformulation of the role of the supervisory committee, and changes in the nature and expectation of the comprehensive exam. The Programs and Curricula Committee is developing evaluation components for each program, including updated course evaluations. Course evaluations will be closely monitored as a tool to optimize learner experience. Review and redesign of the Practice Science Program is underway and will be completed in 2 to 3 years.

Over the last 2 years, significant progress has been made in ensuring access to outside courses needed for RSI students to complete their studies. In the next 4 to 5 years, specializations will be further developed within RSI for training, such as in Biomedical Engineering, Neuroscience, Motor Control, and Health Policy, in partnership with existing collaborative programs. RSI reports that over the last 2 years, all students have been successful in accessing needed outside courses and that they have negotiated for guaranteed places for students taking qualitative methods courses. Over the next 5 years RSI will proactively monitor student access to courses, and continue to maintain positive relationships with outside departments/faculties that provide courses that students need.

Course evaluations of courses offered by RSI will also be monitored continuously to assess impact of curriculum redesign. It is important to recognize the challenge of providing relevant core material for the breadth of research conducted in RSI, which ranges from basic inquiry to health policy in an interdisciplinary context. The direct applicability of course content varies significantly according to students' particular course of study. Because of RSI's commitment to interdisciplinarity, students are exposed to a broad range of material that may not be seen as immediately applicable to their own research. RSI will investigate what course evaluation indicators may be used to capture interdisciplinary learning, as well as more clearly articulate the implications of being in an interdisciplinary program in terms of student expectations and learning objectives.

4. **Reviewers' Comment:** *Recommendation to explore alternative approaches to the current requirement for "up-front" funding for applicants entering RSI programs; an alternative approach could have several possible benefits including increased diversity and international composition of the student body, and opportunities for junior faculty members to begin mentoring students earlier in their careers.*

Decanal Response: RSI currently requests "up-front" funding of approximately 2 years from faculty with respect to prospective students. During this time, it is expected that students/faculty will work towards continued funding. RSI also implemented a funding policy to specifically support junior faculty, which currently provides up to two-thirds of the required student stipends. This support has been used to leverage important applications such as Canada Research Chairs. Junior faculty are also being mentored to use more proactive recruitment strategies to successfully attract trainees.

RSI is very committed to providing funding to increase the diversity of our student body particularly for students from under-represented groups. In recent years, RSI fully funded Indigenous students for a minimum of 2 years and have dedicated Ontario Graduate Scholarship awards for students from underrepresented groups. RSI's advancement activities have included funding to support diverse students, including specific funding for Indigenous students. RSI plans to collaborate on larger student scholarship advancement initiatives. RSI's Communications and Community Relations Committee has designed and piloted a highly successful recruitment strategy already implemented this year; this strategy will need to be enhanced in future years. RSI will continue working with a Temerty Medicine recruiter, as well as other University staff, to support increased representation of students from other countries.

The next UTQAP review of the Rehabilitation Sciences Institute is scheduled in 2024-25. In 2022-23 we will follow up with the Director on the implementation of the external reviewers' recommendations and, later that year, provide you with an interim report on the status of the implementation plan.

Sincerely,



Patricia Houston, MD, MEd, FRCPC
Acting Dean | Vice Dean, Medical Education
Professor, Department of Anesthesiology & Pain Medicine

cc: Lisa Robinson – Vice Dean, Strategy & Operations
Justin Nodwell – Vice Dean, Research & Health Science Education
Lynn Wilson – Vice Dean, Clinical & Faculty Affairs
Anastasia Meletopoulos – Academic Affairs Manager
Daniella Mallinck – Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice Provost, Academic Programs
Angela Colantonio – Director, Rehabilitation Sciences Institute

3. Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

This section will be inserted after AP&P by the VPAP office using language verbatim from the approved Report of the meeting.

4. Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers noted that “RSI has done a superlative job of addressing its key objective, establishing a collaborative hub for researchers from across the region to engage in research, scholarship, and advanced training”; they praised the unsurpassed breadth of opportunities for graduate students to collaborate and interact across a broad range of areas; the significant curriculum revisions that are currently underway to modernize and improve program quality; the high quality students who are “proud to be part of RSI”; the outstanding, productive and well-funded core and external faculty, and the committed and effective staff members; and finally, they commended the institute for its “vibrant and active” interdisciplinary connections with cognate units. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: continuing to develop and refresh RSI program curricula; exploring alternative approaches to the current requirement for “up-front” funding for applicants entering RSI programs; providing incentives to increase engagement and to attract clinician scientists with primary appointments in hospitals to teach in RSI programs; taking full advantage of opportunities for interdisciplinary connections with cognate units, and continuing to expand RSI’s relationships into new areas; improving communications with participating departments regarding workload, and recognition for teaching and supervising students in RSI programs; and enhancing strategic alignment with the Faculty of Medicine. The Dean’s Administrative Response describes the Faculty, unit and programs’ responses to the reviewers’ recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5. Monitoring and Date of Next Review

In 2023 the Dean will follow up with the Chair on the implementation of the external reviewers’ recommendations and, will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs by December 2023 on the status of the implementation plans.

The next UTQAP review of the Rehabilitation Sciences will be commissioned in 2025.

6. Distribution

On **date**, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the Dean of the Temerty Faculty of Medicine, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to the Chair of the Department.

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan - DRAFT

1. Review Summary

Program(s) Reviewed:	Biology, HBSc: Major; Minor Conservation and Biodiversity, HBSc: Specialist; Major Human Biology, HBSc: Specialist; Major Integrative Biology, HBSc: Specialist Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, HBSc: Specialist and Specialist Co-op Molecular Biology, Immunology and Disease, HBSc: Major Plant Biology, HBSc: Major
Unit Reviewed:	Department of Biological Sciences
Commissioning Officer:	Vice-Principal, Academic and Dean, University of Toronto Scarborough
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professor Mark Bernards, Department of Biology, Western University 2. Professor Michael Caldwell, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Alberta 3. Professor David Kirkpatrick, Department of Biology Teaching and Learning, College of Biological Sciences, University of Minnesota
Date of Review Visit:	November 10-13, 2020
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 26, 2021

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: December 19 and 20, 2011

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Programs

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Outstanding commitment to providing laboratory and experiential learning opportunities
- High levels of student satisfaction
- Thoughtful combination of programs that respond to students' needs

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Enhancing the quantitative and computational aspects of biological science to develop skills in the organization and management of large data sets
- Expanding participation in the co-op program
- Delivering several large enrolment courses in web-based format

2. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Research success of the faculty

3. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- High morale of staff, faculty, and students

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Highlighting distinct areas of strength to assist with recruitment
- Addressing space challenges (especially laboratory space)

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

1. About the University and UTSC: UTSC Academic Plan (2015-20); UTSC Admissions Viewbook (2020-21); Campus Virtual Tour.
2. About the Review: Terms of Reference; Review Report Template; Remote Site Visit Schedule.
3. About the Department: Previous External Review Report (2011); Previous External Review Final Assessment Report; Unit Academic Plan, April 2015; Unit Self Study, February 2020;

- Department Video; Program Videos for Conservation & Biodiversity and Human Biology.
4. About Programs and Courses: Description of all programs (2019-20 Academic Calendar); and description of all courses (2019-20 Academic Calendar); Course Enrolments from 2009 to 2019.
 5. Course Syllabi (all courses).
 6. Faculty CVs (all faculty).

Consultation Process

The reviewers met with the following: the decanal group, including the Vice-Principal Academic and Dean, Vice-Dean Recruitment, Enrolment and Student Success, Vice-Dean Teaching, Learning and Undergraduate Programs, Vice-Dean Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, Acting Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum, and Academic Programs Officer; the Vice-Principal Research; the Chair of the Department of Biological Sciences; Biological Sciences faculty – tenure- and teaching-stream (all ranks); the Director and staff from the Arts & Science Co-op Office; UTSC Chief Librarian and library staff; technical staff; departmental administrative staff; and undergraduate students.

