



FOR INFORMATION

PUBLIC

OPEN SESSION

TO: Executive Committee

SPONSOR: Nicholas Rule, Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
CONTACT INFO: (416) 978-0490, vp.academicprograms@utoronto.ca

PRESENTER: See above
CONTACT INFO:

DATE: November 26, 2024 for December 3, 2024

AGENDA ITEM: 6(a)

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Semi-Annual Report on the Reviews of Academic Units and Programs

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 Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs submits the summary and the Dean’s Administrative Response to the Report (including the implementation plan and excluding all confidential information) to University governance through the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) of the Academic Board on a biannual basis in the form of a compendium of draft Final Assessment Reports and Implementation Plans” (*UTQAP, 6.9.2.1*).

The compendium 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 22, 2024)
2. Agenda Committee of the Academic Board [for information] (November 5, 2024)
3. Academic Board [for information] (November 14, 2024)
4. **Executive Committee of the Governing Council [for information] (December 3, 2024)**
5. Governing Council [for information] (December 19, 2024)

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 was previously submitted to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs on April 10, 2024.

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.

Materials for the external review reports and the complete decanal responses for nine external reviews of units and/or academic programs are being submitted to AP&P for information and discussion. Of these, two were commissioned by the Vice-President & Provost; and seven 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 academic units' strong and productive connections with surrounding communities, and many initiatives undertaken to enhance equity, diversity, and inclusion.

As always, the reviews noted areas for development. The reviews identified opportunities for units to strengthen coordination and leverage interdisciplinary strengths, and suggested ways to augment supports and mentorship for both students and faculty. The reviews also highlighted the ongoing need to ensure that diversity is reflected in faculty complement and curriculum.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Not applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for information.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

- Compendium of Reviews of Academic Programs and Units



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PROVOST,
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Reviews of Academic Programs and Units

Report to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

October 22, 2024

Reviews of Academic Programs and Units

Report to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

October 22, 2024

Provostial Reviews

Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering

- No programs, not a UTQAP review

Lawrence Bloomberg School of Nursing and its programs

- *Undergraduate*: Bachelor of Science in Nursing, BScN
- *Graduate*: Master of Nursing in Nursing Science, MN (*Fields*: Clinical Nursing; Health Systems Leadership and Administration; Nurse Practitioner; *Emphases (Nurse Practitioner Field only)*: Adult; Primary Health Care – Global Health; Doctor of Nursing, DN; Doctor of Philosophy, PhD, Nursing Science; Post-Master's Nurse Practitioner Diploma, PMNP (*Emphases*: Adult Primary Health Care – Global Health))

Decanal Reviews

Faculty of Arts & Science

- Department of Cell & Systems Biology and its programs
 - ▶ *Undergraduate*: Cell & Molecular Biology (HBSc): Specialist, Major (*Foci available for both the Specialist and Major*: Molecular Networks of the Cell; Plant Genomics and Biotechnology; Stem Cells and Developmental Biology); Bioinformatics and Computational Biology (HBSc): Specialist; Animal Physiology (HBSc): Major; Genome Biology (HBSc): Major
 - ▶ *Graduate*: Cell & Systems Biology: MSc, PhD
- Christianity & Culture and Christianity & Education programs (housed in St. Michael's College)
 - ▶ Christianity and Culture (HBA): Major, Minor; Christianity and Education (HBA): Minor
- Ethics, Society, & Law program (housed in Trinity College)
 - ▶ Ethics, Society & Law (HBA): Major
- Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures and its programs
 - ▶ *Undergraduate*: Slavic Languages and Cultures (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor (*Major/Minor Streams*: Czech and Slovak, Polish, Russian, South Slavic; Ukrainian); Russian Literature in Translation Minor;
 - ▶ *Graduate*: Slavic Languages & Literatures: MA, PhD

University of Toronto Mississauga

- Department of English & Drama and its programs
 - ▶ *Undergraduate*: English (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor; Canadian Studies (HBA): Major, Minor; Theatre & Drama Studies (HBA): Specialist (joint program with

Sheridan College); Dramaturgy & Drama Studies (HBA): Major, Minor; Creative Writing, Minor

- Department of Language Studies and its programs
 - ▶ *Undergraduate*: Linguistics (HBA): Major, Minor; English Language Linguistics (HBA): Minor; French Studies (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor; French & Italian (HBA): Specialist; Francophone Studies (HBA): Minor; Functional French (HBA): Minor; Italian (HBA): Specialist, Major; Italian Language & Culture (HBA): Minor; Chinese Language & Culture (HBA): Minor; Language Teaching & Learning: French & Italian (HBA): Specialist; Language Teaching & Learning: French (HBA): Major; Language Teaching & Learning: Italian (HBA): Major; Education Studies (HBA): Minor; Certificate in Global Perspectives
- Department of Visual Studies and its programs
 - ▶ *Undergraduate*: Art History (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor; Art & Art History (HBA): Specialist, Major (joint program with Sheridan College); Cinema Studies (HBA): Major, Minor; Visual Culture & Communication (HBA): Specialist; Visual Culture (HBA): Minor; Certificate in Curatorial Studies

Non-UTQAP Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan - **DRAFT**

1 Review Summary

Program(s) Reviewed:	Not applicable
Division/Unit Reviewed OR Division/Unit Offering Program(s):	Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering – Academic Portfolio
Commissioning Officer:	Vice-President & Provost
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nora de Leeuw, Executive Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences, University of Leeds • Jim A. Nicell, Professor and Former Dean, Faculty of Engineering, McGill University • Ishwar Puri, Senior Vice President of Research & Innovation, University of Southern California
Date of Review Visit:	December 4-6, 2023
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 22, 2024

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: January 31 – February 2, 2017 (Provostial, non-UTQAP review)

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Teaching and Research

The reviewers observed the following strengths:

- Outstanding faculty and student body
- Worldwide reputation for excellence in research and education
- Strong undergraduate programs focus on training the “global engineer”
- Graduate programs are the top in Canada, highly competitive internationally, and experiencing enormous growth
- Faculty have received a greater share of major national awards and outperformed their Canadian engineering peers on citations, peer-reviewed funding, and international rankings

The reviewers made the following recommendations:

- The reviewers noted undergraduate student concerns regarding the costs of placements and the lack of availability of matches in some disciplines; they recommended better support for student placements and career services in all disciplines, including for graduate students
- To provide transparency and certainty to graduate students regarding funding, the reviewers strongly recommended that all students be informed of their stipend levels prior to the start of the academic year
- The reviewers recommended reducing average time-to-completion for PhD students, a concern raised in the previous external review
- The reviewers made a number of suggestions around tracking the outcomes of graduates of the Faculty’s undergraduate and graduate programs
- The reviewers suggested ways to build community and support deeper engagement of undergraduate and graduate students, many of whom are commuters
- The reviewers flagged an issue around consistent approaches to parental leave across departments and urged the Faculty to ensure that policy is understood and applied consistently

Internal & External Relationships

The reviewers observed the following strengths:

- Commendable leadership exhibited by the Dean, who is also a strong collaborator with cognate divisions, and throughout Canada
- Faculty’s commitment to diversity has resulted in the highest percentage of women in the Faculty’s entering class at a public university

The reviewers made the following recommendations:

- The reviewers noted that cognate Deans appreciated FASE’s collaborative style, but identified further opportunities for students and programs to benefit from interaction and integration with other divisions
- The reviewers encouraged Departments to share best practices to support engagement and student-faculty interaction across undergraduate and graduate programs
- The reviewers made a number of recommendations to enhance the Faculty’s profile and “brand”
- The reviewers commended the enormous improvements made in diversity among the undergraduate student body, but noted that further work is needed with respect to other underrepresented groups, including Indigenous peoples

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

- Site Visit Schedule
- Terms of Reference
- Self-Study and Appendices
- Previous External Review Report including the Administrative Response
- University of Toronto Governing Council Statement of Institutional Purpose
- Three Priorities
- 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, Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering (FASE)
- Faculty Registrar
- Associate Chair, Civil Engineering Undergraduate Program
- Associate Director, Years 1 & 2, Engineering Science
- Associate Director, Years 3 & 4, Engineering Science
- Associate Chair, Undergraduate Curriculum Development, Chemical Engineering & Applied Chemistry
- Associate Chair, Undergraduate Student Experience, Chemical Engineering & Applied Chemistry
- Associate Chair, Curriculum, Engineering Science
- Associate Chair, Undergraduate, Electrical & Computer Engineering
- Undergraduate Students
- Chair, Mechanical & Industrial Engineering

- Director, Engineering Science
- Chair, Chemical Engineering & Applied Chemistry
- Chair, Civil & Mineral Engineering
- Chair, Materials Science & Engineering
- Acting Director, Institute for Studies in Transdisciplinary Engineering Education and Practice
- Chair, Electrical & Computer Engineering
- Director, Biomedical Engineering
- Chief Financial Officer
- Chief Administrative Officer
- Director, Awards & Honours
- Interim Executive Director, Strategic Communications
- Head Librarian, Engineering & Computer Science Library
- Director, Facilities and Infrastructure Planning
- Director, Human Resources
- Director, Faculty Information Technology Services
- Director, Office of the Dean
- Executive Director, Engineering Career and Experiential Learning
- Associate Registrar and Director, Admissions
- Director, Operations, Advancement
- Engineering Librarian
- Director, Engineering Computer Facility
- Course Administrator and Student Project Coordinator, Engineering Strategies & Practice
- Manager, Finance & Payroll
- Senior Reporting & Budget Analyst
- Advisor, First Year Domestic Students, First Year Office
- Senior Human Resources Consultant
- Manager, Operations, Information Technology
- Facility Manager, Myhal Centre
- Governance and Programs Officer, Office of the Dean
- Associate Director, Engineering Outreach
- Co-op Coordinator, Professional Experience Year Co-op/Engineering Career Centre
- Web & Digital Strategist, Strategic Communications
- Associate Director, Student Experience & Teaching Development
- Associate Dean, Cross Disciplinary Programs
- Assistant Director, Cross-Disciplinary Programs
- Associate Professor, ISTEP
- Assistant Professor Teaching Stream (1st year math lead)
- Executive Director, Engineering Career and Experiential Learning
- Executive Director, Advancement
- Executive Director, Partnerships
- FASE Alumni and Community Members
- Vice-Dean, Research, Strategy and Resources, Rotman School of Management

- Acting Dean, Dalla Lana School of Public Health
- Interim Dean, Temerty Faculty of Medicine
- Acting Dean, Faculty of Music
- Interim Dean, Faculty of Dentistry
- Vice-Dean, Academic Operations, Faculty of Arts & Science
- Vice-Dean, Academic Experience, University of Toronto Mississauga
- Associate Dean Research, John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design
- Vice-Dean Strategic
- Vice-Dean, Undergraduate
- Vice-Dean, First Year
- Vice-Dean, Graduate Studies
- Vice-Dean, Research
- Vice-Dean, Research and Program Innovation, School of Graduate Studies
- Pre-tenure Faculty
- Graduate Students
- Tenured Faculty
- Associate Director, Graduate Programs, Biomedical Engineering
- Associate Chair, Graduate Studies, Mechanical & Industrial Engineering
- Associate Chair, Professional Programs and Learning Platforms, Department of Civil & Mineral Engineering
- Associate Chair, Graduate Studies, Materials Science & Engineering
- Interim Associate Chair, Graduate Studies and Associate Chair, Continuing Professional Development, Chemical Engineering & Applied Chemistry
- Associate Chair, Graduate Programs, Civil & Mineral Engineering
- Chair, Engineering Graduate Education Committee, Studies in Transdisciplinary Engineering Education & Practice
- Associate Director, Professional Programs, Biomedical Engineering
- Associate Director, Research, Aerospace Studies
- Associate Chair, Research, Civil & Mineral Engineering
- Associate Director, Research, Studies in Transdisciplinary Engineering Education & Practice
- Associate Director, Scientific Research, Biomedical Engineering
- Acting Director, Institute for Sustainable Energy
- Director, University of Toronto Electrical Vehicle Research Centre
- Director, Data Science Institute
- Academic Director, Climate Positive Energy
- Director, Mobility Network
- Scientific Director, Medicine by Design
- Teaching Stream Faculty
- Assistant Dean and Director of Diversity, Inclusion and Professionalism
- Dean's Advisor on Black Inclusivity
- Co-Founder, Labrador Engineering Awareness Program
- Engineering EDI Action Group Co-chair
- Chair, Inclusivity, Diversity & Equity Advisory Committee

- Faculty Advisor, National Society of Black Engineers
- Co-Chair, Engineering Positive Space Committee
- President, Graduate Super Women Engineers
- Professor and Associate Director, Community & Inclusion

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- The Faculty is a “world-class institution that continues to excel in its education and research mission”
- Strong evidence of excellence in education, research, and outreach, advancing its research and teaching programs in direct alignment with the institutional mission and priorities of senior leadership
- Academic and support staff are very capable, dedicated, and forward-thinking
- FASE’s undergraduate and graduate programs attract students of exceptionally high calibre; undergraduate programs are fully accredited by the Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board and graduate programs “appear to be flourishing with an ability to attract students both domestically and internationally”
- Graduate students spoke with pride of their ability to work with “incredibly capable and internationally renowned professors”, and faculty remarked on the excellence of their graduate students
- Reviewers noted significant progress since the previous external review on improving the teaching and learning activities in the Faculty, growth in graduate enrolments, and a growing emphasis on interdisciplinary research initiatives
- Reviewers remarked on the Faculty’s research achievements, “that reflect the highest standards of research and scholarly activities”
- Notable improvements in the past decades in increasing the representation of women in undergraduate, graduate populations as well as amongst academic staff

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

- Resource constraints pose a challenge and there is a perception that the level of growth in professional course-based master’s programs may be reaching its ceiling, limiting prospects for future revenue growth
- Perception of two “classes” of professors with the introduction of teaching-stream faculty appointments which leads to the impression that the teaching activities of tenure-stream faculty are “of secondary importance” raising concerns “that the emphasis on excellence in research may come at the expense of the excellence of educational programs”

- Concerns that teaching-stream faculty are not finding suitable opportunities for professional development, guidance on how best to approach their scholarship, and that some opportunities for academic leadership are not open to them
- Reviewers heard concerns regarding newly admitted undergraduate students and an inadequate understanding by the Faculty of students' mindsets and their capabilities when they arrived "and, as such, were not prepared to adapt curricula and advising to the levels required of incoming students"
- Apparent shortage of hands-on laboratory experiences for undergraduate students with virtual labs or lab demonstrations being maintained despite the return to in-person teaching
- Undergraduate students expressed concern regarding the overreliance on extracurricular activities such as design teams to provide hands-on experiential learning given their uneven availability and lack of connection to program requirements
- Reviewers observed a number of challenges concerning graduate education including a lack of uniform policies, approaches and a variable quality of graduate supervision and mentoring; perceived poor quality of some MEng professional courses and programs; unclear expectations for graduate students
- Associate Chairs for graduate education confirmed varying quality of student supervision but feel they have little, if any, tools to address "bad behaviour"
- Time to graduation remains a concern, particularly for PhD students where the median time to graduation is 5.5+ years
- Reviewers remarked on the extraordinary financial pressures faced by graduate students, exacerbated by a time-to-completion that was significantly longer than the "advertised four-year duration of PhD programs' and which extended well beyond the extent of the funding package granted to PhD students"
- "The approach to financial support of graduate students was portrayed as 'wild west and decentralized' across and within units, as was the approach for managing graduate student progress and relationships with supervisors"
- Perception of improvements in teaching and learning practices at the undergraduate level not making their way to graduate courses
- Some laboratory groups "are so large that students feel little connection to their supervisors and lack proper mentoring – some going as far to say that they have had to introduce themselves to their supervisors several times and others stating that they have seen instances where co-supervisors only discover that they are co-supervising a student at the defense stage"
- Recent growth in admission to course-based Masters has led to a perception amongst some faculty and students of a dilution of material in courses, "particularly those that are designed to equip research-focused graduate students to advance their research."
- Some MEng course-based programs are viewed by students as being "of poor quality in terms of teaching practices and out-of-date or irrelevant (to them) content"
- "There also remains a concern that results are not apparent when it comes to improvements in underrepresented groups other than women"

- Concerns raised regarding the fate of Institutional Strategic Initiatives (ISIs), “many of which implicate units within FASE, and which are currently funded through seed funding of limited duration”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Utilize the strategic planning exercise to identify current constraints that threaten the sustainability of the Faculty’s priority initiatives and identify how new models of work and teaching and learning may be used to free up resources, such as leveraging remote/hybrid approaches
- Adapt programs and support services to the realities of admitted student populations
- Provide students with an appropriate level of experiential hands-on learning within their programs
- Consider establishing a teaching and learning community of practice as a venue to share best practices across the Faculty
- Focus on enhancing the graduate student educational experience to develop consistency and uniformity in the quality across the Faculty, ensuring coordination with resources available through the School of Graduate Studies
- Reviewers suggest a coordinated approach to address acute issues related to graduate student funding, time-to-completion, and quality supervision, particularly of PhD students
- Take “active steps to measure, track, and comply with milestones related to the academic progress of students” and share best practices and report on efforts within the Faculty to decrease time-to-completion
- Explore financial models for fellowships to alleviate financial pressures on graduate students and to encourage completing their PhD within the 4-year period
- Develop policies at either the Faculty or University level to ensure equitable course relief/release
- Clarify expectations for teaching-stream faculty within FASE to map out “long-term career paths for them, and to ensure that they are fully integrated as equal and respected partners in the life and activities of their academic units”
- Consider establishing an academic leadership role in the Faculty that would focus on the hiring, retention and development of faculty members
- Develop a coordinated approach to EDI across the Faculty where responsibility for progress on key metrics is “shared across the roles of staff and academics”

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Reviewers observed that the leadership of the Faculty is in strong and capable hands
- The Dean is viewed as having “a very holistic and collaborative approach, entertaining a large reservoir of ideas”

- There appears to be significant funding and personnel resources available for the number of faculty members and students in FASE

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

- Some faculty expressed concerns that certain administrative processes lacked transparency or efficiency, such as approvals of contracts and partnership agreements
- Reviewers noted a perception of delays in key processes within the Faculty such as appointments of new departmental chairs and subsequent successor planning
- Many recently hired professors expressed that “their ability to perform was hampered or impeded by the limited availability of key resources required to advance their research programs”
- “Legacy space” was raised as an acute issue for both junior and mid-career faculty where the perception is that some spaces are being underutilized, limiting the growth of research programs for newer professors
- Reviewers observed “an incomplete or poor understanding of the Faculty and the University, including its governance, policies, and practices” amongst several professors that could benefit from additional orientation

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- “The Review Team is of the view that strategic planning is required to identify and address key academic priorities, especially as FASE transitions out of the pandemic and deals with pressing resource constraints”
- Prioritize a multi-dimensional strategic planning exercise in the near term that is directly connected to resource allocation and focuses on key areas, challenges and opportunities
- Reviewers encourage the Faculty to hold a series of retreats or workshops, with the participation of external stakeholders, to support this strategic exercise and identify areas of focus, resource needs, planning and responsibility for execution
- Consider reevaluating how resources are distributed across the Faculty, enabling the shift of resources where needed
- Develop a space inventory, management, and reallocation plan within the Faculty to ensure fair and equitable access to space
- Establish communities of practice around key areas, issues to “create efficiencies, best practices, and consistent and harmonized approaches to common issues shared by its administrative and academic units”

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Members of the FASE community “take great pride in their institution, are cheerful and have a shared sense of belonging, and, indeed, feel privileged to be part of such a strong community”

- “All evidence points to a strong university of outstanding reputation at the national and international levels, including partnerships with institutions and industry”
- The Faculty is seen as a “willing and productive partner in education and research” by multiple divisions across the University, and has a reputation for a high level of excellence
- Reviewers remarked positively on the growth in industrial partnerships from many global companies, encouraging for the future prospects of the Faculty
- Alumni recognize the value of their community and “are very ambitious for their alma mater... expressed a strong desire to brand the Faculty and the broader institution as an interdisciplinary powerhouse on the international stage”

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

- Reviewers observed that disruptions to many activities and priorities of the Faculty during the pandemic have resulted in ongoing repercussions to “the well-being of community members, the preparation of new students who have been recently admitted to undergraduate and graduate programs, the adaptation to new models of work for staff members and professors”
- Some faculty, staff members and students pointed to a “lack of community and belonging outside of their home units and expressed support for more efforts to get them to know each other”
- Many expressed that administrative complexities and the current budget model are seen as hinderances to interdisciplinary collaboration across the Faculty and broader University

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Reviewers recommend that the Faculty take deliberate measures to create and build a strong sense of community across FASE and the University
- Consider developing business planning templates or other mechanisms to overcome real or perceived barriers to interdisciplinary collaboration
- “The Review Team recommends that the FASE work in collaboration with the central administration and counterparts from other Faculties to develop models for shared educational and research initiatives that create win-win opportunities linked to the excellence of disciplines across the University of Toronto and its three campuses”
- Develop a well-articulated international plan for the Faculty as part of the strategic planning exercise
- “Furthermore, the Review Team recommends that the leadership from the three campuses be brought together to explore opportunities to create new programs for education and research that can capitalize on this immense community spread across Toronto”



September 20, 2024

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

RE: Non-UTQAP Review of the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering

Dear Prof. McCahan,

On behalf of the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering, I would like to thank you and your team for all your support throughout the external review process.