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Program

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Undergraduate programs are excellent, and provide a solid foundation in Biology and its main sub-fields, on par with other Canadian universities
 - ▶ Within the Ontario and Canadian contexts, the Specialist programs are among the very best
 - ▶ Majors are well grounded in a core biology curriculum and provide a solid foundation
- Objectives
 - ▶ All programs highly consistent with the University's undergraduate goals, align well with the department's teaching mission and faculty research efforts, and deliver excellent undergraduate experience to students
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ All programs have well-defined admission criteria
 - ▶ Significant enrolment increase over past decade, which seems likely to continue
 - ▶ Incoming students particularly drawn to Human Biology, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology options; other programs show lower but consistent enrolments
 - ▶ Significant recent enrolment trend towards Major programs

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Program content is well thought out and delivered using a range of traditional and innovative approaches
 - ▶ Department to be commended for strong efforts in designing and delivering a modern Biology curriculum
 - ▶ Courses of study for each program are rigorously developed, with comprehensive Program Learning Outcomes
 - ▶ Many programs have undergone revisions in response to previous review
 - ▶ Teaching Stream faculty implementing current best-practice approaches to content delivery in their courses
 - ▶ Student research opportunities noted as highlight of conversations with faculty
 - ▶ Co-op option of Specialist in Molecular Biology & Biotechnology program represents a successful enhancement of the standard Specialist program, and is well supported and administered
- Innovation
 - ▶ Popularity of cross-disciplinary studies indicates healthy programs, providing students sufficient flexibility to tailor scholarship towards their personal goals
 - ▶ Recently-begun renovations to teaching labs promise to significantly elevate learning in impacted courses
 - ▶ Teaching Stream Faculty largely responsible for driving teaching innovation, including a number of unique and effective initiatives (cross-course poster project, C-level team research projects)
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Teaching Stream faculty have developed assessments to track outcomes of the changes made to PLOs
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ In general, students in programs administered by the department have an excellent educational experience
 - ▶ Student survey results indicate general satisfaction with the programs
 - ▶ Students commend Facilitated Study Groups (FSGs) as being central to their study process and success, and key for maintaining a sense of community after shift to online learning in response to COVID-19
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ Entering undergraduates consistently strong, with a slight recent upward trend in incoming students' high school average (~85%)
 - ▶ Steady year-over-year increase in number of students on Dean's Honours list
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ Graduates are well prepared for future activities be they graduate school or workforce (either Government or private sector)

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Specialist and Minors have seen 1/3 enrolment reduction over past decade
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Concerns raised by some students around sequencing of classes and the frequency of their availability, especially with regard to core courses
 - ▶ Co-op program and joint Paramedicine program present unique challenges to student progression
 - ▶ Relatively limited number of D-level courses that truly differentiate the distinct departmental Specialist programs
 - ▶ Professors at all ranks indicate they do not have enough time to meet all requests for UG research mentoring, particularly in supervised research courses
 - ▶ Teaching Stream faculty directly supervise undergraduate research courses, however note severely limited resources compared to Tenure Stream colleagues
- Student funding
 - ▶ No evidence of undergraduate scholarships or similar monetary support mechanisms

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Explore formalizing research aspects of curriculum, by setting goals for the percentage of student involvement in research; a stronger emphasis on upper level research would benefit students
 - ▶ Provide Teaching Stream faculty with full support (financial, access to laboratory facilities, field equipment, etc.) to maximize the student research experience
 - ▶ Create capacity for new faculty to diversify upper-year course offerings
 - ▶ Review critical points in timetable of course offerings and consider offering required courses more frequently
- Student funding
 - ▶ Development of donor-funded scholarships would provide financial relief for students and increase programs' attractiveness

2. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Faculty – Teaching Stream in particular – provide high quality classroom and laboratory instruction; their knowledge and expertise in curriculum development and delivery represent a significant departmental resource
 - ▶ UTSC faculty compare favourably with other small campus research intensive universities in Canada
 - ▶ Junior faculty members are uniformly high achieving academics, positioned for national and international success

- Research
 - ▶ Professors at all ranks conduct the expected “full scope and breadth” of research
 - ▶ Quality judged relative to core research funding measured against NSERC DG successes is high
 - ▶ Faculty research programs are highly subscribed to by graduate students and by undergraduate students seeking research learning opportunities, which reviewers note as indicative of their relevance
 - ▶ Tenure Stream faculty have self-assorted into non-exclusive research clusters whose members interact constructively
 - ▶ At level of Tenure Stream faculty recruitment, the department presents a well conceived plan for developing strength in seven identified research clusters
 - ▶ Funding support for research initiatives has remained strong, with a recent trend towards more external funding, most notably governmental agencies and non-profit organizations
- Faculty
 - ▶ Faculty complement stands at approximately 82% Tenure Stream and 18% Teaching Stream – a reasonable distribution, given extensive undergraduate teaching demands

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ While UTSC faculty members at all ranks compared favorably with UTM faculty members at all ranks, neither group compared as well with faculty members in EEB and CSB at the St. George campus
- Research
 - ▶ Concerns expressed around lab renovation timelines, and subsequent delays in faculty productivity and outcomes
 - ▶ Reviewers view the lack chance to meet with graduate student stakeholders a missed opportunity in their assessment of the strength of departmental research activities, and quality of research environment

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Formally recognize Teaching Stream faculty as a ‘Research Cluster’ within the department, and encourage and promote continued curricular innovation that can be shared across all faculty involved in teaching
- Research
 - ▶ Provide maximal research support to new Tenure Stream faculty, either through accelerated renovations, or support for alternative research programs pending laboratory completion
 - ▶ Prioritizes quality of research space over proximity, ensuring needs of new and established researchers are met

- ▶ Include interviews with graduate student stakeholders in future review site visits

3. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ High morale, strong sense of community and collegiality amongst faculty, staff and students
 - ▶ Department has benefited from strong leadership since its inception and current chair has fostered a collegial environment
 - ▶ Local student composition indicates critical and important recognition from the local community
 - ▶ Tenure Stream faculty have self-assorted into non-exclusive research clusters whose members interact constructively; Teaching Stream faculty also form a cohesive unit
 - ▶ Department has developed extensive local, national and international partnerships with academic units in numerous universities and colleges, and with external government agencies at the local, provincial and national level
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Straightforward departmental organization structure that functions smoothly
 - ▶ Programs are well supported by excellent administrative and technical staff, through top quality library resources and a strong Co-op office
 - ▶ Department is effectively utilizing its “human resource” to realize their departmental mission and vision to excel in research and teaching
 - ▶ Recently initiated renovation (and expansion) of teaching labs universally viewed as a welcome change, and is absolutely essential to department’s ability to deliver high-quality undergraduate lab courses
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Programs offered by the department align well with the UTSC academic plan
- International comparators
 - ▶ The Department of Biological Sciences and the undergraduate programs it offers are competitive on a global stage

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Some faculty note strained relationships with cognate units (in particular Cell & Systems Biology, and Ecology & Evolutionary Biology), discontent with the graduate programs linked these departments, and a desire to develop their own graduate program
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Several impacts noted regarding tri-campus structure of graduate programs in biological sciences:
 - Department’s lack of involvement in governance and decision-making regarding graduate programs administered by CSB and EEB

- Inconvenience of the travel between UTSC and UTSG necessary to meet program requirements
 - Opacity around graduate student funding
- ▶ Physical constraints (both in total square footage and amenability to renovation) of the Andrews Building; all stakeholder groups expressed concerns around general departmental space
- ▶ Department has grown to physical limits of allotment in the Andrews Building; any future growth will necessitate difficult choices around space
- ▶ A number of the core facilities need renovation, most notably the greenhouse and aquatics facilities
- ▶ Administrative staff roster has not grown as quickly as rest of department
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Recent faculty hires, driven by strong and growing UG enrolment, have brought department to a critical tipping point in terms of identity and future growth
 - ▶ UTSC complement planning is sensitive to the need to ensure that new hires meet standards set by cognate departments regarding supervision of tri-campus graduate students

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Repair and make functional relationships with CSB and EEB
 - ▶ Either move to create own independent graduate program, or seek to build new relationships with cognate departments on graduate programming
 - ▶ Maintain department's high standard of achievement in external partnership development and relationships at all levels
 - ▶ Continue and build on excellent work of being locally relevant, to enhance national social impact
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Prioritize quality of research space over proximity, ensuring the needs of new and established researchers are met
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Further explore development of a Conservation & Biodiversity Co-op program
 - ▶ Either develop own UTSC-administered graduate program and set own path for faculty complement, or evolve complement planning process to become a joint initiative between UTSC and its two graduate program cognate departments
 - ▶ Develop and articulate written complement plan for Teaching Stream faculty
 - ▶ Develop and articulate written complement plan for administrative and teaching support staff; ensure that staff complement growth keeps pace with faculty growth and any graduate program development
 - ▶ Related to space planning, decide what the Department values more:
 - Increasing the size of the faculty, staff and student complement, thereby requiring a new building/buildings to house growth; **or**

- Downsizing around complement planning and growth via attrition, remaining where they are currently housed with all members in close proximity
- ▶ Regarding complement planning:
 - Either develop own UTSC-administered graduate program and thus set own path for faculty complement planning; **or**
 - Evolve complement to become a joint initiative between UTSC and its two graduate program cognate departments
- ▶ Reviewers note several areas of opportunity for revenue generation:
 - Possible expansion of core facilities could lead to an increase in external users;
 - A focus on obtaining external support through endowments and scholarships
 - Increased involvement in revenue-generating Masters programs
- ▶ Include donor-funded scholarships and/or bursaries in fundraising plans



September 15, 2021

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
Office of the Vice-President and Provost
University of Toronto

Dean's Administrative Response: External Review of the Department of Biological Sciences

Dear Susan,

Thank you for the April 8, 2021 letter requesting my administrative response to the external review of the Department of Biological Sciences. We want to thank the review team – Professor Mark Bernards, Department of Biology, Western University; Professor Michael Caldwell, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Alberta; and Professor David Kirkpatrick, Department of Biology Teaching and Learning, College of Biological Sciences, University of Minnesota – for their consultation with us during the remote site-visit, held from November 10-13, 2020, and for their report, which was received on December 16, 2020, and finalized on January 4, 2021.

I appreciate the seriousness with which the reviewers approached the external review process, as well the thoughtful consideration given to Biological Sciences and its undergraduate programs. I am very pleased by the overall positive review of the Department. In particular, the reviewers noted the excellence of the undergraduate programs, the high-quality of teaching overall as well as the innovative pedagogical approaches in delivering course content, the strong sense of community and collegiality among the faculty, staff and students, the high morale, and the consistently strong leadership in the Department.

The external review report was sent to the Chair of the Department, Professor Andrew Mason, on January 5, 2021, with a request to share it widely among the faculty, staff and students. The decanal group, including myself, the Vice-Dean Teaching, Learning and Undergraduate Programs (VDTLUP), Vice-Dean Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (VDGPS), Vice-Dean, Recruitment, Enrolment and Student Success (VDRESS), Vice-Dean Faculty Affairs, Equity, and Success (VDFAES), Interim Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum (ADUPC), the Director of the Office of the Vice-Principal Academic and Dean, and the Academic Programs Officer, met with the Chair of Biological Sciences and the current Associate Chair Teaching and Undergraduate Affairs, Associate Chair Research and Graduate Studies (now Acting Chair), and the former Associate Chair Teaching and Undergraduate Affairs, on May 5, 2021 to discuss the external review report and administrative response; I am pleased with the depth of the discussion that took place.

My administrative response to the points raised in your letter is given below. This response has been developed in close consultation with both the Chair and Acting Chair of Biological Sciences and reflects the key elements of the unit response letter, dated August 4, 2021. It also includes responses to points raised in the Request for Administrative Response that are outside departmental control.

Let me address the specific points raised in your letter:

- *The reviewers recommended that the Department explore formalizing research aspects of the curriculum, and that teaching stream faculty in particular receive appropriate access to labs and other resources to support program quality and undergraduate research.*

As the Chair outlines in his Response letter, these recommendations from the review team are related to undergraduate research. First, they recommend that the Department begin to formalize research aspects of the curriculum “by setting goals for the percentage of student involvement in research.” The impetus for this recommendation is the reviewers’ understanding that undergraduate research at the upper level “appears to be variable in its availability, based primarily on faculty willingness, capacity and involvement.” Given this variability, they feel that a stronger emphasis on upper-level research would be beneficial to undergraduates in each program. Second, the review team recommends that: “(a) teaching-stream faculty in the Department “receive full support (financial, access to laboratory facilities, field equipment, etc.)” to maximize the student research experience; and (b) the Department “formally recognizes the Teaching Stream Faculty as a Research Cluster within the Department, and encourages and promotes continued curricular innovation that can be shared across all faculty involved in teaching.”

With regard to the first recommendation, it is important to note that undergraduate students in the Department of Biological Sciences are already strongly encouraged to engage in research activities and have access to many opportunities to do so. Indeed, students begin building their research experience at the B-level (e.g., BIOB90H3), continue with courses at the C-level (e.g., BIOC90H3), and have access to rich array of opportunities at the D-level, including undergraduate thesis projects, summer research placements, and (for students in the Specialist Co-op program in Molecular Biology and Biotechnology) co-op placements. Building further on these course elements, in the 2019-20 academic year, the Department established an undergraduate, in-program Certificate in Biological Sciences Research Excellence that encourages students to engage in research, and formally recognizes, on their transcripts, students’ research accomplishments. These carefully scaffolded research opportunities are a highlight of the Department’s programs and research culture.

All faculty in the Department of Biological Sciences are highly invested in undergraduate research, but they believe strongly that they can only realistically support a limited number of students each year, dependent on the nature of the research (e.g., field work involving relatively large-scale surveys and data collection). This is in accordance with the nature of independent research projects, which require significant resources and investment by faculty (although the Department does provide limited financial reimbursement in support of D-level projects). Nevertheless, the expansion of course-based research opportunities remains an important area of potential growth. The Department proposes to expand the role of, and pedagogical/professional development resources available to, the teaching-stream faculty. For example, some members of the teaching stream faculty already engage work-study students in the summer months to develop and pilot mini experiments that are then incorporated into the Biology introductory course labs. In coming years, with more reliable use of renovated teaching lab space, this model will be adapted into course-based undergraduate research experiences (CUREs) that include an added biology education focus for the results of their experimentation.

In response to the second recommendation, the Department agrees that explicit recognition of pedagogical research and student research supervisions, largely led by teaching-stream faculty, would be beneficial. They plan to revise the departmental governance document to clarify their status as follows: 1) recognizing the contributions of teaching-stream faculty in the area of pedagogical research as integral to the department; and 2) making explicit that this entails access to full support and resources for teaching-stream faculty led student research. The Department further notes that financial, space, and equipment supports are currently available and teaching-stream faculty will be encouraged to leverage them. Finally, the Department has developed flexible options for all newly hired faculty to maintain

productivity while their labs are under development, including access to temporary space combined with earlier initiation of the design and renovation process for new labs.

While the Dean's Office strongly supports recognition for the pedagogical/professional development activities of teaching stream faculty, including discipline-based research, it is important to note that basic research is not required as a part of the workload of teaching-stream faculty at the University of Toronto. As a result, there are currently more limited resources and opportunities at the University to support teaching-stream faculty research, as opposed to pedagogical/professional development. It would be possible for the Department to provide resources to teaching stream faculty to allow them to supervise student research conducted as part of coursework, and the Dean's Office would certainly consider requests to enhance the teaching budget to permit this kind of research activity. While the Dean's Office supports the long-term development of research opportunities and related resources for teaching-stream faculty as part of their teaching and pedagogical/professional development activities, particularly given the growing emphasis on the scholarship of teaching and learning, changes to departmental governance and any related workload expectations for teaching-stream faculty research would raise issues of policy that would need to be addressed in dialogue with the Provost's Office.

- *The reviewers noted significant student concerns regarding the sequencing and frequency of required courses, and recommended that the Department review "critical pinch points" in its course offerings to enable timely degree progression.*

In his Response letter, the Chair notes that the Department of Biological Science has been working steadily to expand course offerings in the summer term to include all core courses in their programs; this initiative gives students the opportunity to complete any courses they may have missed during the academic year, particularly as a result of co-op work terms. Although the Department prefers that students maintain the recommended sequence of courses for their program(s), they recognize that some students will want, or need, to deviate from this pathway. To support these students, the Department regularly updates the undergraduate *Academic Calendar* to clarify the ideal program planning, and they have also created incentives for students to follow the recommended sequences. In addition, the Department provides advising sessions with the departmental Program Coordinator, prior to registration deadlines, with the goal of proactively assisting students in their academic planning. In terms of the number of upper-level courses available to students, the Department has been working steadily on broadening the selection of these courses (e.g. BIOC35H3, BIOD07H3, BIOD63H3, BIOD13H3 all added within the past three years, and BIOD29H3 proposed for the 2021-22 academic year) to more efficiently stream students to graduation. The effectiveness of these measures is demonstrated by time-to-completion rates in the Department, which compare favourably with institutional norms. The Dean's Office supports the Department in these endeavours and has suggested that the Department develop specific plans regarding the sequence and availability of courses in its programs. This will be supported and informed by strategic enrolment management led by the Dean's Office.

- *The reviewers recommended that the Department explore the development of a Co-op program in Conservation and Biodiversity.*

The Chair reports that plans to introduce a Specialist (Co-operative) program in Conservation and Biodiversity have already been initiated, and consultations with the Arts & Science Co-op Office, who are responsible for securing appropriate co-op work term placements for students, is currently ongoing. The Department notes that a major modification proposal is in development, and it has been submitted to the Dean's Office as part of the 2021-22 curriculum cycle. The expectation is that students will be able to begin enrolling in the program in Fall 2022.

- *The reviewers observed that recent faculty hires, driven by increasing undergraduate enrolments, have brought the Department to an "important crossroads" with regard to identity and future growth. They note that the Department has reached the limits of its current space, and recommend that meeting the space needs of new and*

established researchers in a timely way be prioritized over maintaining spatial proximity of the Department as a whole.