I would also like to thank the reviewers, Nora de Leeuw, University of Leeds, Jim A. Nicell, McGill University, Ishwar Puri, University of Southern California, for their thorough review and recommendations for the Faculty. In addition, I would like to thank the faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study. I also want to thank the many staff, students, alumni, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided input throughout the review process. This Non-UTQAP review process has created an opportunity to take a broad view of our Faculty, to recognize areas for improvement and acknowledge areas of achievement.

Overall, the reviewers had a very positive view of the Faculty noting our excellence in education, research, and outreach. The reviewers' overall assessment of the faculty and programs was highly positive, noting our research and academic programs as world-class. Additionally, they offered valuable guidance on challenges such as expanding experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate students, enhance the graduate student educational experience and create strategic opportunities to increase efficiencies throughout the Faculty.

Following the receipt of the final External Review Report in January 2024, we made it available to all on the Engineering website in early March and announced the receipt of the report at the monthly Chairs & Directors meeting. All departments, units, and contributing groups for the Self-Study were invited to share the review and provide feedback for responses to recommendations. The Self-Study Working Group met to discuss the feedback from all groups and obtain more clarification for some responses. This administrative response and implementation plan is the outcome of our consideration of the input and feedback from all these groups.



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

We are currently completing our Facilities Master Plan which will complement and inform our academic plan for 2025-2030. The external review, the review of the final Facilities Master Plan, and this response and implementation plan will be important inputs for our next academic plan.

I look forward to any questions or suggestions from your team and the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christopher Yip', with a horizontal line underneath.

Christopher Yip

Professor and Dean, Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering
University of Toronto

2023-24 Provostial non-UTQAP Review of the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering - Review Recommendations

Please do the following for each recommendation in the table:

- If you **intend** to act on a recommendation, please provide an **Implementation Plan** identifying actions to be taken, the time frame (short, medium, long term) for each, and who will take the lead in each area. If appropriate, please identify any necessary changes in organization, policy or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.
- If you **do not** intend to act on a recommendation, please briefly explain why the actions recommended have not been prioritized.
- While this review does not fall under the UTQAP, it may be helpful to consider the following UTQAP provision: “while the external reviewers’ report may include **commentary** on issues such as faculty complement and/or space requirements when related to the quality of the program under review, **recommendations** on these or any other elements that are within the purview of the university’s internal budgetary decision-making processes must be tied directly to issues of program quality or sustainability” (emphasis added)
- You may wish to refer to the [sample table](#) provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Dean’s Response
<p>The review team highlighted a deep desire on the part of many FASE stakeholders, particularly following the disruption of the pandemic, for strategic directions to advance the Faculty’s research and teaching missions. They recommended that the Faculty prioritize the development of a multi-dimensional strategic plan, in close consultation with FASE community members and external partners, that is directly related to resource allocation and the sustainability of initiatives, and identifies and addresses FASE’s key priority areas, challenges and opportunities.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>“The Review Team recommends that priority should be placed in the near term on conducting a multi-dimensional strategic planning exercise – involving stakeholders from across FASE and its partners – that is directly connected to resource allocation and focuses on key areas, challenges and opportunities, many of which will be described below.”</p>	<p>Dean, Vice Dean, Strategic</p> <p>The Faculty’s Academic Strategic Plan and Facilities Master Plan, both currently under way, will provide strategic directions to advance the Faculty’s research and teaching missions as detailed below.</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently in the consultation phase of the Facilities Master Plan to develop a sustainable and strategic future for engineering teaching and research spaces. • Establish processes and measures of success as part of the implementation plan. • Develop the structure/outline for the Academic Strategic Plan. • Begin consultations for the Academic Strategic Plan. <p>Medium term [1-2 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Academic Strategic Plan following outline, extensive consultations and analysis. • Implement near-term priorities identified in the Facilities Master Plan and Academic Strategic Plan. • Review and update the implementation plan annually to track progress against goals. • Communicate progress with updates in the annual By the Numbers report. <p>Long term [3-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement long-term priorities identified in the Facilities Master Plan and Academic Strategic Plan. • Review and update the implementation plan annually to track progress against goals. • Communicate progress with updates in the annual By the Numbers report.

	2	<p>“The Review Team recommends that FASE work, through its strategic planning exercise, to identify current constraints that threaten the sustainability of its priority initiatives and to identify how new models of work and teaching and learning may be used to free up resources not only to preserve the gains made in recent years with respect to research and teaching, but also to create a path forward for the development of new initiatives.”</p>	<p>Dean</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently in the consultation phase of the Facilities Master Plan to develop a sustainable and strategic future for engineering teaching and research spaces. • Establish processes and measures of success as part of the implementation plan. • Develop the structure/outline for the Academic Strategic Plan. • Begin consultations for the Academic Strategic Plan. <p>Medium term [1-2 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Academic Strategic Plan following outline, extensive consultations and analysis. • Implement near-term priorities identified in the Facilities Master Plan and Academic Strategic Plan. • Review and update the implementation plan annually to track progress against goals. <p>Long term [3-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement long-term priorities identified in the Facilities Master Plan and Academic Strategic Plan. • Review and update the implementation plan annually to track progress against goals.
	3	<p>“The Review Team recommends that, given the resource limitations apparent throughout the Faculty and its units and given the ongoing post-pandemic transition and adaptation, that the FASE consider reevaluating how its limited resources are distributed across the Faculty and to choose what it will and won’t do, enabling the shift of resources to where they are needed most, and creating opportunities for strategic growth or enhanced excellence.”</p>	<p>Dean, Chief Administrative Officer, Vice Dean, Strategic</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given limited resources, determine priorities within the frameworks of the Facilities Master Plan and Academic Strategic Plan. <p>Medium to long term [1-2 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement medium-to-long-term priorities identified in the Facility Master Plan and Academic Strategic Plan. • Create efficiencies by centralizing resources as necessary. <p>Long term [3-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement long-term priorities identified in the Facilities Master Plan and Academic Strategic Plan. • Review and update the implementation plan annually to track progress against goals.
<p>Noting concerns from academic and administrative staff regarding the uneven preparation levels of newly admitted undergraduate</p>	4	<p>The Review Team recommends that the Faculty see it as a strategic priority to work to ensure that (1) programs and support services are adapted to the realities of its admitted student population and (2) students are</p>	<p>Dean</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build upon the current practices of the Teaching Methods & Resources Committee, a standing committee of Faculty Council — which is responsible for teaching methods, resources/aids, evaluating and rewarding

<p>students, the reviewers recommended that the Faculty work to adapt programs and student services where necessary, to ensure appropriate supports for its undergraduate population, as well as access to appropriate levels of hands-on experiential learning.</p>		<p>provided with an appropriate level of experiential hands-on learning within their programs. It is also suggested that the Faculty would benefit from creating a teaching and learning community of practice to share best practices, not confined to experiential learning, across the FASE.”</p>	<p>teaching effectiveness via the Faculty Teaching Awards. Encourage committee members to communicate teaching and experiential learning best practices back to their respective academic units.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to (and on an ongoing basis) promote and leverage teaching and training resources available to faculty members, including U of T’s Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation and the U of T Engineering Educational Technology Office. • Improve communication to students and faculty around policies, practices and support services. • Establish best practices to actively monitor consistency across academic programs to coordinate continuous curriculum improvement via the Vice Dean Undergraduate portfolio. <p>Medium to long term [1-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an internal curriculum review of experiential learning opportunities across academic units and assess the financial implications of additional space to facilitate experiential learning (e.g., financial support from U of T’s deferred maintenance fund and from the Faculty). • Determine priorities and resource requirements to implement recommendations of the Facilities Master Plan aligned with experiential learning. • A new lease starting in August 2024 at 800 Bay Street for research and office facilities will free up space in the Rosebrugh Building, which the Faculty plans to renovate for a new undergraduate mechatronics and manufacturing lab, subject to funding.
<p>Observing acute issues related to graduate quality of supervision, time-to-completion and funding, the reviewers recommended focusing on enhancing the graduate student educational experience as an urgent priority. They underscored the importance of a coordinated Faculty-wide approach to ensure that students receive professional and consistent support, in addition to and alignment with the expertise and resources available to them at the School of Graduate Studies. They further</p>	5	<p>“The Review Team recommends that the Faculty focus on enhancing the graduate student educational experience as an urgent priority. It is recommended that the Faculty/departments consider allocating resources to provide professional support for graduate students and to ensure coordination with the expertise and resources available through the School for Graduate Studies. The goal of this effort would be to develop consistency and uniformity in the quality of the student experience across units and professors. In support of this, the Faculty should work with the Graduate Engineering Council of Students to create a standing group that would be empowered to become a trusted conduit between faculty and students to help them jointly address</p>	<p>Vice Dean, Graduate</p> <p>The Dean’s Office broadly recognizes the need for stronger, more cohesive communications with graduate students. Efforts are underway to develop stronger partnerships with student organizations, such as the Graduate Engineering Council of Students (GECoS). The Dean’s Office also recognizes that academic units will address the recommendation regarding graduate program outcomes, which is a common challenge across all academic units.</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dean has initiated monthly meetings with GECoS to understand the needs of graduate students and ensure resources are allocated to support their professional needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ GECoS is in discussion with the Dean to establish a Graduate Experience Advisory Committee to address graduate student issues. ○ GECoS is also proposing a grad student levy to expand their budget to fund initiatives benefiting the graduate student community (such as academic events, professional development and networking events). • Remain updated on Provostial changes to address graduate student funding at the University level and ensure direction is communicated to academic units across the Faculty. • Encourage academic units to leverage SGS resources, including Healthy Labs. • Closely examine the roles across the Faculty that support graduate students to assess needs and the potential for improved resource sharing. Several academic units have proactively started this work by creating dedicated roles to address the professional needs of graduate students.

<p>recommended focused fundraising efforts to support graduate scholarships, and exploring the possibility of adjusting current divisional graduate funding models. (In developing your response, you may wish to consult with colleagues at the School of Graduate Studies)</p>		<p>concerns about the graduate experience.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This co-op concentration is a major program modification of the MEng program and requires governance which will happen in the 2024-25 academic year for a launch date of Sept 2025 (so this will be presented for approval at Cycle 2 or Cycle 3 Faculty Council). • Create and pilot a co-op concentration for MEng students to bring a professional, work-integrated component into the program. Program requirements and funding models are currently in development. Approval from governance is required with a proposed launch date of September 2025. <p>Medium term [1-2 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create best practices to facilitate more consistency in resources, processes and student experiences Faculty-wide. • Develop resources for graduate students to support their student experience. This includes an onboarding resource for first-year grad students with information about timelines, policies, services/supports and more. In collaboration with GECoS, create a student handbook with resources for graduate students and their supervisors. • Align funding guidelines for graduate students with the University and Provostial guidelines around increased doctoral stream funding levels. This will set minimum funding levels and timelines. • Develop broad funding guidelines for academic units. • Consult with stakeholders to develop best practices for recruitment policies to create consistency across the academic units. <p>Long term [3-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to collect, review and analyze demographic and survey data from graduate students to better understand their experience and how it is changing over time — and adjust accordingly. • Work proactively with Engineering Alumni Relations and the Engineering Career Centre to track both recent and past graduates.
6		<p>“Beyond this, it is suggested that a coordinated approach is needed in the short term to address acute issues related to graduate student funding, time-to-completion, and quality supervision, particularly of PhD students.”</p>	<p>Vice Dean, Graduate</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with academic units to develop a unified plan around increasing stipends. As a strategic priority, the Engineering Advancement Office is working to increase support for graduate student stipends and fellowships. The need to increase stipends is acute and has been recognized across the Faculty. • Continue to promote SGS guidelines and resources — which outline best practices around required meetings and student progress — via the Vice-Dean, Graduate portfolio. This information will continue to be disseminated at monthly Associate Chair and Director meetings to ensure common understanding across academic units. <p>Medium term [1-2 years]</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop best practices for quality of supervision and time-to-completion. Topics may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Time management training/guidelines for graduate students ○ Timeline for first-year graduate students with milestones ○ High-level benchmarks for the four years ○ Handbook for students and supervisors with resources ○ Mentorship opportunities for early-career faculty, with potentially varied mentors for different aspects of supervision (e.g., grant writing vs teaching) ○ Explore co-supervision as a model across units. <p>Long term [3-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure and monitor the feedback and performance of graduate students to determine the effectiveness of the Faculty's medium-term plans and modify as needed.
7	<p>“Given the current financial pressures on graduate students, it is suggested that a concerted effort in the context of the ongoing “Defy Gravity” campaign be focused on raising funds for fellowships for graduate students, especially in recognition of the fact that graduate students are the lifeblood of research programs and a major source of the institution’s international reputation. It is suggested that financial models for fellowships should be considered in which the supervisor matches the funding provided through fellowships to ensure that the professor has “skin in the game” and an incentive to have the student complete their PhD program within the nominal 4-year period.”</p>	<p>Vice Dean, Graduate, Executive Director, Advancement</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a list of priorities to support engineering graduate students and work with the Engineering Advancement team to develop a case to engage alumni of the Faculty's graduate programs. <p>Medium to long term [1-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work proactively across the Faculty to develop a unified plan around increasing stipends. The need to increase stipends is acute and has been recognized across the Faculty. • Continue to engage potential donors for opportunities to raise funds to support graduate students.
8	<p>“It is also recommended that the Faculty take active steps to measure, track, and comply with milestones related to the academic progress of students.”</p>	<p>Vice Dean, Graduate</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the Vice Dean, Graduate portfolio, monitor and comply with guidelines for milestones set by SGS. • Encourage academic units to work proactively with the Engineering Career Centre and Engineering Alumni Relations offices to ensure more fulsome tracking of both recent and past graduates both in the short term and longer term.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans are in motion to create new tools to better track the academic progress of graduate students through the creation of Faculty-funded IT positions. These and departmental tracking will be compared to SGS tools. <p>Medium term [1-2 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create best practices to facilitate more consistency in resources, processes and student experiences Faculty-wide, including quality of supervision and time-to-completion best practices. Topics may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time management training/guidelines for graduate students Timeline for first-year graduate students with milestones High-level benchmarks for four years of study Mentorship opportunities for early-career faculty, with potentially varied mentors for different aspects of supervision (e.g., grant writing vs teaching) Explore co-supervision as a model Update resources annually for graduate students to support their student experience. This includes an onboarding resource for first-year grad students with information about timelines, policies, services/supports and more. All graduate departments/units have developed student handbooks with resources for graduate students and their supervisors. Develop broad funding guideline for academic units. Consult with stakeholders to develop best practices for recruitment policies to create consistency across U of T Engineering's academic units. <p>Long term [3-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure and monitor the feedback and performance of graduate students to determine the effectiveness of the Faculty's medium-term plans and modify as needed.
9		<p>"Finally, it is recommended that units in the Faculty share best practices and report on their efforts and accomplishments with respect to decreasing the time to completion of PhD studies."</p>	<p>Vice Dean, Graduate</p> <p>In examining challenges around time-to-completion, it is important to note that data from the COVID time period may not be an accurate representation of PhD time-to-completion.</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to the forthcoming best practices to facilitate more consistency in resources, processes and student experiences Faculty-wide (outlined in sections 5 & 6 above), the Faculty will develop more effective mechanisms to share best practices and the results of these efforts across academic units to enhance shared learning. Continue to conduct annual committee meetings and timely follow-ups between academic units Faculty-wide/with students. The adoption of the Individual Development Plan in alignment with SGS's Healthy Labs initiative is an important step forward.

			<p>Medium to long term [1-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up on tracking and sharing strategies across the Faculty. Review both qualitative and quantitative data regularly to determine progress over time. Survey students to determine if they have observed progress and adjust plans accordingly.
<p>The reviewers recommended reviewing current divisional policies and making adjustments or additions where appropriate, to ensure equitable workload for faculty involved in activities such as administrative or leadership roles, coordination of major research initiatives, or providing high levels of graduate supervision.</p>	10	<p>“...to ensure the quality of [FASE’s] educational programs and equitable workloads, policies should be developed either at the Faculty level or the University level to ensure equitable course relief/release for professors involved in, for example, high levels of graduate supervision, administrative or leadership duties, or responsibilities for coordinating major research initiatives.”</p>	<p>Chief Administrative Officer, Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic units across U of T Engineering have finalized or are actively revising workload policies per a directive from the Chief Administrative Officer and the Dean. Each department has a five-year policy in renewal phase and policies are being updated. Guidelines for the Assessment of Effectiveness of Teaching in Tenure, Continuing Status and Promotion Decisions were ratified by the Faculty Council on April 27, 2022, and will be implemented for the promotion of continuing status faculty members. The Faculty approved FASE Best Practices for Assessing Teaching Effectiveness in Progress through the Ranks (PTR) Decisions at its February 27, 2023, Council meeting. <p>Medium to long term [1-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the effectiveness of plans put in place to ensure equitable workload policies, and derive learnings to implement for the next five-year policy cycle.
<p>The reviewers observed that with the growth of teaching stream faculty contributions to FASE in recent years, attention should be paid to clarifying expectations and mapping out long-term career paths for this group, and to broadly ensuring that its members are “fully integrated as equal and respected partners in the life and activities of their academic units.”</p>	11	<p>“...with the growth in the number and importance of teaching-stream faculty in the Faculty, some attention should be paid to clarifying expectations for these faculty members, to mapping out long-term career paths for them, and to ensure that they are fully integrated as equal and respected partners in the life and activities of their academic units.”</p>	<p>Dean</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently exploring a new vice dean role (faculty-related affairs) to oversee many aspects of this recommendation, and to review opportunities for teaching-stream faculty to take on more scholarly activities within the workload policy. The Faculty revised its continuing stream document, which enables teaching-stream faculty to take on graduate students, apply for research grants, pursue administrative leadership roles within the Faculty, and apply for external grants such as NSERC Discovery. Guidelines for the Assessment of Effectiveness of Teaching in Tenure, Continuing Status and Promotion Decisions were ratified by the Faculty Council on April 27, 2022, and will be implemented for the promotion of Continuing Status faculty members. The Faculty approved FASE Best Practices for Assessing Teaching Effectiveness in PTR Decisions at its February 27, 2023, Council meeting. <p>Medium to long term [1-5 years]</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire the new vice dean and establish clear parameters for how they will collaborate with academic units and other partners across the Faculty and University. In the longer term, assess progress made against the mandate of the role and determine if adjustments need to be made going forward.
To facilitate the timely and successful implementation of recommendations related to faculty workload and experience, the review team recommended that FASE explore the creation of an academic leadership role with a focus on faculty affairs. (In developing your response, you are encouraged to consult with the Office of the Vice-Provost, Faculty and Academic Life).	12	“Considering these [faculty-related] recommendations, the Review Team suggests that it might be prudent for FASE to create an academic leadership role in the Faculty, i.e., a Vice-Dean (Faculty Affairs) for instance, who would be focused on the hiring, retention, and development of faculty members.”	<p>Dean</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to exploring a new vice dean role to oversee faculty-related affairs (as noted in section 11), the Faculty is in the process of approving the new role of Director, Academic HR. Together, these leadership roles will oversee the hiring, retention and development aspects of this recommendation. <p>Medium to long term [1-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint the new vice dean and hire the director and establish clear parameters for how they will collaborate with academic units and other partners across the Faculty and University. In the longer term, assess progress against each role and determine if adjustments need to be made going forward.
	13	“...recognizing that career progression and succession planning is essential to the future of the Faculty, it is recommended that a concerted effort be made to provide development opportunities for professors”	<p>Dean</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Dean has been in discussion across the Faculty about succession planning for faculty. Departments have formal mentoring practices. Create opportunities for informal mentoring for junior-level faculty in addition to the current formal mentoring practices. The Office of the Vice-Provost, Faculty and Academic Life, provides resources and events for Faculty leadership. Continue to leverage the existing guidelines for Academic Administrative Appointments to drive the promotion of faculty into critical leadership roles within the Faculty. Faculty have an annual review process. Develop new tools and templates for faculty to update their career progression annually. <p>Medium to long term [1-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring greater consistency to faculty onboarding processes by creating guidelines that leverage central U of T resources. Over the longer term, continue to monitor and evaluate the status of career progress and succession planning, as well as uptake on new career-development opportunities for faculty.
The reviewers observed that while the Faculty has made great progress in	14	“The Review Committee recommends that the FASE place a high priority on developing a coordinated approach to	<p>Director, Diversity, Inclusion & Professional Development</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p>

<p>increasing the representation of women in their student and faculty populations, some stakeholders note concerns that EDI efforts have stalled, particularly as they relate to other underrepresented groups. They recommended that FASE place a high priority on developing a coordinated approach to EDI across the Faculty, where responsibility for progress on key metrics and deliverables is shared across leadership, faculty and staff.</p>		<p>EDI across the Faculty, one in which responsibility for progress on key metrics and deliverables is shared across the roles of staff and academics, not just in leadership or management positions. Only through engagement at all levels of the Faculty, will an inclusive, equitable and diverse culture be created and operationalized.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On behalf of the Faculty, the Office of Diversity, Inclusion & Professionalism — working in close collaboration with the Engineering EDI Action Group; the Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity & Advisory Committee; the Dean’s Advisor on Black Inclusivity; the Dean’s Advisor on Indigenous Inclusivity; and the Dean’s Advisor on 2SLGBTQ+ — will develop strategic priorities around EDI. This office will also play a central role in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promoting and increasing the visibility of EDI priorities and the office across the Faculty. ○ Educating staff and faculty around EDI issues and training opportunities. ○ Identifying and tracking how the community is contributing to and advancing EDI priorities. ○ Hiring two staff positions to support the EDI portfolio (to be filled within 6-12 months). ○ Creating a coordinated approach to achieving the Faculty’s EDI goals in the short and long term. • Incorporate EDI into onboarding for all individuals considered for USW & PM positions. (The Office of the Vice-Provost, Faculty and Academic Life provides resources and trainings.) <p>Medium to long term [1-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review both qualitative and quantitative data regularly to determine progress over time against the EDI priorities. Follow up on tracking and sharing strategies across the Faculty.
<p>Highlighting FASE’s reputation as an effective and enthusiastic collaborator, the reviewers observed opportunities to further strengthen knowledge-sharing and partnership both internally among FASE units, and with the broader University:</p>	-		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They recommended that FASE community members work together to advance common objectives and develop communities of practice around key themes, with the goal of creating efficiencies, 	15	<p>“...the Review Team noted a strong willingness of members of the community to learn and work with each other to advance common objectives and, as such, it recommends that communities of practice be established around key thematic roles or issues to create efficiencies, best practices, and consistent and harmonized approaches</p>	<p>Dean</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work has commenced to centralize and bolster shared services and common approaches for the benefit of the entire Faculty. This includes discussions about shared IT services and IT’s inclusion in the Issues Response Committee; conversations around curricular module delivery in the educational technology space; a fuller service unit for Engineering Strategic Communications; and (as noted in section #14) a plan to coordinate efforts and best practices across the EDI portfolio.