The Chair emphasizes that meeting the space needs of new faculty is a priority in the Department of Biological Sciences; however, a central consideration in the allocation of faculty research space in the Department is access to research resources and infrastructure. The Chair observes that the dispersed model of departmental growth imposes different constraints on complement planning because some areas of research cannot be supported in lab space that is removed from core facilities, and points out that the reviewers also seem to recognize this point in the review Report: “The success of the movement of research groups to new locations, should this be part of the Department’s decision regarding future space use, is likely to be correlated with easy access to appropriate core facilities (pg. 18).” The Chair acknowledges that that wet lab capacity in the Science Wing and Science Research Building are not fully utilized, and the Department will consider both proximal and less proximal space as best fits their complement planning priorities.

It may be helpful here to note that there is a process at UTSC for identifying space and equipment needs for new faculty. This process, which involves the Offices of the Vice-Principal Academic and Dean, the Vice-Principal Research and Innovation, and the Chief Administrative Officer, enables the campus to prepare in a proactive way for the needs of new faculty, and also encourages departments to consider the research facility needs of new faculty at the time that they develop their faculty complement plans. The availability of suitable space is taken into consideration when the campus develops its faculty recruitment and complement plans.

- *The reviewers recommend that the Department develop written complement plans for Teaching Stream faculty and administrative staff.*

In his Response, the Chair emphasizes that Department of Biological Sciences recognizes the important contributions the teaching-stream faculty make to the academic mission, and he reiterates that more coherent approach to complement planning will follow from an explicit recognition of teaching-stream faculty as an integral part of a research cluster that is focused on pedagogy. He further notes that, while teaching-stream faculty do participate in the annual campus-wide complement planning process they have not, in the past, brought hiring proposals to planning discussions in the same way that other research clusters normally do. The Department believes that their planned changes to departmental governance will address this.

It should also be noted that the Faculty Complement Committee (FCC) was created during the academic year 2019-20 to provide recommendations to me regarding the distribution of teaching-stream and tenure-stream faculty positions sought by academic units in the yearly recruitment cycle, within the context of strategic multi-year departmental and campus faculty complements. The FCC provides a consultative, inclusive and transparent process that involves all academic units in determining the complement submission at UTSC. Plans for hiring teaching-stream faculty will be considered in the review of faculty complements.

With regard to complement planning for administrative staff, the Department notes they are understaffed relative to other comparable departments, and they have already requested an additional staff position (dedicated to management of research funds), which has been provisionally approved. Development of a more comprehensive staff hiring plan will be incorporated in the next departmental academic plan, and the Dean’s Office will continue to work with the Department in assessing its short- and long-term staffing needs.

- *The reviewers noted that there are “structural barriers” to developing effective relationships with cognate departments, impacting the Department’s faculty complement planning and faculty morale. They recommend that issues of tri-campus graduate program administration be addressed in order to improve relationships.*

The Chair believes that the review may have gained an inaccurate impression of the tri-campus graduate landscape at the University, and notes that the Department's complement planning process is not constrained in any way by their tri-campus graduate relationships with cognate units on the St. George campus. As he notes in his Response, the only expectation is that a graduate chair must be represented on each hiring committee and is required to co-sign a letter of offer, and these requirements are not a source of tension.

However, the Chair does acknowledge that there are other points of tension. First, graduate resources are remote from the Department. While this challenge is somewhat mitigated by campus-level graduate support via the Office of the Vice-Dean Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, the Department believes it can undermine department cohort building. Second, the sense of detachment from cognate graduate units among faculty, which is largely a consequence of distance is somewhat inevitable in disciplines like biology where faculty are tied to physical infrastructure for their work. In this instance, the Department notes that some faculty do maintain strong ties with their affiliated graduate unit, but they primarily identify as members of UTSC Biological Sciences, with complement planning, undergraduate curriculum development and graduate training taking place in that context. Only graduate programming and administration are dispersed.

The Department believes that a proposal for a new graduate program, that is currently under development, is a constructive way to address these issues. The proposed program in Interdisciplinary and Applied Biology, which is in the very early stages of development, is designed to provide PhD-level training in the biological sciences, with an emphasis on cross-disciplinary training, hands-on experience, and the applicability of basic science to real-world problems. The Department anticipates that most faculty will not change their primary graduate affiliation; instead, the new program would be an alternative intake. Moreover the new program will require the development of more graduate course offerings that will alleviate the requirement for graduate students to travel to the St. George campus for courses; this will address a University of Toronto priority for diversified career training for graduate students; and the program will directly advance the campus strategic goals of inclusivity, access, and graduate growth, because it is likely to have broader appeal among students who might not initially consider traditional academic careers.

Regards,



Professor William A. Gough
Vice-Principal Academic & Dean

cc.

Professor Kenneth C. Welch, Acting Chair, Department of Biological Sciences, UTSC

Implementation Plan

Action	Timeline	Lead
Revisions to departmental governance document to: 1) recognize the contributions of teaching-stream faculty in the area of pedagogical research as integral to the department; and 2) make explicit that this entails access to full support and resources for teaching-stream led student research.	Short term [6 months] – to be completed in Fall 2021	Acting Chair, Department of Biological Sciences
Introduce a new Specialist (Co-operative) program in Conservation and Biodiversity	Short to medium term [6 months to 1 year] – anticipated start date is Fall 2022	Ivana Stehlik, Associate Professor, Teaching Stream, Department of Biological Sciences
Expansion of course-based undergraduate research experiences (CUREs).	Medium to long term [1 to 5 years]	Associate Chair, Teaching and Undergraduate Affairs, Department of Biological Sciences
Development of a more comprehensive staff hiring plan as part of the next departmental academic plan.	Medium to long term [2 to 3 years] – to be completed by Spring 2023	Chair, Department of Biological Sciences
Introduce a new PhD in Interdisciplinary and Applied Biology	Medium to long term [2 to 3 years] – earliest anticipated start date is Fall 2023	Mauricio Terebiznik, Associate Professor, Department of Biological Sciences Nate Lovejoy, Professor, Department of Biological Sciences

3. Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

This section will be inserted after AP&P by the VPAP office using language verbatim from the approved Report of the meeting.

4. Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers observed excellent, globally competitive undergraduate programs; they commended the department for strong efforts in designing and delivering a modern Biology curriculum; they noted that faculty – particularly in the teaching stream – provide high quality classroom and laboratory instruction; programs are well supported by excellent administrative and technical staff, through top quality library resources and a strong Co-op office; the local student composition indicates critical and important recognition from the local community; overall morale within the department was described as very high, with students reporting an excellent educational experience and strong sense of community; and finally, the department’s use of Facilitated Study Groups in many programs was noted as a significant strength, and commended as key for maintaining a sense of community among students after the shift to online learning in response to COVID-19. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: exploring formalizing research aspects of the curriculum, and providing teaching stream faculty with appropriate access to resources to support program quality and undergraduate research; reviewing “critical pinch points” in course offerings to ensure timely degree progression; exploring the development of a Co-op program in Conservation and Biodiversity; prioritizing meeting the space needs of new and established researchers in a timely way over maintaining spatial proximity of the department as a whole; developing written complement plans for Teaching Stream faculty and administrative staff; and finally addressing issues around tri-campus program administration to improve relationships with cognate departments. The Dean’s Administrative Response describes the Faculty, unit and programs’ responses to the reviewers’ recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5. Monitoring and Date of Next Review

The Dean’s Office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the Chair.

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than Fall 2024 on the status of the implementation plans.

The next review will be commissioned in 2027-28.

6. Distribution

On **date**, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the Vice Principal Academic & Dean of UTSC, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to the Chair of the Department.

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan - DRAFT

1. Review Summary

Programs Reviewed:	International Development Studies, H.B.A.: Specialist, Specialist Co-op, Major International Development Studies, H.B.Sc.: Specialist, Specialist Co-op International Development Studies Minor (Arts)
Unit Reviewed:	Centre for Critical Development Studies
Commissioning Officer:	Vice-Principal, Academic and Dean, University of Toronto Scarborough
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	Professor John Cameron, Department of International Development Studies, Dalhousie University Professor Rebecca Tiessen, School of International Development and Global Studies, University of Ottawa Professor Karl Zimmerer, Department of Geography, Pennsylvania State University
Date of Review Visit:	March 3-4 & 10-11, 2021
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 26, 2021

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: December 12–13, 2013

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- High quality of the programs
- Outstanding calibre of students
- Innovative and unique Co-operative programs
- Faculty dedication to ensuring student success
- Deep engagement of program stakeholders
- Vibrant sense of community

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Ensuring first-year students understand relevance of core first-year courses to development issues
- Identifying ways to ensure the needs of students in the Major program are met
- Strengthening the development economics and research methodology content of the curriculum
- Maximizing student learning during international field placements
- Exploring non-traditional models of language learning for students
- Acquiring the necessary resources to transition the unit from an Extra-Departmental Unit: B to an Extra-Departmental Unit: A, which will create greater program stability and enable it to manage faculty resources better
- Developing a Master's program

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

1. About the University and UTSC: UTSC Strategic Plan, 2020-25; UTSC Academic Plan (2015-20); UTSC Admissions Viewbook (2020-21); Campus Virtual Tour.
2. About the Review: Terms of Reference; Review Report Template; Remote Site Visit Schedule.
3. About the Department: Previous External Review Report (2014); Unit Academic Plan, April 2015; Unit Self Study, January 2021.
4. About Programs and Courses: Description of all programs (2020-21 Academic Calendar); and description of all courses (2020-21 Academic Calendar); Self-Study Data.
5. Course Syllabi (all courses).
6. Faculty CVs (all faculty).

Consultation Process

The reviewers met with the following: the decanal group, including the Vice-Principal Academic and Dean, Vice-Dean Recruitment, Enrolment and Student Success, Vice-Dean Teaching, Learning and Undergraduate Programs, Vice-Dean Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, Interim Vice-Dean Faculty Affairs, Equity and Success, Acting Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum, Director, Office of the VP Dean, and Academic Programs Officer; the Vice-Principal Research; the Director of the Centre for Critical Development Studies; CCDS faculty – tenure- and teaching-stream (all ranks); Staff, IDS Co-op; UTSC Chief Librarian and library staff; departmental administrative staff; undergraduate students; and graduate students.

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Programs

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ International Co-op program a flagship for CCDS and UTSC, with a long history and strong reputation for outstanding learning experiences
 - ▶ CCDS programs attract strong students to undergraduate programs and graduate collaborative specialization
- Objectives
 - ▶ Clear requirements and learning outcomes for all CCDS programs
 - ▶ Well-designed programs offer students a range of opportunities to achieve the learning outcomes and degree expectations
 - ▶ Course offerings ensure Co-op students develop a solid foundation prior to their Co-op experience, and a deep and analytical reflective experience afterward
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Rigorous admission process is inclusive of the diversity of the applicant pool
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Programs are rigorous and well-designed, offering a wide-ranging, interdisciplinary education in International Development Studies (IDS)
 - ▶ “Extraordinary strength and expertise” in political science, political economy, and food security; recent hires will enable expansion of expertise into areas of African studies, colonialism and diaspora studies
 - ▶ Positive efforts since the previous review to offer more courses with a focus on languages and language studies
 - ▶ CCDS is a leader, within UTSC and among Canadian IDS programs, in providing exceptional learning opportunities for students; Centre has made immense strides to increase local and domestic experiential learning opportunities

- ▶ Knowledge Equity Hub has been an excellent addition to experiential learning offerings, with widespread interest and commitment to expansion from students, staff and faculty
- ▶ Co-op program offers a strong opportunity for undergraduate students to conduct original field research and to write an honours thesis
- Innovation
 - ▶ CCDS demonstrates a strong level of reflection and innovation to adapt the program to student needs and to the changing state of the world
 - ▶ Interdisciplinarity in CCDS programs and research is unique and highly valued
 - ▶ Interdisciplinary emphasis in environmental science is a unique area of specialization, well suited to synergies with other UTSC programs
 - ▶ Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) classroom provides rich opportunities for intercultural learning
 - ▶ Knowledge Equity Hub and Community Knowledge Learning Hub are “highly innovative initiatives” which support experiential learning opportunities, and make them accessible to a more diverse range of students
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ CCDS programs employ rigorous and diverse methods to assess student learning and to achievement of identified learning outcomes
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ CCDS offers a very strong learning experience with innovative approaches to learning inside and outside the classroom.
 - ▶ Students report receiving strong advising and mentoring support from staff and faculty, particularly in the Co-op program
 - ▶ Strong engagement in outreach and promotion to prospective students
 - ▶ “Overall, students appear to be very pleased with their experience”
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ Highly competitive admissions process for the International Co-op program is clear evidence of the strength of students
 - ▶ No evidence of any issues with student retention or time to completion
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ Existing data indicates that CCDS graduates find rewarding, well-paying jobs in a wide range of professional fields
- Student funding
 - ▶ CCDS has made exceptional efforts to reduce financial barriers to participation in the international Co-op program

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Additional expertise is needed to support honours thesis students focussing on topics related to South and Southeast Asia
 - ▶ Reports from students regarding redundancy in material covered in some courses

- ▶ Students commented on difficulty transitioning from CCDS coursework to their Co-op placements, noting a “disconnect” between course content and their experiences in the field
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Students noted the need for additional supports and more inclusive approaches to the pre-departure preparation and debriefing processes, both for the students and the Co-op partner organizations hosting them
 - ▶ Students highlighted that, during co-op placements, treatment and expectations of students who identify as part of BIPOC communities can be different than for white students
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Flagship Co-op program serves a small minority of CCDS students; reviewers caution that non-Co-op students may feel marginalized as “second class citizens” and note reports of non-Co-op students feeling disconnected from the unit
 - ▶ Reports from some students of sexual harassment, discrimination, and unsafe living arrangements during their Co-op placements; students felt strongly that they did not receive adequate support to navigate these issues
 - ▶ Student concerns regarding lack of clarity about additional costs they may incur during Co-op placements that are not covered by program fees
 - ▶ Students reported receiving little feedback on bimonthly reports submitted while on Co-op placements
 - ▶ Students view Co-op placement process as insufficiently transparent, expressing frustration about being denied placements with organizations that they had researched and proposed
 - ▶ International students indicated that they were not aware, prior to entering the program, that visa/legal status might restrict their options for Co-op placements relative to Canadian students
- Student funding
 - ▶ Cost of International Co-op program remains a barrier for some students; many students experience financial difficulty during their Co-op placements

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Continue to regularly review and revise Co-op admissions process to ensure fairness and inclusivity
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Pursue opportunities to expand and showcase the breadth of experiential learning opportunities for CCDS students, and ensure that experiential learning opportunities are available to all students
 - Continue exploring possibilities for partnerships and experiential learning opportunities with northern Canadian and Indigenous communities
 - Consider supporting internship opportunities, particularly for students with interests in environmental conservation, biology, and agroecology

- ▶ Strengthen the interdisciplinary scope of CCDS programs
- ▶ Create additional opportunities, including dedicated course offerings, for students to engage in critical reflection on the ethics of working with marginalized groups and disadvantaged individuals
- ▶ Explore additional linkages with language studies, and continue creating opportunities for students to develop linguistic skills
- ▶ Review content of CCDS and cross-listed courses to reduce duplication in material covered
- ▶ Review the Co-op program with the goal of better aligning the critical analytical components of the program with student experiences in Co-op placements
- ▶ Conduct a survey of current and former Co-op partner organizations to evaluate impact of the Co-op program, and to gain insights for future program development
- ▶ Enhance opportunities for practical learning in courses, including monitoring and evaluation in project management
- ▶ Support and expand non-Co-op programs; provide more opportunities for non-Co-op students to fully engage in the field of development studies
- ▶ Consider expanding the undergraduate thesis option to include non-Co-op students
- Innovation
 - ▶ Provide financial support to sustain and expand Knowledge Equity Hub and Community Knowledge Learning Hub, to support community-based global learning opportunities accessible to all students
 - ▶ Consider post-pandemic continuation of virtual volunteering opportunities for students who cannot or prefer not to travel abroad
 - ▶ Continue supporting highly innovative and promising 'Activist in Residence' and 'Practitioner in Residence' programs
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Ensure that curriculum design, especially the preparation for international Co-op placements, reflects the lived realities of the large numbers of racialized students in the program
 - ▶ Work with Co-op partner organizations to guarantee safety, fair treatment, and equality of opportunity for all students
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Review and consider allocation of time and resources across programs to ensure that all students feel they are valued and have appropriate access to learning opportunities
 - ▶ Carefully consider the concerns of non-Co-op students, who feel that they receive less attention from faculty and staff than Co-op students
 - ▶ Consider providing additional financial resources for students to cover unforeseen costs incurred while on Co-op placements
 - ▶ Ensure that CCDS has the capacity to respond appropriately to student concerns expressed in bimonthly reports submitted during Co-op placements
 - ▶ Provide additional clarity regarding the decision-making processes behind allocation of Co-op placements

- ▶ Enhance mentorship opportunities between current and previous Co-op students, particularly those with experience in the same partner organizations
- ▶ Explore opportunities to strengthen students' voice in shaping the future of the Knowledge Equity Hub
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ Continue researching the career paths of CCDS graduates, and engaging graduates in providing feedback to contribute to program development
- Student funding
 - ▶ Clear need for additional external funding to provide appropriate assistance and enhance accessibility of the International Co-op program