<p>best practices and consistent and harmonized approaches to common issues.</p>		<p>to common issues shared by its administrative and academic units.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current standing committees within the Faculty to determine where gaps might exist toward better information sharing and more consistent/harmonized approaches to common issues. The Teaching Methods & Resources Committee, working with Faculty leadership, are currently in discussions to form a community of teaching practice. • Explore the role of the Institute for Studies in Transdisciplinary Engineering Education & Practice (ISTEP) as a service provider within the Faculty to support enhanced teaching practice and pedagogy. ISTEP is also considering bringing on additional staff to advance the goal of more harmonized approaches. • Continue to integrate into institutional communities of practice to ensure information sharing is happening broadly (e.g., HR director serves on U of T-wide committee; CAO is connected with similar roles from other faculties). Input from the Faculty has helped to inform central best practices in some cases. • Streamline processes within academic and administrative units by aligning internal communications, IT and curricular delivery. • Set priorities around creating efficiencies and best practices as the Faculty develops the structure and outline for the Academic Strategic Plan. <p>Medium term [1-2 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Academic Strategic Plan following outline, extensive consultations and analysis to establish the best ways to share information across the Faculty’s many parts. • Implement near-term priorities identified in the Facilities Master Plan and Academic Strategic Plan. <p>Long term [3-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement long-term priorities identified in the Facilities Master Plan and Academic Strategic Plan. • Review and update the implementation plan annually to track progress against goals of the Academic Strategic Plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They suggested that FASE might play an important leadership role in working with central administration and relevant divisions to develop models for shared educational and research initiatives, and to create mutually beneficial opportunities, linked to the excellence of disciplines across the 	<p>16</p>	<p>“The Review Team recommends that the FASE work in collaboration with the central administration and counterparts from other Faculties to develop models for shared educational and research initiatives that create win-win opportunities linked to the excellence of disciplines across the University of Toronto and its three campuses. FASE could play an important leadership role in this given that it and its faculty leadership are seen as very effective and willing collaborators.”</p>	<p>Dean, Central Administration, Tri-campus Leadership</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to collaborate widely across the University to create opportunities that advance institutional and divisional goals. Historically, U of T Engineering has been a key partner and leader in many central initiatives. Some examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Faculty’s Dean, Vice Deans and Administrators are members of formal and informal committees across the University ○ The Faculty Leads 6 of 20 Institutional Strategic Initiatives (participates in 7 of 20) by supporting research, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. ○ Collaborates with central units when they pilot new institutional processes or projects. ○ Partners with other divisions to offer unique and interdisciplinary undergraduate minors and certificates (e.g., Faculty of Music, Munk School, Rotman). The Faculty is in discussion with KPE, Law and Daniels for additional minor and certificate options.

University's three campuses.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collaborates on research activities across all three U of T campuses, with ongoing discussions around further work at UTM in the robotics space. ○ Discussion is underway with ISTEP to offer courses to students from other divisions. <p>Medium to long term [1-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explore new opportunities for collaboration across U of T's three campuses.
Noting FASE's success in attracting international students, and in placing students internationally after graduation, the reviewers observed that the Faculty is well poised to build on these strengths, and further enhance its international presence and profile. They recommended that FASE develop a well-articulated strategic international plan, in consultation and collaboration with the broader University.	17	"The Review Team recommends that priority be placed in a strategic planning exercise on the development of a well-articulated international plan for the FASE, likely in conjunction with the broader University and its three campuses. Furthermore, the Review Team recommends that the leadership from the three campuses be brought together to explore opportunities to create new programs for education and research that can capitalize on this immense community spread across Toronto."	<p>Dean, Office of the Vice President, International, Tri-campus Leadership</p> <p>U of T Engineering's current and future objectives are well aligned with the University's International Strategic Plan. The Faculty's undergraduate student body is diverse, representing nearly 100 countries worldwide and roughly 80% of the counties from which U of T draws its undergraduates. The Faculty works collaboratively within U of T and with other institutions to recruit talented international students, strengthening U of T Engineering's strong reputation as a global leader in engineering education and research.</p> <p>Creating global fluency among engineering undergraduates is core to the Faculty's approach to educating the next generation of engineering professionals. To this end, an Undergraduate Research & International Experience Coordinator role was created and filled to support the stretch goal of having every engineering student graduate with international experience. Further, the Faculty has been instrumental in helping to drive change in the Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board to remove barriers to students gaining international experience.</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An international plan is being prioritized, both at the Faculty level and at the institutional level within the Office of the Vice President, International. Priorities include undergraduate and graduate student recruitment — given recent changes to study permits in Ontario — as well as faculty recruitment. ● Continue to establish partnerships with universities, companies and research institutions worldwide to create further rich opportunities for engineering students to build their global fluency through study, work and research abroad. ● Continue to offer international doctoral clusters at the graduate level. ● Continue to build a presence within diverse industries as an academic partner, both locally and globally. The Engineering Partnerships Office's new space at 800 Bay Street offers industry partners the opportunity to co-locate in the heart of Toronto — a lucrative opportunity for companies looking to establish themselves in a new market while working directly with engineering experts on campus. ● Contribute to and advance University initiatives that support the International Strategic Plan. This includes the key role the Faculty plays in offering the Global Leadership Minor and the International Entrepreneurship Highways initiative. <p>Medium to long term [1-5 years]</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a system to track undergraduate students' international experiences. Continually measure uptake of international opportunities among students toward the stretch goal of having every student graduate with global experience. • Establish fundraising initiatives for the Faculty that support international opportunities for students. • Seek new opportunities for partnership — whether abroad or at U of T — to advance the Faculty's and University's globally focused goals. • Develop focused minors with specific partner institutions. Explore novel approaches encouraging undergraduate exchange and programmatic mobility abroad. MSE and Undergraduate Office are working with Zurich partners.
<p>The reviewers observed that Faculty space concerns appear to represent “the most important limiting factor on graduate education and research productivity.” They recommended that FASE leadership develop a space inventory, management and reallocation plan, to ensure equitable access to space, and support growth for faculty members at all levels.</p>	18	<p>“...given that space appears to be the single most important limiting factor on graduate education and research productivity, especially in furthering the careers of new faculty members, the development of a space inventory, management, and reallocation plan in the Faculty, perhaps mirrored at the unit level, should be seen as a priority. The goal would be to provide fair and equitable access to space to support the development and growth in research programs for professors at all levels across the Faculty.”</p>	<p>Dean, Director, Planning and Infrastructure</p> <p>Short term [6 months]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Faculty is engaged in a Facilities Master Planning exercise to determine strategic opportunities to develop better space for teaching and research. • The Faculty is completing the Myhal Space Review, which includes recommendations for the next five years and a framework for use of project rooms. Once the report is finalized, an implementation plan will be established. <p>Medium term [1-2 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement near-term priorities identified in the Facilities Master Plan and Academic Strategic Plan. <p>Long term [3-5 years]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement long-term priorities identified in the Facilities Master Plan and Academic Strategic Plan. • Review and update the implementation plan annually to track progress against goals of the Academic Strategic Plan.

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 FASE as “a world class Faculty at a world class institution with world class professors, staff, students, and alumni”, observing that FASE members take great pride in the Faculty and have a strong sense of belonging and community. The Faculty attracts incredibly qualified and motivated undergraduate and graduate students; academic and support staff are capable, dedicated and forward-thinking; and leadership is strong, holistic and collaborative. The reviewers highlighted exceptional advancements in improving teaching and learning activities, growth in graduate enrolments, and a growing emphasis on the launch of interdisciplinary research initiatives in areas of divisional and institutional strategic importance; and noted that FASE has made great strides in recent years in increasing the representation of women in their student and faculty bodies. Overall, the reviewers observed considerable evidence of initiative and excellence in education, research and outreach, noting that FASE has advanced its research and teaching programs in many ways, and in direct alignment with the institutional mission and the priorities of senior leadership.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: prioritize the development of a multi-dimensional strategic plan, in close consultation with FASE community members and external partners, that is directly related to resource allocation and the sustainability of initiatives, and identifies and addresses FASE’s key priority areas, challenges and opportunities; work to adapt programs and student services where necessary, to ensure appropriate supports for its undergraduate population, as well as access to appropriate levels of hands-on experiential learning; focus on enhancing the graduate student educational experience as an urgent priority; review current divisional policies and making adjustments or additions where appropriate, to ensure equitable workload for faculty involved in activities such as administrative or leadership roles, coordination of major research initiatives, or providing high levels of graduate supervision; clarify expectations and mapping out long-term career paths for teaching stream faculty to broadly ensure its members are “fully integrated as equal and respected partners in the life and activities of their academic units.”

The Dean’s Administrative Response describes the Faculty’s responses to the reviewers’ recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5 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.

6 Distribution

On June 30th 2025, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was provided by email to the Dean of the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering and the Secretaries to AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council.

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

1 Review Summary

Program(s) Reviewed:	<p>Bachelor of Science in Nursing, BScN</p> <p>Master of Nursing in Nursing Science, MN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fields: Clinical Nursing; Health Systems Leadership and Administration; Nurse Practitioner • Emphases (Nurse Practitioner Field only): Adult; Primary Health Care – Global Health <p>Doctor of Nursing, DN</p> <p>Doctor of Philosophy, PhD, Nursing Science</p> <p>Post-Master’s Nurse Practitioner Diploma, PMNP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphases: Adult Primary Health Care – Global Health
Division Reviewed:	Lawrence Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing
Commissioning Officer:	Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alice Gaudine, Professor and Former Dean, Faculty of Nursing, Memorial University of Newfoundland & President, Canadian Association Schools of Nursing • Valerie Howard, Dean, School of Nursing, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill • Brendan McCormack, Head and Dean, Susan Wakil School of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Sydney
Date of Review Visit:	January 29-31, 2024
Review Report Received by VPAP:	April 8, 2024
Administrative Response Received by VPAP:	September 19, 2024
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 22, 2024

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: November 28, 2017

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- Its solid status as one of the top nursing faculties in the world
- The innovative teaching methods and numerous opportunities for students to engage in learning beyond the classroom
- The faculty are highly accomplished researchers with impressive levels of research funding
- The staff report great pride and satisfaction working in the Faculty

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Supporting graduate student recruitment from regions outside of Ontario as well as from local health service organizations
- Considering the possible impact of student funding and tuition on enrolment and recruitment
- Modernizing the MN-NP curriculum
- Addressing faculty recruitment challenges through the development of pipelines, from the BScN onwards
- Identifying supports for teaching stream faculty to develop their scholarship
- Increasing student and faculty diversity
- Exploring revenue generating international programs
- Conducting a staff job analysis and review to see if opportunities exist to reallocate responsibilities within Faculty areas

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 CVs
- Previous review report 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 & Provost
- Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

- Dean, Lawrence Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing
- Associate Dean, Academic
- Associate Dean, Research
- Director, Doctoral Programs
- Director, MN Programs
- Director, Undergraduate Program
- Year 1 Undergraduate Coordinator
- Year 2 Undergraduate Coordinator
- Graduate Students
- Undergraduate Students
- Acting Executive Director, Centre for Professional Development Office
- Executive Director, Centre for Professional Development Office
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Indigenous Reconciliation Committee Chairs and members
- Executive Assistant to the Dean
- Director, Office of the Dean
- Assistant Dean, Registrarial and Student Services
- Director of Advancement
- Business Manager
- Academic Information & Technology Supervisor
- Director, Information Technology
- Director Clinical Education Office
- Senior Communication and Media Boardroom Relations Officer
- Chief Administrative Officer
- Vice President, Clinical Operations and Chief Nursing Executive, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
- Vice President, Programs & Services and Chief Nursing Executive, Holland Bloorview Rehabilitation Hospital
- Program Director, Surgery, North York General Hospital
- Vice President of Clinical Programs and Corporate Nurse & Professional Practice Executive, Women's College Hospital
- Alumni Representatives
- Vice-Dean, Research and Program Innovation, School of Graduate Studies
- Dean, Dalla Lana School of Public Health
- Dean, Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy
- Dean, Faculty of Kinesiology & Physical Education
- Interim Dean, Faculty of Dentistry
- Vice-Dean, Clinical and Faculty Affairs, Temerty Faculty of Medicine
- Director of Research Administration
- Research Data Analyst, Research Office
- Strategic Research Development Officer, Research Office
- Financial & Payroll Assistant, Research Office
- Administrative Assistant, Research Office
- Teaching Stream Faculty
- Part-Time and Status-Only Faculty

- Pre-Tenure Faculty
- Tenured Faculty

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
 - ▶ Strong emphasis on integrating research, with commitment to further expanding integration opportunities
 - ▶ Program Objectives and Program Learning Outcomes are mapped intentionally with the Curricular Themes, serving as a foundation for continuous quality improvement in an attempt to modernize nursing education
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Highly competitive admissions process, with admitted students exceeding admission requirements
 - ▶ LBFON is implementing a holistic BScN admissions process to ensure students represent the populations they serve
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ BScN program incorporates didactic, clinical, and simulation instruction
 - ▶ Newly implemented Program Objectives and Program Learning Outcomes include anti-discriminatory and culturally safe nursing practices and incorporate recommendations from the Indigenous Health Nursing Working Group and the Black Health Equity Working Group
 - ▶ Improvements in clinical education and the strengthening of the simulation team are key program features
- Innovation
 - ▶ Simulation lab creates a safe environment for students to practice
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Program directors and faculty members work with students and nurses in clinical practice to promote accessibility in undergraduate courses
 - ▶ Priority BScN pathway for Indigenous applicants, including review of applications by Indigenous community members, is a commendable practice
 - ▶ Indigenous Health Nursing Working Group formed in 2021 to make recommendations regarding integration of Indigenous content within program curricula, including principles of cultural safety, cultural humility, social justice and anti-racist approaches to Indigenous health
 - ▶ 2019-20 review of undergraduate course content identified content related to Indigenous health; course instructors committed to integrate Indigenous knowledge and voices, and to consider the decolonization of nursing practice in their courses

- ▶ Black Health Equity Working Group formed in 2021 to make recommendations regarding development of students' knowledge and skills to address anti-Black systemic racism, promote health equity and social justice (including principles of anti-oppression, cultural safety, cultural humility, equity, compassion and empathy), and to promote an environment where Black students feel included and safe in nursing courses and clinical settings
- ▶ Notable focus on incorporation of Universal Design principles and supporting students with disabilities to obtain a nursing degree
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Disclosure process developed since last review enables students who have experienced or witnessed harassment or discrimination to disclose the event online or to a designated intake officer
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ Majority of student course evaluations are positive
 - ▶ NCLEX-RN first-time pass rates are consistently 95% or higher, exceeding average pass rates in Ontario and the U.S.
 - ▶ Degree completion rates are higher than the overall Ontario rate
 - ▶ Strong employment rates compared to provincial overall rate
 - ▶ Employers consistently state that the LBFON alumni are superior and highly sought after
 - ▶ Students and graduates consistently share feedback regarding the high quality of clinical experiences

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

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Government-initiated enrollment expansion has significantly increased student numbers without commensurate increases in program resources
- Student funding
 - ▶ Relatively high cost of living in Toronto compared to other areas highlights the need to support students with additional resources for housing and cost of living expenses

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ As enrolment increases, ensure that classroom, clinical, and simulation experiences are coordinated and mapped according to student level and learning outcomes
 - ▶ Consider incorporating online courses in the BScN program to introduce students to innovative teaching modalities, ease the burden on the physical facility, promote a more flexible learning environment, and provide opportunities for continued learning if students cannot attend class in person
- Innovation
 - ▶ Use of evidence-based simulation can ease the burden for finding clinical placements; consider investing more resources in simulation to meet needs of growing student enrollments

- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Continue building on the solid foundation of work with diverse communities performed to date, developing anti-discriminatory and culturally safe nursing practices incorporating recommendations from Black, Indigenous, and LGBTQ2S+ communities
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Consider requiring a written formative assessment at mid-term, to ensure students are progressing and on-schedule to meet clinical objectives
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ Continue monitoring program outcomes, course and instructor evaluations, and NCLEX-RN first time pass rates to ensure program quality remains strong

2. Graduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ PhD program is a long-established, well-respected program with an excellent track record of graduating high-performing nursing researchers and leaders
- Objectives
 - ▶ Strong emphasis on integrating research in LBFON master's level programs, with commitment to further expanding integration opportunities
 - ▶ All fields of the MN (Clinical, HSLA and NP) and the PM-NP programs are relevant to advanced practice nursing requirements
 - ▶ Innovative DN program, the first of its kind in Canada, aims to equip nursing leaders with the knowledge, skills and expertise to grow into executive roles
 - ▶ Consistency between DN Program Objectives and Program Learning Outcomes; PLOs clearly reflect a health-systems focus, underpinned by relevant areas of theory and practice needed to lead the advancement of practice in complex health systems
 - ▶ DN program has a strong research focus relevant to the need for leaders to be able to systematically inquire into their own and others' practice as well as evaluate change and innovation
 - ▶ PhD Program Objectives focus on preparing scientists and scholars with the analytical and research skills required to expand knowledge of clinical, theoretical, and health systems issues; program is in line with the university's goals as a research-intensive university
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ LBFON reputation for research and program quality leads to high quality applicants
 - ▶ MN and the PM-NP admission requirements aligned to select individuals who will be successful in the program
 - ▶ Pre-screening process introduced in 2022 so to support better alignment between potential DN students and supervisors

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Practicum requirements in the MN Clinical and HSLA fields, which are not included in many Canadian programs, enhance relevance and quality
 - ▶ MN-HSLA and MN-Clinical programs have sufficient numbers of quality placements and preceptors for practicums
 - ▶ Online format of the MN (HSLA and NP fields) and PM-NP programs enables flexibility for students, including those residing outside of Toronto
 - ▶ MN and PM-NP curricula are continuously reviewed and revised by faculty members, program directors and the Curriculum Committee, incorporating feedback from students, graduates, practice partners, faculty members and regulatory bodies
 - ▶ PhD research methods course in year 1 addresses all aspects of research methodology and method development as well as researcher growth and development; course aims to foster a community among enrolled students and support them through their program
 - ▶ Simulation lab supports NP student learning with dedicated resources and adherence to simulation standards of best practice
- Innovation
 - ▶ Innovative teaching practices in the MN program include the use of flipped classrooms, synchronous discussion sessions, and learning pods in which students collaborate on case studies and other learning activities
 - ▶ MN-HSLA field includes hybrid clinical placements as well as on-site placements
 - ▶ Mapping of DN curriculum to the Canadian College of Health Leaders LEADS in a Caring Environment competencies framework is a notable innovation
 - ▶ DN program team is working closely with the inaugural DN student cohort in a co-design relationship to engage in ongoing quality improvement of the program, a commendable innovation
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Program directors and faculty members work with students and nurses in clinical practice to promote accessibility in graduate courses
 - ▶ Priority MN pathway for Indigenous applicants, including review of applications by Indigenous community members, is a commendable practice
 - ▶ Indigenous Health Nursing Working Group formed in 2021 to make recommendations regarding integration of Indigenous content within program curricula, including principles of cultural safety, cultural humility, social justice and anti-racist approaches to Indigenous health
 - ▶ Black Health Equity Working Group formed in 2021 to make recommendations regarding development of students' knowledge and skills to address anti-Black systemic racism, promote health equity and social justice (including principles of anti-oppression, cultural safety, cultural humility, equity, compassion and empathy), and to promote an environment where Black students feel included and safe in nursing courses and clinical settings Notable focus on incorporation of Universal Design principles and supporting students with disabilities to obtain a nursing degree