2. Graduate Program (n/a)

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Research
 - ▶ Faculty members engage in high level research and publish in some of the highest-ranking journals
 - ▶ Scope, quality and relevance of faculty research activities are appropriate and on par with national and international comparators
- Faculty
 - ▶ CCDS faculty members are international leaders in community-engaged learning and public access to academic research
 - ▶ Diverse faculty complement with expertise in a range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields, and geographic areas
 - ▶ Excellent recent faculty hires will help expand course offerings and areas of research expertise
 - ▶ Faculty are highly committed to mentoring graduate students, both within the CCDS collaborative specialization and in Master's and PhD programs in other units

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
 - ▶ Encourage faculty to pursue additional internal and external research funding opportunities
 - ▶ Successful, specialized approaches in interdisciplinary environmental science may serve as a resource to contribute to expanding faculty interest, experience, and expertise in obtaining research funding
- Faculty
 - ▶ Careful strategic decisions will be needed in CCDS faculty complement planning and the strengthening of collaborative relationships with other departments

- ▶ Work closely with Chairs of other units to ensure that workload expectations for junior faculty members are fair and clearly communicated
- ▶ Consider thematic/regional gaps as well as increasing BIPOC representation in future complement planning
- ▶ Reviewers caution against “the trap of reinforcing disciplinary siloes” in faculty complement planning
- ▶ Support interdisciplinarity by expanding affiliations with non-CCDS faculty

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Very strong morale and dedication among faculty and staff, despite heavy workloads
 - ▶ Commendable, effective efforts in cultivating and fostering relationships with other units
 - ▶ Deep engagement with community-based/non-governmental organizations in Toronto, Canada and the rest of the world through Co-op and experiential learning programs
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Complex organizational and financial structure requires strong leadership to manage effectively
 - ▶ Unit has been able to thrive despite organizational challenges, primarily due to strong interdisciplinary commitments of faculty and staff
 - ▶ Impressive capacity to generate external funding for experiential learning programs and other initiatives
 - ▶ CCDS appears to make good use of its existing facilities
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ CCDS is at a critical and exciting juncture; transition to department status is expected to create new opportunities for growth and expansion
 - ▶ Solid, effective alignment with UTSC’s Strategic Plan and the University’s overall mission; CCDS is well-positioned to make important contributions towards the achievements of specific major components of the UTSC plan
- International comparators
 - ▶ CCDS compares favourably with other IDS programs in Canada and globally in terms of the quality of teaching, research outputs and community engagement.
 - ▶ Co-op program is particularly unique, in Canada/North America and globally.

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Heavy staff workloads, particularly related to student advising and management of Co-op and experiential learning programs

- ▶ Staff concerns that plans to spread their workspaces throughout the building in which CCDS and other Social Science departments are based will undermine productivity and threaten their morale
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Reviewers note lack of clarity and consensus on future directions for CCDS

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Build on existing interdisciplinary strengths through increased connection and collaboration with other units
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Consider options for providing additional administrative support, particularly to Co-op and experiential learning programs
 - ▶ Clarify areas of responsibility for key leadership roles, and consider appointment of two associate chairs: one for undergraduate work and one for graduate work and research support
 - ▶ Space planning for staff should carefully consider issues related to in-person work, communication and coordination among staff, as well as productivity and morale
 - ▶ Consider creation of a faculty advisory committee to expand and enhance the participation of faculty members in departmental governance
 - ▶ Address the need for more student common space
 - ▶ CCDS will need support from the Development and Alumni Relations Office and other units responsible for external fundraising to continue to support and expand innovative programs and initiatives
 - ▶ Consider succession planning for administrative leadership roles
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Undertake a strategic planning process to consider the unit's future directions, priorities for future hiring, faculty complement planning, and opportunities for stronger linkages with other units
 - ▶ Strategic plan should consider gaps in expertise needed to expand the scope and content of program curricula and graduate supervision
 - ▶ Strong encouragement to invest in expansion of CCDS graduate program offerings, including a standalone MA program, strengthening of Masters-level collaborative specialization, and adding PhD-level collaborative specialization
 - ▶ Expand the range of courses available to students in the collaborative specialization, and expand professional networking opportunities for graduate students
 - ▶ Additional resources and strong leadership needed to expand enrolment in non-Co-op programs, and to serve the needs of both Co-op and non-Co-op students
- International comparators
 - ▶ Further improvement against international and national comparators will require strong leadership, careful strategic planning/envisioning, and increased financial resources to expand the faculty complement



September 30, 2021

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
Office of the Vice-President and Provost
University of Toronto

Dean's Administrative Response: External Review of the Centre for Critical Development Studies

Dear Susan,

Thank you for your letter of July 21, 2021 requesting my administrative response to the external review of the Centre for Critical Development Studies (CCDS). We want to thank the review team – Professor John Cameron, Department of International Development Studies, Dalhousie University; Professor Rebecca Tiessen, School of International Development and Global Studies, University of Ottawa; and Professor Karl Zimmerer, Department of Geography, Pennsylvania State University– for their consultation with us during the remote site-visit, held on March 3rd, 4th, 10, and 11th, 2021, and for their report, which was finalized on April 27, 2021. It will be helpful, here, to note that CCDS was converted to the Department of Global Development Studies (GDS) effective July 1, 2021. Throughout this letter, we have used the acronym GDS when referring to the current and future actions of the department.

I appreciate the seriousness with which the reviewers approached the external review process, as well the thoughtful consideration given to CCDS and its undergraduate programs in the review Report. I am very pleased by the overall positive review of the department. In particular, the reviewers noted the unit's strong alignment with the UTSC Strategic Plan (Inspiring Inclusive Excellence); the rigorous and well-designed undergraduate International Development Studies program, which they describe as "on par with the strongest IDS programs in Canada"; the "strong level of reflection and innovation to adapt the program to the changing state of the world and to student needs"; and the very high quality of students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The external review report was sent to the Director of the CCDS, Professor Paul Kingston, on May 5, 2021, with a request to share it widely among the faculty, staff and students. On September 9, 2021, the decanal group, including myself, the Vice-Dean Teaching, Learning and Undergraduate Programs (VDTLUP), Vice-Dean Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (VDGPS), Vice-Dean, Recruitment, Enrolment and Student Success (VDRESS), Vice-Dean Faculty Affairs, Equity, and Success (VDFAES), Interim Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum (ADUPC), Associate Dean Experiential and Global Learning, and the Academic Programs Officer, met with the Chair, and one of Associate Chairs, of GDS to discuss the external review report and administrative response; I am pleased with the depth of the discussion that took place.

My administrative response to the points raised in your letter is given below. This response has been developed in close consultation with the Chair of GDS, and reflects the key elements of the unit response letter, dated September 27, 2021. It also includes responses to points raised in the Request for Administrative Response that are outside departmental control.

Let me address the specific points raised in your letter:

- *The reviewers recommended that CCDS undertake a comprehensive strategic planning and visioning process to clarify future directions as the unit changes in status from an EDU:B to an academic department, including:*
 - *Consideration of areas for academic specialization and course offerings;*
 - *Priorities for future faculty hiring and complement planning; and*
 - *Administration and management of the department, including succession planning, future hiring priorities, and space planning.*

In her Response letter, the Chair agrees with the reviewers that GDS will benefit from undertaking a comprehensive strategic planning and visioning process. Starting in 2021-22, and continuing over the next 2 years, GDS will hold a series of department and committee meetings focused on establishing their future direction and priorities, and a set of core values for pedagogical practices and research priorities, as well as departmental daily operations and governance practices. These discussions will help to shape preliminary and ongoing discussion around academic specialization and course offerings. The department anticipates these discussions will also result in improved communication of their collective pedagogical philosophies around development thought and practice. GDS values the discomfort that comes with having to reconcile the critical thinking that students learn in courses with the realities of mainstream development while on placement or in volunteer/internship opportunities. Bearing this tension in mind, the department advocates establishing a “Practitioner-in-Residence”; my office is supportive of “activist-in-residence” initiatives. The Dean’s Office will work with GDS during this process to provide guidance and support, as well as assistance to leverage any available resources.

With regard to the recommendation that the department consider areas for academic specialization and course offerings, GDS will be undertaking a number of actions, including:

- i. As of Fall 2021, they have established two curriculum committees – one focused on International Development Studies (IDS) and the other focused on African Studies (AFS). For IDS programs, key considerations will be expanding the diversity of their course offerings, and a possible program name change to Global Development Studies. For AFS programs, the focus will be on fully integrating both AFS programs and faculty into GDS.
- ii. In 2023-24, the department will meet for a day long retreat to re-orient course offerings along the goals and values defined during the strategic planning and visioning process.
- iii. Finally, with regard to expanding language offerings at UTSC, my office recognizes the importance of considering this as resources allow. We will encourage the GDS to work in collaboration with the Department of Language Studies to ensure that available language offerings are optimized to meet campus-wide needs. We are also prioritizing the further development of language study options that connect directly to and benefit our local community.

With regard to the recommendation that the department consider priorities for future faculty hiring and complement planning, the Chair highlights the recent hire of two new tenure-stream faculty at the Associate Professor rank: Caroline Hossein, whose research focuses on Cooperative Banking for Racialized Women, and Zubairu Wai, whose research focuses on Epistemologies of African Development have joined the department, effective August 1, 2021. The Chair notes a need for further faculty hiring to support African Studies, as well as the desirability of a future hire focused on South/South East Asian Studies.

To support the department in their complement planning, in 2019-20, UTSC established the Faculty Complement Committee (FCC) to provide recommendations to me regarding the distribution of teaching-stream and tenure-stream faculty positions sought by academic units in the yearly recruitment cycle, within the context of strategic multi-year departmental and campus faculty complements. The FCC provides a consultative, inclusive and transparent process that involves all academic units in determining the complement submission at UTSC. GDS will be encouraged to bring their plans and priorities forward each year through the FCC. My office will also work with GDS to ensure it has the resources it needs to support the further development of the African Studies Program, which it is now administering.

With regard to the recommendation that the department consider its administration and management, including succession planning, future hiring priorities, and space planning: first, GDS notes that a number of actions have already taken place, following the recent departmentalization. GDS is now headed by a Chair, who is supported by two Associate Chairs – one responsible for chairing the department’s Curriculum Committee and managing related matters, and the other for managing the allocation of TAs and the hiring of stipend instructors. The Chair manages the annual teaching roster, acts as liaison with the departmental student association, and takes the lead on department operations and events. The Chair and Associate Chairs meet regularly as an Executive Committee, and the Associate Chair roles will rotate among the faculty every 2 years – a structure that is designed to facilitate succession planning. Second, the department has approval for a new administrative staff role that will focus on student advising (this role will be shared with the Departments of Political Science and Human Geography). Finally, regarding space, the Vice-Dean Faculty Affairs, Equity and Success is working closely with all UTSC Chairs and their Business Managers on space planning. The Chair of GDS notes that, as a group, academic leadership is paying attention to the expressed needs and desires of staff for both hybrid work arrangements and optimal office design for shared spaces. There is already evidence that this action has eased staff concerns and improved morale around the location and placement of administrative offices.

- *The reviewers made a number of recommendations regarding the expansion, enhancement, and accessibility of co-op and broader experiential learning opportunities for all CCDS students.*

As the Chair describes in her Response letter, expanding opportunities for Co-op and broader experiential learning opportunities for all GDS students is a departmental priority. In 2021-22, GDS will host a department wide Open House for all students. Other initiatives include:

- Further development of the Knowledge Equity lab coupled design of the GDS feminist collective;
 - Establishing a committee focused on expanding sustainable, practical and experiential opportunities, particularly for non-Co-op students. GDS will request additional resources to support activities related to writing grants and applications, to liaise with the Development and Alumni Relations Office, and to seek new sources of support for placements and partnerships.
 - Review the curriculum with the goal of empowering students to reflect critically on the ethics of working with marginalized groups (i.e., IDSB07H3, Confronting Development’s Racist Past and Present).
 - Continue their review the Co-op admissions process. The Chair notes that, as of 2021-22 they are replacing in-person/zoom interviews with a series of short questions, with the goal of mitigating any anxiety associated with performing in front of an audience, and eliminating the possibility of any bias based on appearance. In addition, GDS will discuss and collaborate on ways to enable first year applicants (those enrolled in the IDS non-Co-op Major program) to apply, at the end of Year 1, for entry, in Year 2, into one of the Specialist Co-op programs. The department will be requesting new resources from the Dean’s Office to offer scholarships for exceptional applicants, with the goal of making Co-op more accessible and affordable. My office recognizes the importance of this program for GDS and for the campus and for ensuring equitable access to Co-op opportunities, and will work with the department and with the Development and Alumni Relations Office in assessing short-term and long-term supports.
- *The reviewers highlighted the need to ensure that the program curricula provide adequate and appropriate preparation for students prior to entering international co-op placements.*

In her Response letter, the Chair notes that students are guided to find volunteer/internship/short-term placements throughout their first 3 years to learn the expectations of office work and cross-cultural understanding (both through volunteer opportunities and as offered by the Co-op training in GDS). In addition, the program remains nimble to change; for example, students are no longer required to write bi-monthly reports in IDSD01Y3; instead, students will meet monthly with the Co-op Program Manager and Co-op Program Coordinator to discuss their experiences. Rather than writing reports while in country, students will be encouraged to use the preface section of their theses to reflect

on their placements and international travel experience. The department agrees with the reviewers that longer-term placements offer a vital opportunity for Co-op students and feel strongly that should they remain in place. The Chair notes that, in some cases, the length of the placement is determined by partner organizations. That said, as part of the GDS strategic visioning practices the department will think through, and articulate, the rationale for longer term placements and communicate this more clearly in a new IDS Co-op Handbook, as well as department messaging.

- *The reviewers noted student reports of harassment, discrimination, and unsafe living arrangements during their placements and highlighted the need to ensure that students receive appropriate support and communication.*

The Chair notes the department is working to strengthen their communications regarding the student expectations while abroad; for example, they have developed an IDS Co-op Handbook, which is being published as of Fall 2021, in which they will address, with as much transparency as possible, the costs associated with Co-op placements, the process of assigning placements, emergency services when abroad, mental health supports, and pre-departure check lists. The Chair further notes that, over the next 1 to 2 years, GDS will seek ways to prepare non-white and female students for the insidious ways racism and sexism emerge abroad. To facilitate this activity, the department is currently consulting with the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office (EDIO), at UTSC, on ways to establish supports for students who experience discrimination while on placement. They are also introducing a new B-level course as of Winter 2022 – IDSB07H3 (Confronting Development's Racist Past and Present). This course will provide an "in-house" opportunity for students to learn about global racisms and their embeddedness in development. Together, the pre-departure briefings and course will prepare students, before they travel, for the global inequities they may face while on placement. Finally, GDS will consider whether there is a need for additional faculty members (with appropriate expertise and experience) to assist the Co-op Program Manager and Co-op Program Coordinator in mentoring students regarding racism and sexual discrimination while in the field. In addition to supporting GDS in their crucial program-specific work in this area, the Dean's Office is prioritizing the development of campus-wide best practices and guidelines to support students preparing for Co-op and experiential learning placements, both locally and globally, drawing also on tri-campus resources and from the EDIO at UTSC.

- *The reviewers noted comments from some students in non co-op programs who feel that they receive less attention from faculty and staff than co-op students; the reviewers recommended enhancing learning opportunities and mentoring for students in these programs.*

In her Response, the Chair highlights some of the GDS's existing initiatives, including a Research Mentorship Program, offered since 2015, that is available only to non-Co-op students; this program recruits up to 10 students a year to work one-on-one with a faculty member as a research assistant. Additionally, in 2020-21 the department introduced a senior thesis writing course (IDSD02H3) for non-Co-op students.

Having said that, the department agrees with the reviewers' recommendation to expand the undergraduate thesis option as well as other student programming to include non-Co-op students. As of 2021-2022, GDS has established a committee to review non-Co-op student programming, and begin building innovative undergraduate opportunities including, but not limited to, experiential learning, research, mentoring, and public-speaking. The committee's goal is to introduce, and advance, at least one new opportunity for non-Co-op students in the 2021-2022 academic year; it will continue to work over the next 1 to 5 years to create a robust set of learning opportunities that will include non-Co-op students, and also bring Co-op and non-Co-op students together into a more cohesive community of learners.

Enhancing learning opportunities and mentoring for students in non-Co-op programs will be a key priority for the new leadership team in GDS. Promoting a culture of belonging for all students in the department – not just students in Co-op and non-Co-op IDS programs, but also the newest group of students in the AFS programs – is a departmental priority. As part of the department's visioning process they will design events and activities that will enable students from the multiple programs to work together on collective projects such as a proposal for a new International

Documentary Film Festival. Over the next 1 to 2 years, GDS will undertake outreach with the appropriate student groups, and invite their participation in this process.

- *The reviewers noted the need for increased clarification and consensus among faculty members about future directions for graduate program offerings.*

In her Response letter, the Chair confirms that over the next 1 to 2 years, GDS will engage in discussions regarding graduate program offerings and work towards a consensus around developing a stand-alone MA program, and/or expanding the existing Collaborative Specialization – Development Policy and Power to include PhDs. They will consult, as needed and appropriate, with me and the Vice-Dean Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies regarding resources needed to support these endeavors.