- ▶ NP curriculum includes training in assessment of individuals with different skin colours
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Programs employ a wide variety of assessment methods with consideration for different learning styles and professional practice competencies
 - ▶ PhD requirements (e.g., literature review and proposal development/defense) act as key milestones for assessing student progression
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students/graduates of the MN-HSLA field, MN-Clinical field and MN-NP field spoke positively about their programs
 - ▶ Disclosure process developed since last review enables students who have experienced or witnessed harassment or discrimination to disclose the event online or to a designated intake officer
 - ▶ MN and PM-NP diploma programs include practicum placements enabling experiential and applied learning
 - ▶ Development of practicum placements and preceptors is informed by student feedback
 - ▶ Annual PhD Symposium provides the opportunity to present their work to fellow students and engage in classes to support thesis writing and development as researchers
 - ▶ PhD students have the opportunity to participate in the Bloomberg Rounds
 - ▶ Recent change to include some PhD course work in year 2 of the programs (instead of entirely in year 1) provides continued support and a sense of belonging for students
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ MN applications increased 80% from 2017 to 2021; new registrants increased 28% in the same period
 - ▶ High licensure exam pass rates for NP students
 - ▶ MN and PM-NP student course evaluations are positive, with a response rate of over 50%
 - ▶ Practicum preceptors are surveyed every second year; respondents speak favourably about LBFON students and describe them as “standing out” from graduate students from other universities
 - ▶ Student evaluations of courses compare the same or more favourably with those of students from other U15 Universities
 - ▶ MN and PM-NP students and graduates were positive about the quality of their program and expressed pride in being a University of Toronto student or graduate
 - ▶ PhD shows consistent and sustained numbers of students entering the program
 - ▶ PhD program quality is continuously monitored through a range of processes including a variety of surveys, benchmarking assessments and monitoring of completion rates; results consistently demonstrate a high-quality program, with the international standing of the faculty being particularly strong
 - ▶ PhD time to completion rate is better than the university average

- ▶ PhD student satisfaction survey results generally show a highly satisfied community of students
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ All MN graduates are surveyed two years after they complete their program, with responses indicating that they felt prepared for leadership roles; 2022 survey had a 66% response rate and 100% of the respondents said they were employed in a role that mandated or preferred an advanced practice nurse
- Quality indicators – faculty
 - ▶ MN and PM-NP programs are supported by sufficient numbers of faculty members with PhD degrees who are active in research or scholarly activity, as well as registered as an RN or NP
 - ▶ Strong faculty complement, including several global research leaders, forms a key resource available to students and represents a distinctive quality of the PhD program
- Student funding
 - ▶ Variety of funding options are available to PhD students at the time of application and for support at key stages of the program (e.g., conference attendance)

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Reviewers note sufficient numbers of quality placements and preceptors for practicums in the MN-HSLA and MN-Clinical programs, with some challenges with finding preceptors for the NP program
 - ▶ Students commented that some pre-recorded NP lectures needed updating
 - ▶ Reviewers observe that the DN program includes a focus on leadership in education, but that very few DN courses are dedicated to education theory/practice and pedagogical principles
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ MN students expressed a desire for course assignment due dates to be coordinated
 - ▶ PhD students commented on inconsistent quality of supervision
 - ▶ Reviewers note that several international students voiced serious concerns regarding the cost of living in Toronto and related financial struggles
 - ▶ Reviewers note that several international students voiced serious concerns regarding the cost of living in Toronto and related financial struggles, including "potential homelessness" and the affordability of food and other essential items

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Consider strategies to help interested MN students transition into the PhD program, including an MN thesis option, inclusion of a small MN research project, redevelopment of the MN capstone course, and/or more frequent use of MN "fast-track" option for exceptional students

- ▶ Consider including a focus on systems design and executive leadership in the HLSA field
- ▶ Consider changes to program regulations to address challenges finding preceptors for NP students
- ▶ Consider reorienting the DN research project/thesis to emphasize ‘excellence in practice’ with suggested focus areas including policy development and analysis, transformational changes in clinical practice, and educational scholarship
- ▶ Consider developing a hybrid delivery option for the PhD program to allow increased flexibility for students
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Develop explicit indicators to support monitoring of quality of PhD supervision
 - ▶ Create opportunities for all PhD students to work as TAs in a broad range of teaching, learning and assessment activities, in addition to marking student assignments
 - ▶ Consider developing a ‘Teaching Certificate’ for PhD students to enhance their employability potential
- Student funding
 - ▶ Explore ways to provide additional support and resources for students facing financial challenges due to the cost of living in Toronto

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Research
 - ▶ LBFON is a leading research-intensive Faculty with a clear research strategy consistent with the research strategic goals of the university
 - ▶ Relationship with Toronto Academic Health Sciences Network (TAHSN) is a key characteristic of LBFON research, with many faculty cross-appointed to affiliated research institutes
 - ▶ TAHSN membership enables LBFON researchers to lead and participate in interdisciplinary research teams, ensuring that many aspects of health research have a nursing perspective
 - ▶ Focused and strategic approach to all aspects of research funding, management and relationships, supported by the Office of Research and External Relations (ORE), has resulted in significant impacts that place the Faculty as a global nursing and health research leader
 - ▶ Securing Tri-agency research funding has been a key ORE priority, with significant recent increases in overall research funding and commendable grant application success rates
- Faculty
 - ▶ Faculty complement includes 22 tenure-stream professors, 9 of whom hold research chairs; many faculty have received national and international awards in recognition of their research successes

- ▶ Many faculty are global leaders in their research areas, contributing to the generation of new knowledge that informs clinical practice, nursing education, and health policy in Canada and around the world
- ▶ LBFON has taken a strategic decision to recruit high quality researchers into professorial positions, resulting in significant success evident in the research outcomes.
- ▶ Faculty hiring processes address applicants' experiences and approaches to working with diverse groups, and their contributions to fostering diversity
- ▶ Faculty hiring processes include posting available positions to the Canadian Black Nurses Alliance (CBNA) and the Canadian Indigenous Nurses Association (CINA) to help reach diverse applicants

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

- Research
 - ▶ Reviewers note limited measurement of faculty research impact beyond publication and citation rates
- Faculty
 - ▶ Reviewers note comments from faculty members in both teaching and tenure streams regarding high workload and “feeling stretched”
 - ▶ Intentionality of directors and faculty members in accommodating students brings an increase in director/faculty workload
 - ▶ Reviewers note comments from administrators and faculty members regarding challenges hiring NPs who also have PhD degrees into faculty roles
 - ▶ Faculty members commented on challenges due to inadequate TA support
 - ▶ Faculty workload associated with revising and developing courses is not compensated through assigning teaching weights
 - ▶ Faculty in PhD and DN programs do not receive teaching weight credit for supervision work
 - ▶ Faculty expressed concerns about the workload associated with DN supervision commitments, and resulting impacts on the overall workload of faculty
 - ▶ Reviewers note concerns from faculty regarding the administrative work required to support active grants and grant applications

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
 - ▶ Consider strategies for broader systematic assessment of faculty research impact
- Faculty
 - ▶ Monitor and recognize increases in director/faculty member workloads related to supporting student requests for accommodation
 - ▶ Faculty with pedagogical expertise are needed to support continuation of the education focus in the DN program
 - ▶ Consider increasing resources for the DN program to prevent negative impacts on overall faculty workload

- ▶ Explore strategies for faculty succession planning and development to ensure a clear plan is in place for ongoing research leadership and management in the Faculty; suggestions include an ECR mentoring program, KPIs for tenured faculty to support their development in research, teaching, and administration, and a research leadership development program for existing faculty and research administrators
- ▶ Examine teaching stream faculty workload model with consideration for course coordination, student enrollment, clinical coordination, assessment loading, space for scholarship, as well as serving on PhD/DN committees
- ▶ Consider developing a teaching equivalencies document with weight assigned to courses and graduate students that align with the associated workload

4. Administration

Note: Issues that are addressed through specific University processes and therefore considered out of scope for UTQAP reviews (e.g., individual Human Resources issues, specific health and safety concerns) are routed to proper University offices to be addressed, and are therefore not included in the Review Summary component of the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Strong relationships with other Faculties, departments and units across the university; positive partnerships between academic leaders, between faculty across Faculties and departments, and a strong commitment to interdisciplinarity
 - ▶ Strong partnerships with other nursing and health Faculties across Canada and internationally
 - ▶ Strong relationships with practice partners
 - ▶ Strong partnerships with external agencies, most notably TAHSN; positive relationships serve to ensure the ongoing development of key aspects of LBFON operations including clinical learning for undergraduate students, internships for master's students, and research partnerships
 - ▶ Following a 2021-22 survey, LBFON developed of a number of initiatives to support wellbeing of students, faculty, and staff
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Following recent increases in students requiring academic support, LBFON has added an on-location Accessibility Advisor in addition to central support for accessibility
 - ▶ LBFON has a clear professional staff profile serving a variety of departmental functions; "we were impressed with the level and range of work undertaken through these departments and the sense of collegiality across departments"
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ All programs are consistent with University and Faculty missions, as well as the Faculty's values and academic plan

- ▶ LBFON has completed substantial work on equity, diversity and inclusion since the last review; reviewers commend the Faculty on this work as well as the Faculty's continuing commitment to increase diversity, equity and inclusion across all departments and services
- ▶ Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Indigenous Reconciliation (EDI & IR) Committee was established in 2021 and is a standing committee of Faculty Council; the committee responds to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations for nursing education as well as to the University's work to address anti-Black racism
- ▶ Learning materials to support faculty members' integration of recommendations from the BHEWG, the Indigenous working groups, as well as guidance for consideration of populations such as LGBTQ2S+ and Muslim individuals, have been placed in the university's online learning management system
- ▶ LBFON recognizes the need to increase diversity in hiring, to match the demographics of the student population
- ▶ All hiring and promotions committee members complete training on unconscious bias, equity, diversity and accessibility; members of search committees include a representative for equity, diversity and inclusion
- ▶ LBFON is an active leader in Canada through participation in a variety of strategic decision-making forums and bodies, showing consistent leadership in nursing in the country
- ▶ LBFON demonstrates social impact through sharing outcomes from the Bloomberg Rounds, the Faculty Newsletter, an annual named lecture (The Splane Lecture), and 'Nurses Week'
- ▶ LBFON continues to provide programs that are desired by graduates and future employers
- International comparators
 - ▶ LBFON research is highly ranked when compared with a variety of international comparators, consistently ranking in the top 10 nursing schools globally, with favorably comparisons to the top US universities in terms of student outcome and research funding
 - ▶ Publication and citation rankings are in the top 20 of North American institutions conducting nursing research
 - ▶ LBFON achieves notable levels of productivity in research funding and research outputs despite having fewer faculty and students than many North American peer institutions

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

- Relationships
 - ▶ Reviewers note comments from some faculty members regarding the Faculty culture, particularly regarding opportunities for shared decision-making and a sense of a lack of transparency in decision-making
 - ▶ Reviewers note "accounts of a perceived divide between the research and teaching streams resulting in perceptions of imbalanced workloads and lack of opportunities for professional development"

- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Anticipated end of funding for the Strategic Research Development Officer position in ORE, has potential for “significant negative impact on the overall research success of faculty”
 - ▶ Reviewers note comments regarding staff taking on new responsibilities without compensation or adding additional FTE
 - ▶ Reviewers observe that LBFON operates with relatively small faculty and staff complements
 - ▶ Reviewers note comments from staff members that additional staff are needed in certain units
 - ▶ Several administrative functions and offices are fulfilled by a single person; reviewers note concerns that this poses considerable risk to business continuity
 - ▶ Reviewers observed a lack of awareness among some Faculty members regarding the central services available to them and how to access them
 - ▶ Reviewers note comments from faculty members that there are fewer administrative staff members to support students, resulting in increased demand on faculty members to provide student support
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Reviewers note concerns that “enrollment growth in an environment of stagnant tuition poses a risk for long range planning and places additional challenges on the Advancement and Fundraising staff”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Consider a program of culture development to address perceived divide between and create cohesion between tenure and teaching stream faculty
 - ▶ Explore opportunities to increase interdisciplinarity through internal and external partnerships
 - ▶ Explore further opportunities to leverage the benefits of TAHSN to create more clinical-academic researcher positions
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Conduct an operational review of staffing needs and workload equivalences in areas including student recruitment, student clinical placement, and admissions
 - ▶ Consider increases in faculty and staff complements to address workload and area coverage concerns
 - ▶ Consider staff cross-training to assist in meeting operational requirements during busy or short-staffed periods
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Consider hiring doctorally prepared Director of Simulation to lead innovation in simulation instruction and focus on research related to evidence-based implementation of simulation
 - ▶ Consider broader and deeper methods of measure the Faculty’s social impact, including developing a process for assessing the impact of research at individual, community and societal levels and within a global perspective

- ▶ Strategic planning process for the Centre for Professional Development should include financial modeling as well as clarification of CPD's mission and contributions to the Faculty
- ▶ Consider resource requirements as well as the risks and benefits of offering programming at the Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health
- ▶ Evaluate progress on the Faculty's current strategic plan and dedicate resources to developing the next 3-5 year plan
- ▶ Develop a sustainability plan with a clear focus on maintaining, sustaining and further developing the Faculty's global position

2 Administrative Response & Implementation Plan



Bloomberg Nursing

September 20, 2024

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs and
Vice-Provost Innovations in Undergraduate Education
University of Toronto

Dear Professor McCahan,

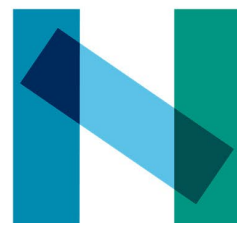
Thank you for sharing the report of the January 2024 external review of the Lawrence Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing and its programs. The UTQAP Provostial cyclical review process has facilitated informative conversations with students, faculty, staff, alumni, and our clinical partners. We will use the feedback we received, and the knowledge gained from the review process, to inform the creation of our 5 - year strategic academic plan.

We were pleased that the reviewers lauded points of pride for our Faculty such as our: high-quality research, academic programs that are valued by graduates and employers, and our work in the areas of equity, diversity, and inclusion. We also appreciated seeing that numerous recommendations in the report aligned with our own noted areas for improvement. At the same time, we felt there were some misperceptions and recommendations that did not align with our self study. As such, we have incorporated our perspectives and priorities for improvement into our response to the recommendations. A detailed response to each recommendation and a summary of our short-mid and long-term goals are included in the appended table. We will track and evaluate our progress on each of these goals and our plans for implementation will be integrated into our academic plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robyn Stremler".

Professor and Dean,
Robyn Stremler, RN, PhD, FAASM, FAAN



2023-24 UTQAP Review of the Lawrence Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing - Review Recommendations

Please do the following for each recommendation in the table:

- If you **intend** to act on a recommendation, please provide an **Implementation Plan** identifying actions to be taken, the time frame (short, medium, long term) for each, and who will take the lead in each area. If appropriate, please identify any necessary changes in organization, policy or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.
- If you **do not** intend to act on a recommendation, please briefly explain why the actions recommended have not been prioritized.
- In accordance with the UTQAP and Ontario's Quality Assurance Framework, "it is important to note that, while the external reviewers' report may include **commentary** on issues such as faculty complement and/or space requirements when related to the quality of the program under review, **recommendations** on these or any other elements that are within the purview of the university's internal budgetary decision-making processes must be tied directly to issues of program quality or sustainability" (emphasis added)
- You may wish to refer to the [sample table](#) provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Narrative	Dean's Response
The reviewers made recommendations related to ways to address the impact of enrollment expansion emphasizing the need to leverage ways to expand simulation and clinical placement options.	1	"The use of evidence-based simulation according to the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning (INACSL): Healthcare Simulation Standards is imperative to running a high-quality simulation program to prepare pre-licensure students. Simulation can ease the burden for finding clinical placements, and, in order to provide this training, the school must dedicate adequate resources and personnel to ensure success... the reviewers suggest investing more resources in simulation to meet the needs of the growing enrollment. One area of opportunity is to hire a doctorally prepared Director of Simulation to lead innovation in simulation instruction and focus on research related to evidence-based implementation of simulation (including mannequin based,	Since the last review, the SIM lab and programming have improved significantly. The SIM lab enables students to learn, and faculty to evaluate student learning, in a variety of ways beyond the classroom and clinical settings. We agree that since the challenges with clinical placements will continue for the foreseeable future, a viable solution is expanding the simulation program to further complement clinical placements and enhance clinical skills attainment. At the same time, based on current research evidence and clinical context, we don't believe simulation should be substituted for up to 50% of clinical experiences as stated in the recommendations. Therefore, our short-medium-and long-terms goals are centred around: leveraging resources to further enhance the SIM programming that currently	<p>Short Term (3 months – 1 year)</p> <p>Consultations with TAHSN Chief Nurses - The Dean has started her term (May to September 2024) by meeting with the Chief Nurses at each TAHSN hospital to discuss many topics, including ways to share resources around simulation learning and the challenge of procuring sufficient clinical placement spots, clinical instructors, and preceptors for our student population. These meetings have helped identify opportunities where Bloomberg Nursing students could utilize SIM labs and resources within hospitals and to consider ways to involve more clinical instructors and adjunct faculty in supporting SIM learning for our students, both at Bloomberg Nursing in our SIM lab and at SIM facilities at TAHSN sites. The conversations have also underpinned the importance of, and commitment from the TAHSN nursing leadership to, protect clinical placement spots for students at Bloomberg Nursing and encourage RN staff to serve as clinical instructors and preceptors. The Faculty will build upon the meetings with the Chief Nurses to further strengthen connections and communication between Bloomberg Nursing and our TAHSN partners to ensure a sufficient number of placement spots within our expanded enrollment and to better incorporate SIM learning within clinical learning opportunities. We will also continue generative conversations as above, but with community partners (e.g. VHA Health, SE Healthcare, Toronto Public Health) and partners outside of TAHSN.</p> <p>Leads: <i>Dean with Associate Dean Academic, Directors of UG, MN, Doctoral programs</i></p>

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		standard patients, and Virtual Reality).”	exists; expanding SIM to the Masters and Doctoral programs; and strengthening relationships with hospitals and community partners to protect – and even expand - clinical placements and leverage SIM resources outside of the Faculty of Nursing.	<p>Hire a SIM Learning Consultant – We will hire a SIM Learning Consultant to collaborate with our current SIM team members to co-create a curricular plan across our programs. The Consultant will engage with the Faculty and our TAHSN partners to explore points of connection with SIM-focused initiatives such as leveraging/sharing our existing SIM resources, considering how our clinical placement pressures might be eased by substituting some SIM activities (including traditional SIM, e-SIM, virtual SIM) for clinical placement time, creating a plan to increase use of SIM in graduate programs. Leads: <i>Dean with Associate Dean Academic, Director Clinical Education Office, Director of UG, MN, Doctoral programs</i></p> <p>Use SIM to Develop Research Competencies for Doctoral Students - A team of faculty members and trainees was awarded a grant “<i>Development of an innovative, simulation-based Graduate Research Interactions with Human Participants (GRIHP) Training program</i>” from the SGS Graduate Education Innovation Fund (GEIF) in May 2024 to develop, evaluate and implement SIM scenarios to develop research competencies (e.g. participant consenting, conducting semi-structured interviews/focus groups) for PhD and DN students. Leads: <i>Director of Doctoral Programs with Dean, Associate Dean Academic</i></p> <p>Conduct a Workflow Analysis of the Clinical Education Office – We have started a workflow analysis (September 2024) of the Clinical Education Office to identify opportunities for process improvement and ways to better utilize resources and build capacity in securing and coordinating placements for students. Lead: <i>CAO with Associate Dean Academic, Director Clinical Education Office</i></p> <p>Medium Term (1-2 years) Develop a Long-term Plan for SIM – the SIM Learning Consultant will collaborate with our current SIM team members to co-create a curricular plan across our programs. The Consultant and SIM team will implement a plan with the Faculty and our TAHSN partners to leverage/share our existing SIM resources (e.g. lab space, SIM scenarios, virtual reality [VR] SIM scenarios), consider how our clinical placement pressures might be eased by substituting some SIM activities for clinical placement time, understand faculty members’ professional development needs in SIM, create a plan to increase use of SIM in</p>
	2	“The results of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing National Simulation Study indicate the substitution of up to 50% of clinical experiences with evidence-based simulation experiences is equivalent to traditional clinical experiences; doing so can help alleviate the burden of finding clinical placements. In order to do this, the simulation lab must have trained facilitators and adequate resources.”		