- *The reviewers encouraged faculty members to pursue additional and diverse research funding opportunities, through tri-council grants and other federal funding sources, as well as internal opportunities through the UTSC Office of the Vice-Principal Research and Innovation.*

As the Chair notes in her Response letter, GDS faculty are a diverse group of scholars who successfully win awards and funding from a variety of sources appropriate to their fields and disciplines such as SSHRC Insight Development & Insight Grants, Distinguished Professor Award, Canada Research Chair, Fulbright Scholarship, Royal Society of Canada Fellowship, Connaught Research Fellowships and more. Many faculty also include and hire GDS undergrads to participate on research projects. It would be helpful to emphasize, here, that there also exists a robust mentoring culture at UTSC, one in which each faculty member is paired with a mentor. The Vice-Dean Faculty Affairs, Equity, and Success is available as a resource for discussing frameworks and needs connected to mentorship to further support opportunities for GDS faculty in this area.

- *The reviewers noted the need for further divisional support, including from the Development and Alumni Relations Office, to fully realize CCDS's fundraising potential and to support its innovative programs.*

The Chair notes, in her Response letter, that GDS would welcome additional administrative support, particularly from Development and Alumni Relations Office (DARO), to design and market a strategy for ongoing fundraising to support the development and advance of innovative undergraduate programming in GDS. Access to co-op and experiential learning opportunities, particularly those with a global focus, are an explicit priority of DARO's emerging fundraising campaign for UTSC, which I expect will benefit GDS. My office is also committed to ensuring ongoing and future development of the outstanding programs for which the department is known.

Regards,



Professor William A. Gough
Vice-Principal Academic & Dean

Cc: Professor Sharlene Mollett, Chair, Department of Global Development Studies, UTSC

Implementation Plan

Action	Timeline	Lead
Publish the IDS Co-op Handbook	Short term (6 months)	Chair, GDS; IDS Co-op Manager
Hold department and committee meetings focused on establishing a set of core values for pedagogical practices, collective research priorities, daily operations and governance practices	Short term (6 months to 1 year)	Chair, GDS; Associate Chair, Judith Teichman
Advocate with the Office of the Dean to establish a “Practitioner-in-Residence”	Short term (6 months to 1 year)	Chair, GDS; IDS Co-op Manager
Review non-Co-op student programming and introduce at least one new opportunity	Short term (6 months to 1 year)	Chair, GDS; Associate Chair Ryan Isakson; Bettina Von Lieres; Caroline Hossein
Host department wide Open House for all students	Short term (6 months to 1 year)	Chair, GDS; IDS Co-op Manager
Expand Knowledge Equity lab and introduce GDS feminist collective	Short term (6 months to 1 year)	Chair, GDS; Leslie Chan
The Dean’s Office will prioritize the development of campus-wide best practices and guidelines to support students preparing for Co-op and experiential learning placements, both locally and globally, drawing also on tri-campus resources and from the EDIO at UTSC	Medium term (1 year and ongoing)	Vice-Dean Teaching, Learning and Undergraduate Programs; Associate Dean Experiential and Global Learning
Review the admissions process for IDS programs, with the particular goal of creating pathways for students from non-Co-op programs into Co-op programs; request additional resources to ensure Co-op is accessible for more students	Medium term (1 to 2 years)	Chair, GDS; IDS Co-op Manager; Associate Chair Ryan Isakson
Engage in a comprehensive strategic planning and visioning process; including discussion of collective goals and values; GDS will seek the guidance of the Dean’s Office and leverage available resources	Medium term (1 to 2 years)	Chair, GDS; Associate Chair, Judith Teichman; with department faculty
Work with the Dean’s Office and the FCC process to add faculty complement focused on African Studies	Medium term (1 to 2 years)	Chair, GDS
Develop additional mechanisms to prepare non-white and female students for placements abroad	Medium term (1 to 2 years)	Chair, GDS; IDS Co-op Manager
Engage in discussions regarding graduate programs	Medium term (1 to 2 years)	Chair, GDS; Associate Chair, Judith Teichman; Anne-Emanuelle Birn
In 2023-24, hold a departmental retreat focused on aligning course offerings with departmental mission and values	Medium term (2 years)	Chair, GDS
Undertake outreach with the appropriate student groups, and invite their participation (medium term); Develop a strong list of experiential opportunities for students, ensuring they are sustainable (long term)	Medium to long term (1 to 5 years)	Chair, GDS; Bettina Von Lieres; IDS Co-op Manager

Action	Timeline	Lead
Fully integrate the AFS program into the department	Medium to long term (2 to 3 years)	Chair, GDS; Zubairu Wai, Caroline Hossein, Bettina Von Lieres, Thembela Kepe
Review IDS and AFS programs and courses; integrate courses from a more diverse range of disciplines into the IDS programs; review the title of the IDS programs	Medium to long term (2 to 4 years)	Chair, GDS; Associate Chair Ryan Isakson; Thembela Kepe; Zubairu Wai; Caroline Hossein; Bettina Von Lieres
Work with Dean's Office and the FCC process to add faculty complement focused on South/South East Asian Studies	Long term (3 to 5 years)	Chair, GDS

3. Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

This section will be inserted after AP&P by the VPAP office using language verbatim from the approved Report of the meeting.

4. Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers praised the International Development Co-op program as a flagship for CCDS and UTSC, and commented that the Centre is “a leader at UTSC and among IDS programs in Canada in providing exceptional learning opportunities for students outside the classroom”; they commended the Centre’s strong level of reflection and innovation, which have enabled it to adapt to student needs and to the changing state of the world; they praised the very strong research output from CCDS faculty members, and the Centre’s strong relationships with both cognate units and community-based organizations and NGOs; finally, they noted that CCDS has demonstrated impressive capacity to generate external funding for initiatives such as the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholarship and the Knowledge Equity Lab. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: undertaking a comprehensive strategic planning and visioning process to clarify future directions as the unit changes in status from an EDU:B to an academic department; expanding, enhancing and improving accessibility of co-op and broader experiential learning opportunities for all CCDS students; ensuring that the program curricula provide adequate and appropriate preparation for students prior to entering international co-op placements; addressing student reports of harassment, discrimination, and unsafe living arrangements during their placements; addressing non-co-op student concerns that they receive less faculty and staff attention than co-op students; increasing clarification and consensus among faculty members about future directions for graduate program offerings; encouraging faculty members to pursue additional and diverse research funding opportunities; and enhancing Divisional support, to fully realize CCDS’s fundraising potential and to support its innovative programs. The Dean’s Administrative Response describes the Faculty, unit and programs’ responses to the reviewers’ recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5. Monitoring and Date of Next Review

The Dean’s Office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the Chair of the Department of Global Development Studies (established July 2021).

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than Winter 2025 on the status of the implementation plans.

The next review will be commissioned in 2028-29.

6. Distribution

On **date**, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the Vice Principal Academic & Dean of UTSC, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to the Chair of the Department.

APPENDIX I

Externally commissioned reviews of academic programs completed since the last report to AP&P

Additional reviews of programs are conducted by organizations external to the University most commonly for accreditation purposes. These reviews form part of collegial self-regulatory systems to ensure that mutually agreed-upon threshold standards of quality are maintained in new and existing programs. Such reviews may serve different purposes than those commissioned by the University. A summary listing of these reviews is presented below.

These reviews are reported semi-annually to AP&P as an appendix to the compendium of external reviews.

Unit	Program(s)	Accrediting Agency	Status
Temerty Faculty of Medicine	MD	Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS), Liaison Committee on Medical Education	Full accreditation for maximum 8-year term, until 2028. Supplementary status report due in August 2023.
Temerty Faculty of Medicine	Postgraduate Medical Education	Canadian Residency Accreditation Consortium (CanRAC)	58 postgraduate training programs: full accreditation for maximum 8-year term. Next accreditation in 2028. 14 postgraduate training programs (Adult Nephrology; Clinical Investigator Program; Clinical Pharmacology and Toxicology; Core Surgery - Surgical Foundations; Dermatology; Family Medicine - Core; Family Medicine - Enhanced Skills, Central & Cat. 2; General Surgery; Geriatric Psychiatry; Obstetrics & Gynecology; Occupational Medicine; Orthopedic Surgery; Pediatric Neurology; Pediatric Surgery) & PGME Office: accredited with follow-up report due in 2023. 7 postgraduate training programs (Adult Neurology; Emergency Medicine; Neuropathology; Psychiatry; Anesthesiology; Internal Medicine – Core; Pediatric Cardiology): accredited with follow-up site visit in 2023.