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				<p>graduate programs, determine if a permanent Director of SIM Learning position is needed and design the role.</p> <p>Faculty members will be supported to integrate additional simulation experiences in the MN and doctoral programs to allow students to apply theory and gain additional experience enacting APN competencies as well as to increase development of leadership skills (e.g. developing coaching skills, engaging in difficult conversations) and research skills (e.g. participant consent, conducting interviews, running focus groups).</p> <p>Leads: <i>Directors of UG with Associate Dean Academic with, MN, Doctoral programs</i></p> <p>Expand the Number and Type of Clinical Placements – we aim to expand the number of clinical placement spots through outreach, including engagement with the UTSC Placements office (in anticipation of needing additional Eastern GTA placement spots for the expansion of the Nurse Practitioner field of study to UTSC at the Scarborough Academy of Integrated Health [SAMIH]), notably in primary health care, long term care, integrated care, home care, remote and rural, and public health settings.</p> <p>Lead: <i>Director, Clinical Education Office</i></p> <p>Long Term (3+ years)</p> <p>Develop a SIM Learning Program – the Director of Simulation, in collaboration with Directors, will continue the development of a SIM Learning program, across all academic programs (UG, MN, Doctoral) and in partnership with clinical placement partners, that includes a Human Resource plan, standard operating procedures, standardized templates for all SIM learning material, and mapping of SIM to curriculum Program Learning Outcomes. The Advancement Office will pursue opportunities for philanthropic support to upgrade capital components of the lab (e.g. mannequins, cameras, microphones, streaming capability).</p> <p>Leads: <i>Directors of UG with Associate Dean Academic, MN, Doctoral programs</i></p> <p>Expand Programs to UTM and UTSC (described in #4 medium term) – Program expansion will help build additional relationships with additional clinical placement partners in the Western and Eastern GTA, which will reach diverse communities.</p>

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				<p>Leads: <i>Dean with Associate Dean Academic, Directors of UG, MN, Doctoral programs</i></p> <p>Short Term (6 months – 1 year) Investment in Faculty Development Activities – we will continue our tradition of investing in faculty by allocating resources in targeted topic-specific programming (e.g. Generative AI in Teaching/Learning, Civil Discourse [Randy Boyagoda is attending our October Faculty meeting]); Sponsoring faculty to attend programs such as the ACUE Effective Teaching Practices Course, the NCFDD Faculty Success, Post-Tenure Pathfinders, and Teaching Toolkit Programs, Education Scholars and NEAL programs with the Centre for Faculty Development, CACHE's Collaborative Change Leadership Program; Orientation sessions each term for new faculty and sessional instructors; Establishing mentorship teams (teaching and scholarship) for new tenure stream and teaching stream faculty. Lead: <i>Associate Dean Academic</i></p> <p>Hire Additional Sessional Instructors & Teaching Stream Faculty - As we have begun the 2024-25 Academic year slightly over (n=239 students, expecting some will withdraw by Nov 1st) our UG target (n=231 in a continued seat expansion), the Dean has hired an additional sessional teaching faculty member for 2024-25 to share the teaching of some of the large first year courses. The additional teaching complement is aimed at strengthening instructors' capacity to connect with students and conduct meaningful evaluations of student learning outcomes, identify students' learning successes and challenges, and work with students who require accommodations. We will seek to hire an additional two Teaching Stream faculty members to start in the 2025-26 academic year. Lead: <i>Dean with Associate Dean Academic, Directors of UG, MN, Doctoral programs</i></p> <p>Short, Medium, Long Term (6 months – 3 years) Explore Moving 30 BScN Seats from UTSG to UTM – We will re-ignite discussions (begun 2023) related to moving 30 seats from UTSG for a cohort of BScN students at UTM, for enrollment in Fall 2026. Curriculum across sites would remain the same but instruction would be a combination of in person instruction at UTM and broadcasting instruction from UTSG. Clinical</p>
	3	“As enrollment increases, it will be important to monitor the program outcomes, course and instructor evaluations, and the NCLEX-RN first time pass rates to ensure program quality remains strong. Additional resources related to student support, tutoring, and faculty development may be needed in order to maintain outcomes.”	We will continue to monitor quality indicators, as is the regular practice in the Faculty. We recognize that our faculty members are experiencing increased demands for their time and attention related to many factors, including the impact of artificial intelligence on teaching and learning, increased student enrollment via seat expansion in some programs, our efforts to bolster a culture of civil discourse, and meeting the needs of a growing number of student accommodation needs. We are also keenly aware that increased enrollment can have an impact on our students and the quality of expanding programs. While there is minimal interest in offering BScN courses online, we are open to broadcasting instruction to UTM and UTSC. We see program expansion as a strong, viable option for addressing the challenges of enrollment growth and securing additional clinical placement spots. We also have a very low course failure rate, so we do not see the need for adding additional formal assessments (which would be unduly burdensome for our difficult to	
	4	“As the enrollment increases, it will be important to ensure classroom, clinical, and simulation experience are coordinated and mapped according to student level and learning outcomes. One area of opportunity is to incorporate online courses throughout the BScN program to (1) expose the learner to this innovative teaching modality, (2) ease the burden on the physical facility, (3) promote a more flexible learning environment for both students and faculty, and (4) provide opportunities for continued learning if students are ill and cannot attend class in person.”		
	5	“One recommendation is to require a written formative assessment at mid-term to ensure students are progressing and on-schedule to meet clinical objectives.”		

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			recruit clinical instructors and preceptors), but we do recognize that specific students may need additional support and accordingly, will continue to invest in support (e.g. faculty member assigned a portion of their FTE in support of students who require remediation or accommodation) for faculty and students who require additional support in the clinical learning environment.	placements would be focused in the Western GTA with Trillium Health Partners as the flagship clinical placement site. Leads: <i>Dean with Associate Dean Academic</i> Collaborate on a Combined Degree Program with UTSC - Re-ignite discussions (begun 2023) related to a Combined Degree Program with the Human Biology program at UTSC and the UTSC BScN program to promote interest in and provide a pathway and tailored preparation of students for our second entry BScN program. Once the NP program is running at UTSC/SAMIIH (Fall 2026), 30 BScN seats could move to UTSC (Fall 2027) to further decrease pressures on the UTSG classroom and clinical placement environment. Leads: <i>Dean with Associate Dean Academic</i>
The reviewers made recommendations for ways to enhance the MN program to better prepare students for professional advancement whether focused on research, clinical practice, or health systems leadership.	6	“The inclusion of a small research project, or another activity designed to increase research competencies, could be useful for graduates who transition to a PhD program. In addition or alternatively, the MN (all options) capstone course could be redeveloped to ease the transition of graduates into a doctoral program.”	We see opportunities to integrate more research and leadership development into the MN program. Both the Rosenstadt Research Development Program and the Canadian College of Health Leaders (CCHL) LEADS certification provide these opportunities for specific groups of MN students, but we believe there is value in expanding these opportunities by better integrating research and leadership knowledge and skills into the three fields of the MN program.	Short Term (6 months – 1 year) Provide Sessional Instructor Orientation Sessions - The Associate Dean Academic and the MN Program Director have recently begun to provide an orientation for Sessional Instructors at the start of each term. This orientation informs instructors of the teaching and learning supports offered (e.g. Instructional Technology assistance in the Faculty of Nursing, CTSI courses, collaboration with other faculty, etc.) and of the information contained in our Graduate Teaching Guidelines. These sessions were introduced in the last academic year to help make course delivery and instruction more consistent, align with academic policies, and to address concerns related to updated course materials and assignment due date conflicts (a master assignment due date calendar available to all course instructors has been introduced to limit this). To support instructor capacity in educational technology (e.g., updating virtual lectures, etc.) our educational technology specialist will be attending each MN program meeting to provide resources and updates. Lead: <i>Associate Dean Academic with Director of MN programs</i> Short – Medium Term (6 months – 2 years)
	7	“There is an option to fast-track exceptional MN students into the PhD in nursing program, and this option could be used more frequently. A thesis option could be offered, particularly for students who faculty members identify as able to transition to the PhD program prior to completing their MN degree.”	The Director, Doctoral Programs reaches out to instructors in the MN program for a list of top students, students who have indicated an interest in doctoral studies, and	

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	8	"The HSLA [Field in Health Systems Leadership and Administration] could include a focus on systems design and executive leadership."	<p>students who have current experience in research, to personally invite them to meet to learn more about applying to the PhD program in the future. MN students are eligible to transfer to the PhD program, but historically, only a small percentage of Year 1 MN students opt for this route to the PhD.</p> <p>Given the multiple family and financial demands on NP students, we do not feel it is reasonable to insist that students be forced into taking on remote clinical placements that would limit their ability to maintain their local employment and look after their dependents, and require additional costs for travel and accommodation.</p>	<p>Strengthen the Integration of Research and Leadership in the MN Program – We will re-examine the MN curricula with an eye to strengthening the integration of research and leadership in across all field of studies to better support moving students into PhD or DN studies. Possible foci will be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review curriculum to determine the best way to integrate the CCHL LEADS and other relevant leadership frameworks into the MN-Clinical and MN-NP field of study courses. • Consider specific content areas of research and leadership that need bolstering in the MN curricula (e.g. technology and AI in health care, design/systems thinking, integrated care, collaborator as a research team member). • Disseminate external research/scholarly (e.g. scientific conferences) and leadership professional development opportunities (e.g. leadership training) via a faculty supported Quercus site available to all MN students. • Explore if the Program Planning and Evaluation course taken in the penultimate term could be better leveraged as a lead-in to the final practicum for students who are interested in evaluation, quality assurance or quality improvement research; and • Evaluate ways to incorporate research opportunities in the final practicum for the MN-HSLA and MN-Clinical fields. The final practicum involves the completion of a scholarly project in advanced nursing practice (160 hours of practicum). Projects could be expanded to include clinically and leadership focused research with preceptors that engage in research as part of their role. • Establish a system for matching MN students with research mentors or funded research opportunities early in their program, to build research skills, experience, and a network of research colleagues that will facilitate transition into doctoral studies. Opportunities include the programs of research of our own faculty members as well as leveraging our significant adjunct faculty numbers.
	9	"... given the challenges in finding preceptors for NP students, the regulations for this program could state that students may be required to do a block clinical experience in a different region of the province, and if they are unable to do this, their progress in the program may be delayed."		
	10	"...students [have said] that some of their pre-recorded NP lectures needed updating, and that due dates for assignments in the MN program could be coordinated, especially given they only take two courses in a semester."		

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				Leads: <i>Director of MN Program with Associate Dean Academic, Director of Doctoral Programs</i>
The reviewers suggested reconsidering the focus of the DN thesis project to be based on "excellence in practice" with a focus on developing expertise in areas such as policy development and analysis, transformational changes in clinical practice, and educational scholarship; they also observed that students in the Education focus of the DN program require instruction from faculty with expertise in pedagogy.	11	"There is also an opportunity to reconsider the focus of the research project/thesis to that of 'excellence in practice', with a focus on developing expertise in policy development and analysis, transformational changes in clinical practice, and educational scholarship (for example)."	The DN program is in its infancy, with many opportunities for enhancement. The focus on excellence in practice suggested by the reviewers is, indeed, the focus of the DN thesis project, but we agree that expanding our network of committee members on DN committees could broaden and deepen the expertise available to our DN students. Currently, our DN students are primarily interacting with members of their cohort and Bloomberg Nursing faculty members. Facilitating increased connections and collaborations with academics in other faculties and nurse leaders in the field would be mutually beneficial, given that our DN students seek to address pressing practice, leadership and educational issues through their thesis work, and these connections would extend the knowledge base and expertise available to the DN students beyond that of our faculty members.	<p>Short Term (6 months – 1 year) Facilitate Connections to Expand DN Research Opportunities - The Dean and faculty members teaching in the DN program will facilitate connections between clinical partners and research institutes and our DN students to expand research opportunities. For example, in meetings with the Dean and our TASHN partners there was interest in engaging with centres that focus on practice-based research and innovation (e.g. QI/QA/evaluation projects), the Wilson Centre could be engaged for projects that undertake educational research for health professions, and CQuIPS and IHPME faculty could be better engaged. In addition, we plan on inviting our Adjunct Faculty who hold senior and executive nursing leadership positions to help further refine course content and to lecture in DN courses to better integrate a broad range of professional expertise into our curriculum. Leads: <i>Dean with Associate Dean Academic, Doctoral Programs Director</i></p> <p>Consult with Johns Hopkins University - The Bloomberg Nursing DN program was modeled after the DNP (Doctor of Nursing Practice) program at Johns Hopkins University. We will continue to consult with colleagues at Johns Hopkins to learn from their experiences with their own DNP program. This information will help inform mid to long term plans for our DN program. In the DN seminar in Year 2, learners are supported in the development of their projects with a specific focus on practice-based research and the use of examples from the Johns Hopkins DNP program online repository of projects. Lead: <i>Director, Doctoral Programs</i></p> <p>Medium to Long Term (2 + years) Recruit DN Students for Teaching Stream Positions - The first cohort of DN students are graduating in November 2024. As the number of DN graduates who focused on educational leadership increases, the Faculty hopes to recruit strong candidates for Teaching Stream positions at Bloomberg Nursing. Lead: <i>Dean with Associate Dean Academic, Doctoral Programs Director</i></p>

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				<p>Collect DN Student Experience and Career Path Data - We will survey graduates to gather feedback on their experiences in the program and their career path following graduation to assess the quality and efficacy of the program. We will use the collective knowledge gained from the survey responses and consultations with Johns Hopkins University to inform future directions for the DN program.</p> <p>Lead: Director, Doctoral Programs</p>
<p>The reviewers recommended creating opportunities for PhD students to work as Teaching Assistants in a broad range of teaching, learning, and assessment activities, and suggested the creation of a teaching certificate to enhance PhD graduates' employability.</p>	12	<p>"[There is a] need to create opportunities for all PhD students to work as TAs in a broad range of teaching, learning and assessment activities and not just marking of assignments. The option for them to receive a 'Teaching Certificate' which would enhance their employability potential should be considered."</p>	<p>We consider TA assignments an opportunity for students' professional development and not simply a component of the PhD funding package. We take time to carefully consider TA assignments for our PhD students and aim to progress students through greater responsibilities with each assignment. We survey our PhD students and course instructors each year about TA opportunities and try to match PhD students with the respective TA opportunities course instructors are able to offer.</p> <p>Our aim is to provide structured professional development through the creation of a PhD Student Teaching Academy. The Academy will include 6 sessions on different teaching skills per academic year.</p>	<p>Short to Medium Term (6 months – 2 years)</p> <p>Create a PhD Student Teaching Academy - The Associate Dean Academic has just launched the <i>PhD Student Teaching Academy</i> for our PhD students. The Associate Dean Academic will assess PhD students' level of interest by tracking attendance and surveying the participants to determine the usefulness of each session – and the program as a whole. The Associate Dean Academic will continue to expand the programming to meet the evolving needs of PhD students as they progress through their program. The goal is for PhD students to attend the sessions each year for the full 4 years of their program. PhD students who develop strong teaching skills will be invited to take on increasing responsibility with course instruction. The goal is for more PhD students to serve as course instructors in the final years of their program.</p> <p>Leads: Associate Dean, Academic with Director, Doctoral Programs</p>
<p>Noting student comments regarding variability of supervision quality in the PhD program, the reviewers recommended exploring ways to monitor and ensure</p>	13	<p>"While the Faculty of Nursing PhD program follows best practices as directed by the graduate school, we would recommend explicit indicators being developed for the monitoring of the quality of supervision."</p>	<p>SGS regulations state that PhD students should have at least one supervisory committee meeting per year. Bloomberg Nursing has a long history of requiring 2 formally documented supervisory committee</p>	<p>Short Term (6 months – 1 year)</p> <p>Assess Doctoral Student Progress 2 Times/Year - For many years, the Dean, Associate Dean Academic, Director Doctoral Programs and the Registrar have met annually to review student progress for all students in the Doctoral Programs (40-50 students). In May 2024, it was decided these Doctoral Progress Review Meetings should be held twice a year to better identify and quickly address and provide supports to students and supervisors for any</p>

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consistent quality of supervision.			meetings per year. We also have a well-established practice of pairing pre-tenure Assistant Professors with a tenured faculty member who has successfully graduated doctoral students. The pairing helps new faculty members learn how navigate the responsibilities inherent with strong graduate student supervision and to be mentored in best practices. While our students have one of the shortest times to completion at UofT, and our supervision practices exceed SGS guidelines, there is always work that can be done to improve student experience.	concerns about a student's progress. This will allow timelier referral of students and faculty members to resources such as CTSI, Writing Centre, Centre for Graduate Supervision and Mentoring, etc. We will assess the impacts of assessing student progress every 6 months to determine if this will become established practice. Leads: Director, Doctoral Programs with Associate Dean Academic, Dean, Registrar
The reviewers noted comments from students regarding financial challenges due to the cost of living in Toronto and recommended exploring ways to provide additional support and resources.	14 15	"Notably, the cost of living in Toronto is relatively high when compared to other areas, which highlights the need to support the students with additional resources for housing and cost of living expenses." "The funding support model for international students should be given some attention."	As sources of government funding remain stagnant, or decrease, the financial demands on the Faculty and the cost of living for students are increasing. These demands are placing a greater financial strain on the Faculty and PhD students. In addition, there is significant variation in the internal and external financial supports available for our PhD students depending on their registration status (domestic or international), work opportunities, supervisor grant funding, competitiveness for awards, and personal financial resources. Specifically, international students	Short-term (6 months – 1 year) Establish a PhD Funding Working Group - The Dean will establish a PhD Funding Working Group that will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compile current information on funding amounts and sources to generate an overview report on PhD student funding; • compare Bloomberg Nursing funding practices with SGS best practices and practices of comparator single department Faculties; • evaluate financial need criteria; • use the information collected to assess and evaluate ways to more effectively leverage funding sources and practices to respond to the base funding amount increase to \$40K inclusive of tuition; and • develop recommendations to make an informed decision on ways to equitably improve PhD student funding amounts and practices. Leads: Dean with Associate Dean Research, Associate Dean Academic, Director of Doctoral programs, CAO, and the Working Group

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			struggle to find additional funding resources outside of the funding package due to work restrictions and lack of eligibility for many internal and external scholarships. In addition, PhD students at Bloomberg Nursing are often mature students managing mortgages and child/elder care expenses, and as practicing RNs or NPs, usually wish to maintain active practice given registration requirements and links between practice and research.	<p>Prioritize Opportunities to Secure Philanthropic Support for PhD Students - The Dean and the Director of Advancement will explore ways to leverage existing endowment funds and will work with alumni and donors as opportunities arise to secure additional financial support for PhD students, leveraging existing matching programs as well as Divisional reserves for matching purposes. Leads: <i>Director of Advancement with Dean</i></p> <p>Medium-Term (1 – 2 years) Update PhD Funding Amounts, Policies and Practices - We will use the recommendations from the PhD Funding Working Group to determine the composition and amount of base funding for PhD students, and update funding policies and best practices. Leads: <i>Dean with Associate Dean Research, Associate Dean Academic, Director of Doctoral programs, CAO</i></p>
The reviewers made several recommendations aimed at enhancing support for early career researchers, including the development of mentoring and research leadership programs.	16	<p>“We would recommend the Faculty explores the development of capacity and capability building programs, specifically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An ECR mentoring program that enables the systematic (leadership) development of ECRs into independent researchers. 2. Development of KPIs for tenured faculty with no research income to enable them to grow a funded program of research or focus their role on other aspects of academic activity (such as education and administration); 3. A ‘research leadership development program’ for existing faculty and for 	Our new tenure stream faculty members are matched with a senior faculty member mentor to provide advice related to developing a program of research on the journey to tenure and are also encouraged to seek consultation with any faculty members regarding issues. In addition, the Dean, Associate Dean, Research and Associate Dean, Academic meet with new faculty members regularly to guide and mentor them on the tenure process, funding a program of research, and developing their teaching portfolio. Extensive administrative support is provided in both the pre-and post-award period to ensure that faculty members have administrative support for the identification, development, submission, and	<p>While the reviewers only highlighted this need for tenure-stream faculty, we feel all of these initiatives would be a valuable approach and should be implemented for teaching-stream faculty as well.</p> <p>Short Term (6 months – 1 year) Identify & Formalize Helpful Processes Within ECR Mentoring – We will survey current faculty to determine helpful processes to be formalized within our current ECR mentoring, e.g. consider formal meetings with the Dean, Associate Dean Academic, and Associate Dean Research twice per year with a spring meeting to receive feedback following submission of the annual activity report, and a fall meeting to review progress, plans for grant and award submission, and research/scholarly outputs through the year. Leads: <i>Dean with Associate Dean Research, Associate Dean Academic</i></p> <p>Establish an Internal Peer Review Process - Establishing an internal voluntary peer review process so that ECRs (and other faculty if desired) could have feedback on their grant protocols from faculty members prior to submission to funding agencies. This would be in addition to the administrative and editorial reviews that are already available to all faculty members submitting grants. Again, although the reviewers only focused on tenure-stream faculty, we feel</p>

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		<p>research administrators, to ensure a clear plan is in place for ongoing research leadership and management in the Faculty. “</p>	<p>management of research grants. A full-time biostatistician is available for grant development and statistical analyses. New tenure stream faculty receive start-up grants to support the development of their research programs and are encouraged to attend orientation events and ongoing faculty development workshops, including those offered by the Centre for Research and Innovation Support (CRIS) at UofT.</p>	<p>this could be a valuable approach in encouraging and supporting applications by teaching-stream faculty to funding for scholarship of teaching and learning. Leads: Associate Dean Research with Associate Dean Academic</p> <p>Invest in Faculty Development Activities – We will continue our tradition of investing in faculty by allocating resources in targeted Faculty Development activities such as the NEAL program and the and the Centre for Research Innovation and Support (CRIS) Research Leadership Academy. Leads: Dean with CAO, Associate Dean Research, Associate Dean Academic</p> <p>Develop Mechanisms to Better Aid in the Establishment of Collaborations with internal (e.g. Collaborative Centre for Climate, Health, and Sustainable Care, Inlight-Student Mental Health Research ISI, and our newly re-established connection to Toronto Addis Ababa Academic Collaboration) and external groups (e.g. researchers at TAHSN agencies), particularly for ECRs who are establishing their networks, but also for established faculty members and senior faculty members new to Bloomberg Nursing, and for teaching-stream faculty who wish to establish connections for their scholarship activities. Possible activities include expanding the reach of the biannual research report, creating one-page summaries of faculty research/scholarship interests and projects for wide distribution, and establishing “project sharing” events to connect researchers along areas of interests. Leads: Associate Dean Research with Dean, Associate Dean, Academic</p>
<p>The reviewers noted a number of faculty concerns related to workload, including doctoral supervision commitments, securing adequate TA support, and limited administrative support for grant processes, as well as a “perceived divide” between tenure stream and teaching stream faculty regarding imbalances in their workloads and opportunities</p>	17	<p>“The Faculty of Nursing should consider developing a teaching equivalencies document that assigns weights to courses and graduate students that align with the associated workload.”</p>	<p>Bloomberg Nursing revised and approved a Unit Workload Policy in May 2023, and it became effective in July 2023. The document describes the workload parameters for teaching and service activities for several types of academic appointments at Bloomberg Nursing. There are roles that were not accounted for that are now counted as service activities (MN field lead teachers, UG IPE Coordinator). In</p>	<p>Short Term (6 months – 1 year) Organize Broad Consultations to Inform Workload Policies and Practices - To increase transparency and better understand concerns regarding workload, the Dean will meet with Faculty program committees to discuss workload, PTR, and promotion and to hear questions/concerns around workload. The Dean will also form a working group to look at annual activity reports to make them more informative for annual PTR activities and to capture activities undertaken by faculty members with a broader and more comprehensive understanding of scholarship foci and impact (e.g. social, economic, environmental, policy, technological, etc). The Dean will also consult with the Deans of other faculties and with the Office of the Vice Provost Faculty and Academic Life to learn more about workload practices at other Faculties.</p>
	18	<p>“The intentionality of directors and faculty members in accommodating students brings an increase in director/faculty workload, which should be monitored and recognized.”</p>		

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for professional development. They recommended that the Faculty explore ways of monitoring and balancing faculty workloads, including consideration of a process to assign weighted values to certain teaching and supervision activities.	20	“...if the [DN] education focus continues, there is a need for faculty with pedagogical expertise to be available to students. Given the workload associated with the DN program, there is a need to consider increasing resources available, so that the program does not negatively impact on overall workload of faculty.”	addition, an instructor was hired to help relieve teaching demands with larger class sizes in the BScN program. It is clear that there are numerous concerns related to workload. Some of these may be addressed through increased transparency around workload decisions, while other concerns will require review and reflection.	<p>Lead: <i>Dean</i></p> <p>Enhance Communications About Workload and Professional Accomplishments - To help address the “perceived divide” between tenure stream and teaching stream the Dean will enhance internal and external communications about workload and the ‘value’ of work. For example, the Faculty and Student Newsletter and the Alumni Newsletter that have historically highlighted research will now also highlight teaching and learning accomplishments and innovations to further elevate the importance of teaching and learning at our Faculty. Consultations and planning around the next Bloomberg Nursing Research Report may be centered around the idea of creating a Faculty report that includes research as well as faculty contributions to innovations in teaching and learning and practice.</p> <p>Leads: <i>Dean with Associate Dean, Academic, CAO, Senior Communications and Media Relations Officer</i></p> <p>Medium to Long Term (1 – 2+ years)</p> <p>Improve Workload Processes and Resource Utilization - The Dean will utilize learnings from consultations and draw upon the themes from the Nursing Retention Toolkit to inform workload policies and models for flexible work. The Dean and CAO will also develop a more comprehensive onboarding process for new faculty members that will include information about workload, PTR and promotion. In addition, the Faculty will better utilize Adjunct Faculty and external researchers to expand pedagogical expertise and resources, with the goal of reducing workload pressures for faculty members (e.g. see Dean’s responses above related to SIM learning, expanding collaborations to contribute to DN learning, additional hiring).</p> <p>Leads: <i>Dean with Associate Dean, Academic, CAO</i></p>
	21	“Supervisors for PhD and DN programs do not receive a teaching weight for this work. If faculty were to receive a teaching weight for supervising doctoral students, and if 10 students are admitted to each of the PhD and the DN program each year, more courses will need to be assigned to faculty members in the teaching stream. This may lead to a need for more research and/or teaching stream faculty positions.”		
	22	“Examining the workload model for the teaching stream in particular should be considered, addressing such issues as course coordination, [increased] student enrollment, clinical coordination, assessment loading, space for scholarship, as well as serving on PhD, DN committees in the context of the overarching workload model.”		
	23	“The appointment of a PhD prepared SIM Director would also enhance the overall quality of the education experience.”		

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<p>The reviewers observed that several administrative functions in the Faculty are “single person departments” which poses business continuity risks; they recommended cross-training of staff to assist with meeting operational requirements during unanticipated absences. They also recommended review of administrative staff needs in certain areas that have experienced recent increases in responsibility and workload.</p>	24	<p>“In our meetings with staff members and managers, we heard that an operational review that looked at job descriptions, and what was working and what wasn't working, was warranted. Cross-training of staff may assist in meeting operational requirements when a staff member is on leave or resigns before they can be replaced. As enrollment increases, it will be imperative to monitor the workload of the staff who are vitally important to the operations of the school.”</p>	<p>As a small, Single Department Faculty (SDF), we have the scope and structure of a Faculty, but with limited financial resources for adding staff. There is consensus that developing and/or documenting standard operating procedures and cross-training is essential to maintaining operations when staff are away or leave their position.</p>	<p>Short to Medium Term (6 months – 2 years) Improving Document Management, Workflow, Business Continuity Planning, and Resource Sharing - Numerous steps have been taken in the last 6 months to improve document management, workflow, business continuity planning, and resource sharing. The administrative staff formed a Records Management Project steering committee in spring of 2024 which will take a two phased approach to reviewing and cleaning up administrative records. Administrative leaders organized monthly meetings to cross communicate and are leading an initiative to develop/document essential processes and procedures. The CAO is finalizing a Business Continuity Plan for the Faculty and following an internal audit of data assets, the Director of IT has created a disaster recovery plan for technology and a cyber security incident response plan.</p> <p>To address workflow challenges, the Assistant Dean Registrar restructured student services, hired one new staff member and realigned the workload for the team. The CAO and the Director of Clinical Education are engaging in a workflow analysis of the Clinical Education Office. To address workflow challenges, the Director of Advancement restructured the Advancement Office, hired one new permanent staff member, hired one new temporary staff member, instituted process documentation, and realigned the workload of the Advancement Office including leveraging shared divisional and institutional resources to meet Advancement needs.</p> <p>We are also engaging in opportunities to share resources. We are sharing a security consultant with another SDF and we are working with central offices and other SDFs to develop central systems that would improve workflow for Teaching Assistant Administration across UofT. Another opportunity for potential shared resources include communications roles/resources.</p> <p>Leads: CAO with Administrative Directors, Registrar</p>
<p>The reviewers made several observations related to the Faculty's long-term and strategic plans, including addressing challenges posed by enrollment growth in a</p>	25	<p>“The review panel recommends the need for the Faculty of Nursing to develop a clear sustainability plan as it faces the development of its new strategy, with a clear focus on</p>	<p>The Lawrence S Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing Strategic Academic Plan, <i>Shaping Tomorrow's Leaders Today</i> ran from 2017-2022. With a new Dean and the completion of the Provostial cyclical review, the Faculty</p>	<p>Short Term (6 months – 1 year) Hold Broad Consultations and Develop a 5 - year Strategic Academic Plan - Consulting with faculty, staff, students and academic and clinical partners regarding their willingness to engage in the Strategic Academic Planning process has been occurring via the Dean's onboarding and outreach meetings over the last six months. Academic units at UofT who have recently undergone</p>

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time of stagnant tuition, ensuring adequate resources for new initiatives, clarification of the role of the Centre for Professional Development, and developing a broader set of indicators of the Faculty's social impact.		maintaining, sustaining and further developing its global position.”	is preparing to develop the next strategic academic plan.	<p>Strategic Academic Planning will be consulted to gain insight into their recommendations of successful approaches. A consultant will be hired to work closely with the faculty leadership team to facilitate development of a Strategic Academic Plan for 2025-2030.</p> <p>Students, alumni, staff, faculty, adjunct faculty, academic partners, clinical partners, donors and members of the public will be engaged in development of Bloomberg Nursing's next Strategic Academic Plan, also ensuring alignment with U of T's mission and Provostial and Presidential priorities.</p> <p>Leads: <i>Dean with Associate Dean Academic, Associate Dean Research, CAO, Director of Advancement, Senior Communications and Media Relations Officer</i></p> <p>Medium Term (1-2 year) Disseminate the Bloomberg Nursing 5- year Strategic Academic Plan – Develop a communications strategy to broadly communicate the vision and plan for Bloomberg Nursing for the academic community, clinical partners, alumni and donors. Leads: <i>Senior Communications and Media Relations Officer with Dean, Associate Dean Academic, Associate Dean Research, CAO, Director of Advancement</i></p>
	26	“This delicate balance of tuition revenue and allocations needs to be continually monitored to ensure the school has the resources to operate and maintain the high standards. Enrollment growth in an environment of stagnant tuition poses a risk for long range planning and places additional challenges on the Advancement and Fundraising staff.”	The Faculty has an ambitious goal of raising \$35M during the Defy Gravity campaign. The Director of Advancement is working closely with the Dean on aligning Advancement Office staffing resources, strategic and operational plans, and approved funding priorities as well as assets across the Bloomberg Nursing community with the Dean's strategic priorities and initiatives including, but not limited to, those outlined throughout this document.	<p>Short-term (6 months – 1 year) Restructure and Expand the Advancement Office - The Director of Advancement recently restructured the Advancement Office, hired one new permanent staff member focused on strengthening the Faculty's donor pipeline, hired one new temporary staff member focused on developing the Office's process documentation and digital infrastructure, and realigned the workload of the Advancement Office including leveraging divisional and institutional shared resources. Lead: <i>Director of Advancement</i></p> <p>Deepen the Integration of Fundraising Programs and Portfolios -Continue to deepen the integration of fundraising programs and portfolios (annual gifts, leadership annual gifts, planned gifts, major gifts) to maximize fundraising efficiency and consolidate programmatic fundraising efforts in alignment with the approved funding priorities of undergraduate and graduate student</p>

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				<p>financial support. A volunteer advisory body, the Educating Nursing's Future Advisory Committee, has been established to bolster limited staffing resources in expanding fundraising outreach to the Bloomberg Nursing alumni community across fundraising programs and portfolios. Lead: Director of Advancement</p> <p>Explore the Creation of a Campaign Cabinet and Dean's Advisory Council - As the Faculty begins the strategic academic planning process, explore the creation of two volunteer advisory bodies, a Campaign Cabinet and Dean's Advisory Council, to provide consultation, feedback and advice to the Dean on fundraising and strategic priorities, respectively. The Campaign Cabinet would engage existing and prospective donors to advise on fundraising strategy (funding priorities and gift opportunities, cases for support, potential donors). The Advisory Council would engage members from a broad range of backgrounds to advise on the Faculty's strategic priorities and 5-year Strategic Academic Plan. Leads: Dean with Director of Advancement</p> <p>Medium-Term (1-2 years) Assess, Evaluate and Revise Approved Funding Priorities - Upon completion of the 5-year Strategic Academic Plan, launch the formal funding priorities assessment, evaluation, submission and approval process, to enable the alignment of Advancement Office activity with the new 5-year Strategic Academic Plan and initiatives outlined within. Lead: Director of Advancement with Dean</p> <p>Develop a Case for Support for each Approved Funding Priority – Upon the formal revision of the Faculty's approved funding priorities, develop a case for support for each approved funding priority, to enable the alignment of fundraising activity with the Faculty's approved funding priorities. Lead: Director of Advancement</p> <p>Strengthen Strategic Relationships with Donors and Alumni – Refine donor relations and alumni relations activities, with a focus on strengthening strategic relationships that result in new philanthropic support for approved funding</p>

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				<p>priorities. This may include strengthening relationships with Emeriti, Tenured and Adjunct Faculty, many of whom are Bloomberg Nursing alumni. Lead: <i>Director of Advancement</i></p> <p>Long-Term (3+ years) Begin Planning for the University's Next Fundraising Campaign – As the end of the Defy Gravity fundraising campaign draws near, develop a multi-year planning roadmap in anticipation of the University's next fundraising campaign. This may include planning for the next 5-year Strategic Academic Plan as well as assessment and evaluation of Defy Gravity campaign performance, approved funding priorities, cases for support, senior volunteer engagement opportunities (Campaign Cabinet, Dean's Advisory Council, Educating Nursing's Future Advisory Committee), alumni relations and donor relations activities, and Advancement Office staffing needs. Lead: <i>Director of Advancement with Dean</i></p>
	27	<p>"We believe that there are opportunities for the Faculty of Nursing to increase its interdisciplinarity through these [cognate Faculty] partnerships, by for example, increasing the number of courses available in the Faculty of Nursing that students from other Faculties could participate in."</p>	<p>Our courses are professionally based, so the courses and content will not be relevant for many students, but we are pursuing opportunities for program expansion to UTSC and UTM.</p>	<p>See the Dean's response to recommendations 3-5.</p>
	28	<p>"A strategic plan for this division [Centre for Professional Development Division] is being developed; financial modeling and clarifying CPD's mission and contributions to the Faculty will be important to that exercise."</p>	<p>The Centre for Professional Development has a long history of offering courses around advanced practice, clinical practice, leadership, and exam preparation and has high uptake among Nurse Practitioners. CPD also offers certificates that provide a new avenue for registered nurses and nurse practitioners to deepen their expertise in a specific area of professional or clinical practice and to advance their</p>	<p>Short-term (6 months – 1 year) Conduct a Comprehensive Review of CPD's Activities and Strategic Plan - The Director of the Centre for Professional Development has completed a comprehensive review of CPD and is now drafting a proposed strategic plan which will also contemplate budget modelling. In her meetings with Chief Nurses, the Dean also discussed ways the Faculty could respond to gaps created as the MN-NP field shifts from a specialty emphasis to generalist model (e.g. post graduate diplomas, CPD certificates to allow for specialization after the MN-NP degree). The Dean will review the proposed CPD strategic plan, assess the current market for programming, and consult with leaders within the Faculty and U of T to decide on the final strategic plan for CPD. Leads: <i>Dean with Director of the Centre for Professional Development</i></p>

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			careers. We need to consider the strategic plan for CPD as expenses for offering courses and certificates rise and the Faculty begins long-term strategic academic planning.	<p>Lead a Workflow Analysis of the Continuing Professional Development Office – Following the workflow analysis (September 2024) of the Clinical Education Office, we will turn to an analysis of CPD to identify opportunities for process improvement and ways to better utilize resources and build capacity in offering CPD courses and workshops.</p> <p>Lead: CAO with Dean, Director CPD</p>
	29	“... we note that ‘research impact’ is poorly articulated beyond publication and citation rates and it would be strategic for the Faculty to consider broader systematic assessment of research impact.”	The Research and Advancement Offices and the Senior Communications and Media Relations Officer regularly promote our research – and the impact of our research - to the public through news stories published campus wide, press releases, external media outreach, alumni engagement activities (including the annual Verna Huffman Splane Lecture and Nursing Week), Bloomberg Rounds, the Research Report, and through our social media. We recognize that more can be done to better articulate research impact and to consider broader and deeper indicators of research impact.	<p>Short-Term (6 months – 1 year) Examine, Explore and Capture Research Impact Activities - As noted in the Dean’s response to recommendation #22, the Dean will also form a working group to consider revisions to annual activity reports to make them more informative for: assessing annual PTR activities; and capturing activities with a broader and more comprehensive understanding of scholarship foci and impact (e.g. social, economic, global, environmental, policy, technological, etc). To inform the revisions and endeavours of the Working Group, a work study student will be engaged to examine definitions of research impact in higher education, including amongst health professions faculties.</p> <p>Lead: Dean</p> <p>Medium Term (1 – 2 years) Develop a Strategic Communications Plan to Amplify Social Impact of Research - Communications can consult/create a more formalized strategic communications plan that details how research and social impact is amplified and communicated to the public.</p> <p>Leads: Senior Communications and Media Relations Officer with Associate Dean Research with Dean, Director of Advancement</p>
	30	“... we would encourage the Faculty to consider broader and deeper indicators of social impact. Examples could focus on developing a process for assessing the impact of research at individual, community and societal levels and within a global perspective; evaluations of NGO impacts that are informed by Bloomberg Nursing research, engagement with Sigma Global in outreach programs etc.”		
Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response	31	“We acknowledge that the PhD program is an ‘in-person’ delivery model. Currently a hybrid option is not available to students and instead, students who miss class are encouraged to connect with the faculty member or student peer to gain access to notes and study	We have designed our PhD program to foster the development of a learning community amongst students. We facilitate opportunities for our PhD students to connect with their own cohort and across the years of the program as a sources of peer support and learning. We	

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Narrative	Dean's Response
		materials. We would recommend that hybrid options are made available to PhD students as situations arise."	believe that adding a hybrid option to a component of the program that brings students together would be counter to our goals and not beneficial to our students. Our PhD students have a close working relationship with each other, and with our faculty members. As such, it is not difficult for students to access notes and study materials when they miss class(es). We are instead focused on opportunities for our students to connect with each other.	Leads: <i>Director of Doctoral Programs with Associate Dean Academic</i>
	32	"... the updated [BScN] POs and PLOs incorporate anti-discriminatory and culturally safe nursing practices, incorporating the recommendations from two groups: the Indigenous Health Nursing Working Group and the Black Health Equity Working Group. While this is to be commended, the reviewers suggest building upon this strong foundation and further incorporating the voices of other diverse communities, especially those of the LGBTQ2S+."	While our Faculty has a strong – and notable - foundation of creating a supportive, equitable and inclusive environments in our administrative, academic and clinical settings, we believe there is always more work that can be done.	Short Term (6 months – 1 year) Form an EDIA Working Group - In the fall of 2024, the Dean is striking an EDIA Working Group in inform ways to better integrate EDIA principles throughout our educational and administrative work and within our clinical partnerships. The recommendations of the EDIA WG will inform decision making, programs and curricula, the development of the 5 - year Strategic Academic Plan, and the revision of our Faculty Constitution and By-Laws. Lead: <i>Dean</i>

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 as showing consistent leadership in Canadian nursing, engaging in high-quality research, and offering programs that are valued by both graduates and employers. They highlighted the Faculty's substantial work in the areas of equity, diversity, and inclusion, including the establishment of the Indigenous Health Nursing Working Group and the Black Health Equity Working Group to provide curricular recommendations and promote health equity, cultural safety, anti-racism, and social justice across all programs. They commended the innovative teaching practices used across programs including simulation, flipped classrooms, and student learning pods. They praised the faculty's strengths in research and observed that many faculty members are "global leaders in their research areas, contributing to the generation of new knowledge that informs clinical practice, nursing education, and health policy in Canada and around the world." Finally, the reviewers applauded the Faculty of Nursing's strong relationships with other Faculties and units across the University, as well as its strong domestic and international partnerships, most notably with the Toronto Academic Health Sciences Network. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: enhancing simulation experiences in the BScN program; enhancing the research competencies of master's students interested in pursuing doctoral education and facilitating their transition into doctoral programs; reconsidering the focus of the DN thesis project to be based on "excellence in practice" with a focus on developing expertise in certain areas; providing instruction from faculty with pedagogical experience for students in the Education focus of the DN program; creating opportunities for PhD students to work as Teaching Assistants in a broad range of teaching, learning, and assessment activities; exploring ways to provide additional support and resources for students facing financial challenges due to the cost of living in Toronto; exploring ways to monitor and ensure consistent quality of supervision in the PhD program; enhancing support for early career researchers; exploring ways of monitoring and balancing faculty workloads; considering cross-training staff to assist with meeting operational requirements during unanticipated absences; reviewing administrative staff needs in certain areas that have experienced recent increases in responsibility and workload; and undertaking long-term strategic planning to address challenges including enrollment growth in a time of stagnant tuition, ensuring adequate resources for new initiatives, clarification of the role of the Centre for Professional Development, and developing a broader set of indicators of the Faculty's social impact. The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty's 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 January 2024.

6 Distribution

On July 15th 2025, 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 Lawrence Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to unit/program leadership.

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

1 Review Summary

Program(s) Reviewed:	<p><u>Undergraduate Programs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cell & Molecular Biology (HBSc): Specialist, Major <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Foci (<i>available for both the Specialist and Major</i>): Molecular Networks of the Cell; Plant Genomics and Biotechnology; Stem Cells and Developmental Biology • Bioinformatics and Computational Biology (HBSc): Specialist • Animal Physiology (HBSc): Major • Genome Biology (HBSc): Major <p><u>Graduate Programs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cell & Systems Biology: MSc, PhD
Unit Reviewed:	Department of Cell & Systems Biology
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martha S. Cyert, Dr. Nancy Chang Professor of Biology & Chair, Department of Biology, Stanford University • Anja Geitmann, Dean, Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences & Professor, Department of Plant Science, McGill University • Andrew Simmonds, Professor and Chair, Department of Cell Biology, University of Alberta
Date of Review Visit:	February 12-13, 2024
Review Report Received by VPAP:	April 15, 2024
Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:	September 12, 2024
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 22, 2024

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: November 5-6, 2015

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- Strong modern undergraduate curriculum, which serves both CSB's students and many students from other life sciences programs
- Innovative technology-based undergraduate teaching methods and course design, including online and digital learning and use of the inverted classroom
- Undergraduate students' high satisfaction with the programs offered and their value for career development
- Well-run graduate programs that offer high quality research and preparation for both academic and alternative scientific careers
- Research programs are productive, forward-looking, and cutting edge
- CSB's status as a vigorous, healthy unit that is a clear asset to the Faculty and the University

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Enhancing aspects of the undergraduate curriculum, including adding statistics courses, more lab courses, and an introductory course
- Addressing graduate students' desire for a more uniform approach to Ph.D. exams and Master's theses
- Considering the gap between years of funding and average times to completion for graduate students
- Engaging in better advising and support for undergraduate students
- Taking a more strategic approach to complement planning, including improving relationships between subgroups and strengthening the "Systems" area of Cell and Systems Biology
- Investigating space and other solutions for integrating faculty currently located in two different buildings, to support programs, research and communication

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

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

Consultation Process

Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Interim Associate Dean, Unit-Level Reviews, Faculty of Arts & Science; Department Chair; Research and administrative leadership; Educational leadership;

Technical staff; Administrative staff; undergraduate and graduate students, Faculty (Developmental Biologists, Neuro-Biologists; Plant Biologists); Junior faculty; Teaching Stream faculty; Tri-Campus graduate faculty; Project supervisors; Chairs of cognate units & divisions.

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
 - ▶ Undergraduate and graduate programs appear to be in high demand, “supported by an excellent cohort of faculty ranging from those primarily focused on teaching, to research focused faculty”
- Objectives
 - ▶ Staff and students express there is strong support for the academic mission of the Department
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ The Department’s research and training expertise encompasses a diverse group of disciplines including both plant and animal biology, and a relatively new program in Bioinformatics and Computational Biology
 - ▶ Reviewers acknowledge the challenge of delivering a quality lab-based experience given the number of students in the Department, and commend the unit for doing so successfully
 - ▶ Undergraduate programs benefit from “having teaching stream faculty who are dedicated to continuously improving and innovating the pedagogy, for example development of the TeamUP app to support active learning and provide learning communities for first and second year students and development of ‘chat bots’ to answer student questions”
- Innovation
 - ▶ Reviewers remarked on innovations in pedagogy, including “the clever use of AI tools which has led to increased student engagement”
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Appears to be strong support mechanisms for students through the TeamUP app and organized learning communities
 - ▶ The Department is engaging in ongoing research to identify ‘at risk’ students early in their courses to develop interventions to support student success
 - ▶ The undergraduate student union provides supports for students by hosting resume writing events, research events and organizing a mentoring program
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ Bioinformatics and Computational Biology students are described as “an elite group of highly skilled and motivated research-oriented students”

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ “The greatest challenge for the Department, which was also noted in the previous review from 2015, is to provide sufficient access to independent study and research opportunities to [undergraduate] students”
 - ▶ Reviewers were informed that the large number of prerequisites for the various undergraduate programs results in a certain degree of complexity in communicating academic changes to students
 - ▶ Some students commented that the “400-level courses in the focus program seem to vary, with some relying excessively on seminar style course delivery, which is mostly student led, sometimes with minimal faculty engagement”
 - ▶ Students in the Bioinformatics and Computational Biology specialization experience difficulty gaining access to all required courses. “Specifically, as members of an interdepartmental program, they are not given priority to enroll in these courses which are departmentally based”
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Reviewers noted that a relatively small number of undergraduate students are able to gain access to third and fourth year experiential courses; moreover, it was unclear if first generation or low-income students had sufficient support to learn and take part in these opportunities
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ The undergraduate student union expressed a desire for “a more suitable space than the one that is currently offered to them”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Develop ‘how to’ guides for incoming students accessible both in person and online to clarify the various pathways within CSB programs
 - ▶ Once admitted, provide students with additional program-specific information on available resources and processes
 - ▶ Encourage instructors to provide reminders on upcoming application deadlines for programs and upper-level courses, including independent study opportunities
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Assess “the ability of students with different demographics and preparation levels to access research-based independent study courses as well as the selective focus programs in CSB. If inequity is identified, the Faculty of Arts and Science might consider working with CSB to develop programming that extends support beyond the initial Arrive Ready to Study (AR) summer transition program”
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Reviewers encourage developing robust methods of outreach and student communication given the large size of the undergraduate community

2. Graduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ The Department's graduate programs appear to be in high demand and are supported by excellent faculty
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Students are appreciative of the flexibility built into the current graduate curriculum, with relatively few required courses
- Quality indicators – faculty
 - ▶ “The research faculty support a strong graduate program, spread over two buildings at the St. George campus as well as at UTM and UTSC sites”

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Reviewers note that currently there is no requirement for graduate students to take a course that “supports research rigor and reproducibility, i.e. experimental design, interpretation, and data analysis. Nor are students required to take a course in research ethics and scientific integrity”
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Graduate students expressed a desire for improved TA-ship training as current opportunities appear to vary and are course dependent
 - ▶ Reviewers were informed of several issues surrounding TA-ship assignments and a perceived lack of clarity on how course assignments are made
 - ▶ Graduate students “reported a lack of formalized support for career development and planning activities. Currently support varies greatly across faculty members”
 - ▶ “There do not seem to exist many opportunities for the graduate students from the three campuses or even the two St. George campus buildings to interact”
- Student funding
 - ▶ Reviewers commented on the high cost of living in Toronto; “recently increased stipend levels for graduate students do not meet the needs”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Consider introducing required training in best practices for scientific design and data analysis as well as training in scientific integrity and research ethics
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Reviewers encourage initiating basic training to support teaching duties for graduate students and grant/fellowship writing training that could serve to build community across the three campuses

- ▶ Strengthen supports for preparation and submission of research fellowships by encouraging students to apply, organizing grant-writing workshops, and providing timely feedback following unsuccessful fellowship grants
- ▶ Introduce an annual requirement for advisors to meet with each of their trainees “to discuss career development issues”
- ▶ Increase transparency surrounding teaching assignments “and a mechanism to solicit and provide feedback addressing student concerns about assignments”

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ “Overall, the intellectual environment of the Department seems to be stimulating, and those faculty we met with indicated they could easily find collaborators both internally and externally”
- Research
 - ▶ Tenure-track faculty spoke positively of strong research support within the department that sets new and senior tenure-track faculty up for success
 - ▶ “The internal grant review process set up by the Associate Chair Research appears to be a resounding success, evident not only from the comments by [tenure-track faculty] but also from the absolute funding success data”
 - ▶ “The fact that all [tenure-track] staff have tri-council funding is truly extraordinary and reflects not only on the quality of the researchers but also the support system.”
 - ▶ The Department’s core facilities are a benefit to researchers across the Faculty, as is the case with the genomic core facility that provides crucial services to many units
- Faculty
 - ▶ Pre-tenure faculty feel supported by the Department and expressed “great appreciation for the support they receive for grant writing, through the internal review process, as well as for the support they receive during the preparation of the tenure package”

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

- Research
 - ▶ With rising research costs in recent decades and minimal increases to Tri-council grants, some faculty expressed concerns over their ability to “conduct top-notch research under conditions of decreasing buying power”
 - ▶ “[Core research] facilities not easily accessible to researchers located in the other building, a situation to which there does not seem to be an easy solution”
 - ▶ Reviewers observed that many research instruments do not appear to be covered by service contracts which can lead to delays once repairs are necessary
 - ▶ “Lack of a plan for evergreening of the park of instruments is a concern”

- ▶ Perception that there isn't a great deal of central support concerning research data storage and security which poses a degree of vulnerability and potential for breaches to data security
- Faculty
 - ▶ Appears to be a lack of coherent structure in onboarding new faculty members
 - ▶ "Pre-tenure faculty expressed uncertainty about department structure and governance and did not fully understand how important policy decisions are made"
 - ▶ Wait times for lab renovations appear to be excessive, which impacts research programs; "One faculty member is still waiting for a facility that was promised to them in their hiring contract"
 - ▶ Junior faculty are challenged by the high cost of living in Toronto, particularly with concerns to housing
 - ▶ Faculty within the neurobiology discipline noted several concerns for maintaining "intellectual vibrancy within their field" due to administrative commitments amongst senior faculty and the loose neuroscience community that stretches across 16 academic units
 - ▶ Plant-microbe biologists reported challenges accessing some provincial funding streams by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) due to perceptions that "their urban campus-located research might not be relevant to agriculture"

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
 - ▶ Consider raising user fees for core facilities in order to cover service contracts for key instruments in the Imaging Facility
 - ▶ "To ensure evergreening of the microscopy suite of instruments in the Imaging Facility, the Department may wish to adopt an extremely systematic approach with regards to the planning of annual applications under the NSERC RTI program, and to leverage CFI funding opportunities"
 - ▶ Ensure a timely succession plan for the leadership of the Centre for the Analysis of Genome Evolution and Function, possibly by appointing an Assistant or Co-Director
 - ▶ Assess the infrastructure needs required "to provide secure and easy-to-access data storage for researchers"
- Faculty
 - ▶ Develop a consistent set of orientation materials for new tenure-stream and teaching stream faculty members and assign an official mentor
 - ▶ Schedule individual meetings between pre-tenure faculty and the Department Chair to provide consistent communication, mentoring, and discuss career progress
 - ▶ "To increase transparency and communication with pre-tenure faculty and create a mechanism to solicit their viewpoints, a pre-tenure faculty member could be appointed as a member of the executive committee for the Department"

4. Administration

Note: Issues that are addressed through specific University processes and therefore considered out of scope for UTQAP reviews (e.g., individual Human Resources issues, specific health and safety concerns) are routed to proper University offices to be addressed, and are therefore not included in the Review Summary component of the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Positive work environment within the Department
 - ▶ Staff “feel supported by the administration” with retention rates and overall satisfaction appearing to be high
 - ▶ “There is a sense of stability and confidence in the Departmental leadership team. The overall mood is decidedly upbeat creating an enviable environment for staff and students.”

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

- Relationships
 - ▶ The physical separation between the three campuses can pose a challenge to creating a sense of belonging to a common unit
 - ▶ Graduate support staff appear to have less of a connection to graduate students at UTM or UTSC since there are fewer opportunities to meet in person
 - ▶ Perception amongst some faculty members from UTM and UTSC of “being treated as ‘second class citizens’... do not seem to be consulted on decisions pertaining to the graduate program and secondly, the CSB web site structure seems to make it difficult to find academics located on the other campuses as potential supervisors”
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Several concerns raised over space since the Department is spread over two buildings at St. George campus; impacts the frequency of interactions between individuals as well as logistical challenges in accessing the imaging facility
 - ▶ “The principal sore points for many members of CSB seem to be related to building infrastructure and renovation. As is typical for many Canadian universities, individual labs are renovated using CFI funding when a new incumbent comes in. However, piecemeal renovations one lab at a time do not seem to be the most cost-efficient way to execute renovations in wet lab research buildings”
 - ▶ Reviewers were informed of a perceived disconnect between users and U of T Facilities & Services, “and a perceived lack of accountability when renovation progress does not advance as planned or when errors are made”
 - ▶ “For smaller upgrades and repairs, there seems to be a lack of transparency of how to get things done”
 - ▶ “New faculty members who get promised biosafety level lab facilities find that two years after hiring these renovations are still not done”

- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ While the undergraduate programs at UTM and UTSC appear to be growing rapidly, “it is not clear how this growth will be balanced with necessary increases to graduate student populations at these campuses to serve as TAs”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Reviewers encourage on campus events such as the annual research day to rotate across the three campuses or take place at an off-site location
 - ▶ Consider opportunities for graduate support staff to visit UTM and UTSC during the academic term to meet with graduate students in person
 - ▶ “Faculty members from UTM and UTSC need to be included in decision making pertaining to graduate studies and policies. For this purpose, regular faculty meetings should be held that include faculty from the other two campuses (once or twice a year)”
 - ▶ Review the functionality of the Department website “to ensure that researchers at UTM and UTSC are as straightforward to identify as those on the St. George campus”
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Establish processes to improve communication between department administration, users and Facilities & Services to support upgrades to infrastructure
 - ▶ Reviewers found that the Department “would benefit from enhanced support by the Dean’s office related to renovation and in general. This may also apply to other elements such as HR”
 - ▶ Reviewers encourage the Dean’s office to “make the tenure track hiring process more transparent by defining a clear process specifying how and when the unit can request positions, especially in situations where the incumbent is still in place, but succession planning seems critical”
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ “Members from all three campuses should engage with the Dean’s office on long term planning to ensure that sufficient TA capacity exists to support the full complement of [undergraduate] courses”



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

September 12, 2024

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

RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Cell & Systems Biology

Dear Prof. McCahan,

I write in response to your letter of June 27, 2024, regarding the March 12-13, 2024, UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Cell & Systems Biology and requesting our Administrative Responses. The following programs were reviewed: Cell & Molecular Biology (HBSc): Specialist, Major (Optional Foci: Molecular Networks of the Cell, Plant Genomics and Biotechnology, Stem Cells and Developmental Biology); Bioinformatics and Computational Biology (HBSc): Specialist; Animal Physiology (HBSc): Major; Genome Biology (HBSc): Major; Cell & Systems Biology: MSc; PhD.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers, Professor Martha S. Cyert, Stanford University, Professor Anja Geitmann, McGill University, and Professor Andrew Simmonds, University of Alberta, for their very comprehensive review of the Department. We would also like to thank the department chair and department leadership, faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study. We also wish to thank the many staff, students, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided thoughtful feedback. The UTQAP cyclical review process is an invaluable exercise that affords us the opportunity to take stock of our academic units and programs, to recognize achievement, and identify areas for improvement.

The review report was finalized on April 11, 2024, after which the department chair shared it widely with stakeholders in the Department. We are extremely pleased with the reviewers' positive assessment of the overall strength of the Department and its outstanding, productive faculty. The reviewers noted an excellent cohort of faculty, stimulating intellectual environment, strong demand for undergraduate and graduate programs, and strong funding success. The review report also raised several issues and challenges and identified areas for enhancement, including providing sufficient access to independent study and research opportunities and addressing complexity in communicating academic changes to undergraduate students, improving TA-ship

training for graduate students, improving graduate funding, addressing long wait times for lab renovations, and better structure in onboarding new faculty.

Each of these recommendations has been addressed in the attached Review Recommendations Table that outlines the unit's response, the Dean's response, and an Implementation Plan identifying action items and timelines for each recommendation. My Administrative Response and Implementation Plan was developed in consultation with the department chair and with the Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, and senior leadership within my office. The Implementation Plan provided identifies timeframes of immediate- (six months), medium- (one to two years), and longer- (three to five years) term actions and who (Faculty, Dean, unit) will take the lead in each area. I also identified any necessary changes in organization, policy, or governance where appropriate, as well as any resources, financial or otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.

The next UTQAP cyclical review of the Department will take place no later than the 2031-32 review cycle. My office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with program leadership and through the Department's five-year unit-level academic planning process, which will begin at the conclusion of the cyclical review. I also acknowledge that your office will request a brief Interim Monitoring Report midway between the March 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2031-32 to report on progress made on the Implementation Plan as outlined in the accompanying Review Recommendations Table.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to respond to the review report. The reviewers' comments and recommendations will help inform the future priorities of the Department of Cell & Systems Biology and its undergraduate and graduate programs.

Sincerely,



Antoinette Handley
Acting Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Professor, Department of Political Science

cc.

- Nicholas Provart, Chair, Department of Cell & Systems Biology, Faculty of Arts & Science
- Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science
- Caitlin Burton, Manager, Academic Change & Reviews, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
- Lachmi Singh, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
- Andrea Benoit, Academic Planning & Review Officer, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science

2023-24 UTQAP Review of the FAS Department of Cell and Systems Biology - Review Recommendations

Please do the following for each recommendation in the table:

- If you **intend** to act on a recommendation, please provide an **Implementation Plan** identifying actions to be taken, the time frame (short, medium, long term) for each, and who will take the lead in each area. If appropriate, please identify any necessary changes in organization, policy or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.
- If you **do not** intend to act on a recommendation, please briefly explain why the actions recommended have not been prioritized.
- In accordance with the UTQAP and Ontario's Quality Assurance Framework, "it is important to note that, while the external reviewers' report may include **commentary** on issues such as faculty complement and/or space requirements when related to the quality of the program under review, **recommendations** on these or any other elements that are within the purview of the university's internal budgetary decision-making processes must be tied directly to issues of program quality or sustainability" (emphasis added)
- You may wish to refer to the [sample table](#) provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Unit Response	Dean's Response
The reviewers observed some challenges for undergraduate students, particularly with regard to navigating program requirements and pathways, and accessing research opportunities. They recommended exploring opportunities to enhance advising, supports, and resources for the department's undergraduate population.	1	"To develop some clear 'how to' guides for incoming students that can be accessed both in person and also online (i.e. videos that can be watched on demand) to clarify the different pathways through the different CSB programs and focus areas offered. Once students are admitted to one of the focus area programs, there should be some follow-up providing additional information about processes and available resources."	We will implement a "getting-ready-for-BIO130H1" hands-on training session potentially for the Fall semester 2024 (by 2025 at the latest) for incoming 1 st year students. Each focus area already has regular learning community group meetings where students learn more about research and discuss potential career pathways with focus leaders and invited guest speakers. In addition, CSB students receive ongoing support and advice from peer mentors, a faculty advisor and a staff advisor through the first year and second year learning communities. CSB faculty, staff and students participate in the Program Exploration Day every year where students can learn more about program requirements, pathways, extra-curricular activities and potential careers. There are also videos available on the Program Showcase for students who cannot attend. CSB students are also encouraged to attend drop-in advising sessions and/or book advising appointments with staff throughout the year. Reminders are sent monthly through the CSB student	The Dean's office supports the Department's current activities for student advising and applauds the upcoming plans to strengthen those initiatives, especially the "getting ready for BIO130H1" sessions. The Dean's Office will connect the Department with the OFR/Student Success to explore other options, as well.

			<p>listserv and are also posted on the CSB UG Instagram page [↗]. In addition, through the CSBSU and BCBSA, students participate in a mentorship program, network and learn more about research opportunities and potential careers through guest speakers. We will continue to work with the CSBSU and BCBSA (undergraduate student unions) to provide information sessions on degree pathways, research opportunities, and career exploration.</p>	
2	<p>“It would be helpful to assess the ability of students with different demographics and preparation levels to access research-based independent study courses as well as the selective focus programs in CSB. If inequity is identified, the Faculty of Arts and Science might consider working with CSB to develop programming that extends support beyond the initial Arrive Ready to Study (AR) summer transition program that allows students to build essential study skills.”</p>	<p>It is not clear how we would be able to identify and reach out to such students and if we would be provided with extra resources to be able to do so. If FAS would be willing to help flag such students, that would be actionable. We have experience in supporting students from equity-deserving communities students, e.g. through the Pursue STEM and Leadership by Design programs that CSB has undertaken, as mentioned in our UTQAP self-study document. In addition, we reach out to all students to encourage self-identified Black and Indigenous students to apply for the NSERC Summer Research award through which they can engage in paid research in a CSB lab. We work with our UG student unions to plan and prepare for the Research Opportunities workshops</p>	<p>In the immediate term, the Dean’s office supports the department’s initiatives such as these and will also connect CSB with the Department of Psychology, which already has a similar initiative in place. In the medium-term, the Faculty is working on developing additional related initiatives to roll out on a larger scale. The Director, EDI /Office of EDI is working with the department on EDI-related initiatives.</p>	
3	<p>“To encourage instructors in introductory courses to provide brief reminders/explanations in class about upcoming application deadlines for programs and upper-level courses including research-based independent study opportunities. The instructors that currently engage in these practices are highly appreciated.”</p>	<p>We regularly provide slides to instructors for the diversity of experiential learning opportunities available to undergraduate students, such as those for work-study positions, CSB498Y courses, and summer research awards. Information sessions and experiential learning opportunities are publicized through different channels, including our CSB UG Instagram [↗], CSBSU Instagram [↗], BCBSA Instagram [↗], CSB email listserv and website [↗].</p>	<p>The Dean’s office acknowledges that the Department has indicated that it currently offers diverse ways to effectively communicate with students, both institutional and via social media, to ensure students are informed about various departmental deadlines for course enrolment and study opportunities.</p>	

<p>The reviewers broadly noted opportunities to strengthen structure, training, mentorship and supports to benefit the graduate program. They suggested that some areas of focus might include TA training and course matching processes; research training and supports; career development and planning supports; and encouraging greater interaction and community building among tri-campus graduate students.</p>	4	<p>“To institute required training for first year graduate students in several areas: 1) Basic training, support, and professional development in their teaching roles 2) Best practices for scientific design and data analysis. 3) Training in scientific integrity and research ethics. A common set of requirements would also provide an opportunity for incoming graduate students to build community and get to know students from all three campuses. 4) Training in grant/fellowship writing.”</p>	<p>We will be introducing a tailored TA mentorship program for BIO130H1/BIO230H1 TAs (more than 40 graduate students serve as TAs for these two courses). For other students, we will ensure that TAs attend the TATP sessions by instituting an attendance system.</p> <p>CSB’s associate chair graduate did not think it would be feasible to institute a common set of requirements given the diversity of research in CSB, although we have reached out to the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering (FASE) to study the feasibility of introducing a Research Ethics course (FASE offers JDE1000H, a 2-hour course) and we would consider offering a common stats course. We note that governance approval would be required if graduate program requirements change. To promote community, we held an informal “Meet the Labs” after graduate orientation last year, and this could be extended to students at all 3 campuses.</p> <p>Some CSB graduate courses offer training in grant/fellowship writing, but in the medium term we will look into offering support for this, similar to our successful internal NSERC/CHIR review panels for CSB faculty (although graduate students already have access to the University of Toronto’s Writing Centre). We will also engage with the CSBGU to solicit ideas on an ongoing basis for improvements to CSB graduate life.</p>	<p>In the medium-term, the Vice-Dean, Graduate Education and portfolio staff can support the Department if it chooses to develop a major modification to its graduate requirements to incorporate a Research Ethics or a Statistics course.</p> <p>For assistance with grant-writing in the immediate-term, the Department can ensure graduate students are aware of the services of the Director of Graduate Writing Support in the Faculty of Arts & Science. This office supports the academic, non-academic, and pedagogical development of graduate students in the Faculty of Arts & Science through a variety of faculty-wide and unit-specific activities. Services offered in this office include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops on specific genres (e.g. grant proposals, literature reviews), style (e.g. strategies for clear scholarly writing), and process (e.g. revision strategies). • Roundtables, featuring a small number of faculty and/or graduate-student panelists, discussing a given topic (e.g. “Publishing Your Work as a Graduate Student”). • Writing Groups, in which graduate students regularly share and offer feedback on work-in-progress. • Peer-review Sessions that allow students to get feedback on pre-circulated drafts of their writing (e.g. grant proposals, post-doctoral applications, cover letters). • Writing Camps offering participants 2-3 days of structured writing time.
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				In the immediate term, the Dean's office has directed departmental leadership to the Coordinator to get this work started.
5	<p>"To institute an annual requirement for each advisor to meet individually with each of their trainees to discuss career development issues. One way to support this activity is to use an individual development plan (IDP) form to structure advisor-trainee discussions."</p>	<p>We will hold discussions at our next tri-campus faculty meeting on the best way to implement this. Several faculty are already doing this with their students, but it would be good to institutionalize this across CSB. This could potentially be part of each student's annual graduate advisory committee meeting. We also note that the journal Science has a good IDP tool (https://myidp.sciencecareers.org/ [↗]).</p>	<p>The Dean's office supports the Department's exploration of feasible ways to facilitate career development for graduate students. To broaden this discussion, in the immediate-to long term we encourage the Chair to work with the Coordinator, Graduate Student Professional Development, under the newly formed A&S Office of Graduate Professional Development & Student Success, who can offer guidance and is available to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate professional skills workshops (academic or non-academic), including tailored versions of A&S workshops (e.g., "Pathways for PhDs in Linguistics"). • Contribute to existing unit-level activities (e.g. offering guest presentations to professionalization courses, arranging alumni speakers for career panels). • Advise on new or existing program offerings (e.g. the creation of curricular or co-curricular professionalization courses). • Assist and offer feedback on the development of public-facing resources (e.g. alumni and career resource pages for unit websites or Quercus). 	
6	<p>"To provide more transparency to graduate students regarding their teaching assignments and a mechanism to solicit and provide feedback addressing student concerns about assignments."</p>	<p>Our graduate coordinator uses a ranking system for graduate students to choose their first, second and third options for TA positions. The first option is not always available. CSB in most cases aligns grad student research experience with the courses</p>	<p>The Dean's office supports the Department's methods for ensuring that graduate students obtain their chosen TA assignments, wherever possible, noting that a ranked system facilitates increased alignment with student research and experience.</p>	

			they are assigned. Generally, new grad students are assigned first and second year BIO courses.	
Highlighting graduate student and junior faculty concerns about the high cost of living in Toronto, the reviewers emphasized the importance of ensuring adequate supports for these groups.	7	“Junior faculty members are particularly challenged by the high cost of living in Toronto. There seems to be a housing program for faculty, but it seems to be quite limited and reserved for those moving to the city at the time of taking up the position. More support from the university for those already located in the city would be appreciated.”	We have heard from the VPRO that the University is planning on building 500 units of new faculty housing at Site 1, at the northwest corner of campus (Bloor and Spadina), which will be available to eligible faculty members.	In the long-term, the Dean’s office notes that the University is in the planning stages of building more faculty housing on campus.
	8	“The cost of living in Toronto is significantly higher than in most other locations in Canada. While this can safely be assumed to affect all members of the Department, graduate students and young faculty members were vocal about this. It is widely acknowledged that even the recently increased stipend levels for graduate students do not meet the needs.”	NSERC just announced this year that its PhD fellowships will be increasing to \$40k per year. We recognize that improving graduate student funding is an urgent priority of the University. More graduate student housing is also proposed next to the existing Graduate House, and U of T alumni have recently developed an app called SpacesShared for community members to offer shared space opportunities in the neighbourhood – this might be a cost-effective housing option for some graduate students.	The Dean’s office concurs with the unit in noting that more graduate housing is currently being built on campus adjacent to the existing Graduate House, which should greatly assist graduates in seeking housing. The Dean’s office also notes there are other currently existing University resources beyond Arts & Science for on and off campus housing which can assist current and incoming graduate students, including international students, to which the department can direct students.
The reviewers made a number of suggestions related to strengthening the consistency and structure of supports for pre-tenure faculty, enhancing communications with this group, and involving them more closely in departmental operations and governance.	9	“To develop a consistent set of materials to provide each faculty member (research and teaching stream) when they begin their position and assign an official mentor to each as part of this process.”	We will develop a checklist and package, to be rolled out for the next CSB hire, expected in spring 2025. We have also been discussing having Biosafety Level 1 swing space ready for anyone to use, which could help new faculty with initial setup while renovations happen.	The Dean’s office acknowledges the Department’s plans to offer customized packages to new faculty that support setting up their lab and offer other resources, including a departmental mentor, for acclimating to the U of T environment and the Department.

	10	<p>“To provide consistent communication/mentoring for each faculty, an individual meeting for each pre-tenure faculty member should be arranged with the Department Chair to discuss career progress and expectations for promotion.”</p>	<p>The Vice Dean of Faculty and Academic Life recently shared a set of mentorship guidelines (July 2024), developed through extensive consultation, that will be shared with incoming faculty members and their assigned mentors in order to harmonize mentorship practices.</p>	<p>The A&S office of Vice-Dean, Faculty & Academic Life recently developed a New & Recent Faculty Program in partnership with Massey College. All new faculty members (teaching and tenure stream) are invited to participate in meetings where a series of different topics are addressed throughout the year (e.g., writing, PTR process, supporting students with mental health issues) as well as attend informal lunches for new hires to facilitate community-building.</p> <p>Regarding support for faculty mentorship, A&S Vice-Dean, Faculty & Academic Life, will work with the Department to ensure they are informed about the resources and supports available from the division.</p>
	11	<p>“To increase transparency and communication with pre-tenure faculty and create a mechanism to solicit their viewpoints, a pre-tenure faculty member could be appointed as a member of the executive committee for the Department.”</p>	<p>As of June 2024, we have appointed a pre-tenure faculty member to CSB’s executive committee.</p>	<p>The Dean’s office is pleased to see that the Department has already taken this recommendation on board.</p>
<p>The reviewers noted faculty concerns about how the high and growing cost of research will impact their work, and made a number of suggestions related to strengthening research support systems.</p>	12	<p>“The Department may wish to consider raising user fees to be able to cover service contracts for key instruments in the Imaging Facility. If not already done, the unit may also wish to explore outside and corporate users for whom the user fees could be significantly higher.”</p>	<p>We are investigating raising microscopy rates. At the same time, CSB’s chair has struck a “subsidies committee” to investigate the currently somewhat inequitable distribution of subsidies for research facilities. The chair has tasked the committee with developing a more equitable model for distributing the considerable subsidies that CSB provides to researchers. It was noted in discussions about this recommendation that unless NSERC/CIHR funding increases, it is problematic to increase fees, which puts burden on researchers, who are already being asked to do more with grant funding that hasn’t appreciably increased in many years.</p>	<p>In the near future, the Dean’s Office will ensure that units receive more of their research overhead revenues directly, which Units can deploy to offset research costs.</p>

	13	“To ensure evergreening of the microscopy suite of instruments in the Imaging Facility, the Department may wish to adopt an extremely systematic approach with regards to the planning of annual applications under the NSERC RTI program, and to leverage CFI funding opportunities.”	The CSB Imaging Committee is investigating options to do this and it has already suggested preparing a CFI-IF for the 2027 call to secure service contracts for several instruments in RW (and purchase updates) and to establish an "ESC node" of the imaging facility (i.e., to update the space and replace the SP5).	The Dean's office supports the department's plan to address this recommendation.
	14	“The Faculty should ensure that there is a timely succession plan for the leadership of CAGEF, potentially by appointing an Assistant or Co-Director”	We have prioritized a single cell plant biology search this year, and will communicate with the director of FAS HR about the possibility of the next plant hire being at a more senior level to encourage the identification of a new CAGEF director. There is currently no faculty member who'd be an appropriate co-director and the current director doesn't feel that model would be feasible in any case.	EDUs: C, such as the Centre for the Analysis of Genome Evolution and Function (CAGEF) are reviewed regularly as best practices. The appointment or reappointment of unit leadership is informed by this review process. The last review of the CAGEF took place in 2021-22. In the longer-term, the next Dean's review is currently scheduled for 2026-27. The appointment of a Director will be considered in Spring 2027. The Vice-Dean, Research, will work with the unit at that time, along with the Director, Academic HR, to identify suitable candidates for the CAGAF director role.
	15	“The University, Faculty, and/or Department should assess the infrastructure needs required to provide secure and easy-to-access data storage for researchers and provide the same.”	Our IT group is recommending that CSB build a redundant research data storage system (perhaps in cooperation with EEB). There is a standing need from the Imaging Facility for data storage. For groups that already provide for their own storage, CSB could serve as a redundant backup. Note that self-managed, on-premises storage is much cheaper over time than any subscription-based service. However, once established, CSB would own it and must maintain it. There would be an initial purchase costs, minor ongoing maintenance costs, and an ongoing IT staff time commitment.	In the medium-term, there is an evolving plan for CSB to gain tenancy in the Faculty's Research Data Center to meet their data storage needs.
The reviewers noted that “the principle sore points for many members of CSB seem to be related to building infrastructure and renovation.” They recommended establishing	16	“Supported by Faculty administration, clearer processes must be established that improve the communication between department administration, users, and Facilities & Services.”	It is not exactly clear what CSB can do on its own...we really need FAS and Facilities & Services to be on the same page.	Faculty Infrastructure Planning and Dean's Office leadership have allocated identified personnel to work directly with CSB on

<p>clearer processes to strengthen communications between department administration, users, and Facilities & Services; and exploring ways to enhance transparency, accountability and immediacy related to departmental facilities and building infrastructure needs and requests.</p>				<p>physical and infrastructure needs. The department would still liaise with F&S directly on day-to-day property matters.</p>
<p>The reviewers broadly observed challenges around creating a sense of community across the tri-campus graduate unit. They made a number of recommendations related to mitigating the effects of physical separation, including encouraging more regular movement across the three campuses, strengthening collaborative tri-campus faculty decision-making processes, and enhancing communications regarding tri-campus research areas.</p>	17	<p>“If not already in place, the Department or the Faculty may wish to consider assigning the responsibility of managing the liaison between users and Facilities & Services to a staff member who is familiar with both building infrastructure and researcher needs.”</p>	<p>Our CAO is technically this individual, but when there are problems and things don’t happen because Facilities & Services is not responding, it falls to the Chair to create a ruckus. It is not clear why this should be the <i>modus operandi</i>. A long-promised new building for CSB researchers may actually materialize soon, which would alleviate infrastructure issues.</p>	<p>The Dean’s office, in coordination with the Infrastructure Planning group, are actively exploring potential new capital building opportunity for the relocation of CSB faculty and lab facilities.</p>
	18	<p>“The research day could be organized in rotation on the three campuses or off site at a neutral location.”</p>	<p>For the past two CSB research days, this rotation model has been in effect. In 2022-2023 academic year, CSB’s Research Day was held in the west end, at the Old Mill. The 2023-2024 Research Day was held at Hart House, downtown. The 2024-2025 Research Day will be held either in North York or Scarborough, depending on site suitability. Feedback from faculty and students indicated that transit access to the Research Day site would be an important criterion for the site.</p>	<p>The Dean’s office supports the Department’s schedule for rotating the location of the research day between the 3 campuses.</p>
	19	<p>“Support staff administering Grad studies could spend 1 or 2 days per term at UTM and UTSC to meet Grad students in person.”</p>	<p>The CSB associate grad chair will discuss with CSB’s graduate coordinator the possibility of spending a day or two per term at UTM/UTSC, although virtual access at any time has always been available. Another option is to rotate the associate chair grad position to the satellite campuses. This possibility will be investigated in the longer term.</p>	<p>The Vice-Dean Graduate Education can support these discussions and assist the Department at arriving at a solution that satisfies all stakeholders at all campuses.</p>
	20	<p>“Faculty members from UTM and UTSC need to be included in decision making pertaining to graduate studies and policies. For this purpose, regular faculty meetings should be held that include faculty from the other two campuses (once or twice a year).”</p>	<p>The CSB Graduate Affairs Committee already has membership from all 3 campuses, and there are two meetings a year of this committee. According to a recently signed Tri-Campus Graduate Unit Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), the graduate chair of CSB is obligated to hold one meeting annually</p>	<p>The Dean’s office is pleased that this recommendation has already been fully addressed by the Department.</p>

			to which all CSB graduate members (i.e., from all 3 campuses) are invited. This shall be the case going forward, as opposed to delegated communication through the UTM and UTSC Biology chairs. This meeting will be held annually in the spring.	
21	“A small task force comprising members from all three campuses should be convened to review the functionality of the web site to ensure that researchers at UTM and UTSC are as straightforward to identify as those on the St. George campus.”		The associate chair research is working with CSB’s communication officer to improve the navigation and flagging of CSB researchers according to their location of research (in addition to already flagging research areas and organisms), with inspiration from EEB’s website organization (https://eeb.utoronto.ca/people/faculty [↗]).	The Dean’s office is pleased that the Department is working to address this recommendation and ensure that navigation to all graduate faculty sites is smooth.
22	“Members from all three campuses should engage with the Dean’s office on long term planning to ensure that sufficient TA capacity exists to support the full complement of UG courses.”		We don’t think that there is an issue with TA capacity at the 3 campuses. According to the Tri-Campus Memorandum of Understanding, each campus is responsible for its own TA allocation/coordination as UG needs require.	The Dean’s office supports the Department’s assessment that TA support at the St. George campus is sufficient for undergraduate needs, a matter which is formalized through the MoU.

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 highlighted that the Department of Cell and Systems Biology (CSB) encompasses research and training in a diverse group of disciplines, and that its undergraduate and graduate programs appear to be in high demand, well administered, and supported by an excellent cohort of teaching and tenure-stream faculty. The undergraduate program is notable for faculty (particularly in the teaching stream) commitment to pedagogical innovation, incorporating new methods and technology, including AI tools, to deliver a rich student experience; the graduate program is strong and students appreciate its flexibility and relatively small number of required courses; and new and novel offerings in Bioinformatics and Computational Biology also appear strong and successful. Tenure stream faculty highlight the outstanding research supports available to them; an internal grant review process set up by the Associate Chair Research appears to be a resounding success; and the reviewers commended CSB's stimulating intellectual environment, noting a range of internal and external faculty collaborations. Finally, the reviewers praised the working environment in the Department as "very positive and conducive to success"; staff satisfaction and retention are high, staff feel supported by the administration, and there is an overall sense of stability and confidence in the Departmental leadership team.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: explore opportunities to enhance advising, supports, and resources for the department's undergraduate population; strengthen structure, training, mentorship and supports to benefit the graduate program; ensure adequate supports for graduate students and junior faculty; strengthening the consistency and structure of supports for pre-tenure faculty, enhancing communications with this group, and involving them more closely in departmental operations and governance; strengthen research support systems; establish clearer processes to strengthen communications between department administration, users, and Facilities & Services and explore ways to enhance transparency, accountability and immediacy related to departmental facilities and building infrastructure needs and requests; mitigate the effects of physical separation, including encouraging more regular movement across the three campuses, strengthening collaborative tri-campus faculty decision-making processes, and enhancing communications regarding tri-campus research areas.

The Dean's Administrative Response describes the unit's 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 monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with program leadership and through the Department's five-year unit-level academic planning process, which will begin at the conclusion of the cyclical review. The office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs will request a brief Interim Monitoring Report midway between the March 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit to report on progress made on the Implementation Plan as outlined in the accompanying Review Recommendations Table.

The next UTQAP cyclical review of the Department will take place no later than the 2031-32 review cycle.

6 Distribution

On July 15th 2025, 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 & 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 unit/program leadership.

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

1 Review Summary

Program(s) Reviewed:	Christianity and Culture (HBA): Major, Minor Christianity and Education (HBA): Minor
Unit Offering Program(s):	Program only review Programs housed in the University of St. Michael's College
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor P. Travis Kroeker, Department of Religious Studies, McMaster University • Professor Heidi Marx, Department of Religion, University of Manitoba
Date of Review Visit:	October 18, 2023
Review Report Received by VPAP:	November 24, 2023
Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:	September 12, 2024
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 22, 2024

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: October 2-3, 2014

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- Articulate students of high quality
- Emphasis in all programs on development of transferable skills such as research and critical thinking
- Faculty and student involvement in public and charitable outreach
- History of leadership in community-based learning and international immersion experience
- Excellent quality of faculty teaching and research
- Breadth and depth of faculty scholarship in Christianity

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Better aligning the Program with others in North America and Europe through curricular changes
- Enabling greater focus on the Major program and suspending the Specialist
- Supporting Program objectives by re-examining course offerings
- Increasing student enrolment and expanding student outreach opportunities
- Ensuring that the size and mix of faculty is able to support the Program's future directions
- Strengthening communications among the Program, FAS, and USMC

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

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

Consultation Process

Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Associate Dean, Unit-Level Reviews, Special Advisor, Unit-Level Reviews; USMC President; USMC Principal and Vice-President; Program Coordinators; Administrative staff; Undergraduate students; Faculty; and Chairs of cognate units (Department for the Study of Religion; 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
 - ▶ Programs are generally well-designed, flexible, and student-centred
 - ▶ Students are taught and administered by leading researchers and instructors in the field
- Objectives
 - ▶ Faculty have worked hard to articulate meaningful and timely Program Learning Objectives, that can serve as a basis for future curriculum review and change, and that are aligned with the University's mission, and the St. Michael's College academic plan
 - ▶ PLOs are clear, appropriate and aligned with degree requirements
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Admission requirements appear clear and appropriate; programs attract high quality students
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Christianity and Culture (CC) program has new and exciting offerings in Christianity and Science, as well as history, literature, music and art
 - ▶ Programs have a number of popular courses and themes that it can leverage to increase its visibility and attract students, in particular Christianity and Science
 - ▶ Curriculum structure works well for students, allows for maximum flexibility and minimizes course prerequisites that can slow student progress, and encourages students to experience much interdisciplinarity
 - ▶ Faculty and students see the small class sizes as an advantage of the program
- Innovation
 - ▶ Program members are making concerted efforts to experiment with innovative and creative content and delivery methods
 - ▶ Course on reconciliation "is a great example of innovative work to date"
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Individual faculty have worked to increase diversity in the curriculum
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Assessment strategies in most courses appear reasonable, and emphasize the development of transferable skills
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students appreciate the programs' "culture of engagement", and the "great books/liberal arts" experience available to them
 - ▶ Students have many chances to pursue research projects in the context of special topics courses

- ▶ Programs mentor students well as they progress through their degrees
- ▶ Students can access supports through Faculty- and College-specific advising, orientation, libraries, and student services
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ Programs attract high quality, high achieving students, who complete their degrees in an appropriate amount of time
- Student funding
 - ▶ Students have access to funding opportunities at the Faculty and College level

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

- Objectives
 - ▶ Core identity of the programs is somewhat unclear, and they lack legibility both within and beyond St. Michael's College
 - ▶ Concerns noted about “perceptions that CC is really a ‘Catholic Studies’ program more narrowly located in a somewhat inward looking SMC institution”
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ “[T]he one deficiency of the program is its curricular diversity”
 - ▶ Some courses have been cancelled due to low enrolment
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Programs lack diversity at the level of faculty cohort; this lack is also reflected in the curriculum
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Some students note occasional difficulties with accessing help (though reviewers acknowledge that the sample expressing these concerns was very small)

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Objectives
 - ▶ Work to further identify, articulate and communicate the core identity of the programs
 - ▶ Programs would benefit from further reflection on what makes them unique, and from considering, leveraging and strengthening connections with other U of T programs and units
 - ▶ “It is our impression that [the perception of the program as ‘Catholic Studies’] need not be the case, but it will require the work of communicating both within the CC program and beyond to address this concern”
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ “If the programs cannot pursue diversity through hiring based on student numbers and financial realities, we recommend that its members work to diversify the programs at the curricular level, both at the level of courses, and within courses”
 - ▶ Students would benefit from additional experiential learning opportunities, and self-reflective exercises in their courses

- ▶ Enhance efforts to introduce first-year students to areas of program and faculty strength, such as in Christianity and Science, and the Arts (visual, music and literary) to aid in recruitment
- ▶ Opportunities noted to develop new course offerings in Artificial Intelligence, and Alchemy, Astronomy, and Magic that would appeal to science and technology students
- ▶ A program wide curriculum review is strongly recommended, to re-examine course titles and descriptions, and introduce more overt collaboration with the broader University
- ▶ Students note interest in expanding program requirements to include the study of other religious traditions (which could involve collaboration with the Department for the Study of Religion, as well as English and History); reviewers observe that such expansion might enhance the diversity of the student cohort and increase interest in CC programs
- ▶ Consider making course titles more appealing to attract students (along with making concerted efforts to promote the programs)
- Innovation
 - ▶ More could be done to introduce innovative and creative content and delivery methods into the programs
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ A coordinated effort to increase diversity in the curriculum is strongly recommended; “[t]his would also increase the programs’ accessibility, as more students would see themselves reflected in course content”
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Infusing universal principles of design into and enhancing the creativity of assessments would benefit students, and could serve to attract additional enrolments in Christianity and Culture courses and programs
 - ▶ Consult with the new Faculty EDI lead, pedagogical experts, and leaders in cognate departments and programs in the development of innovative assessments
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Renew and reinvigorate community engaged learning opportunities, especially those focused on social justice, as well as internship opportunities
 - ▶ Faculty members encouraged to consider ways to include senior students in their own projects as research assistants

2. Graduate Program(s) – n/a

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ With three recent hires, the CC program has a strong core of excellent, committed faculty members in a range of disciplines
- Research
 - ▶ Contributing faculty have strong research programs in their defined fields, with good to excellent publication records
- Faculty
 - ▶ Several contract instructor positions have been replaced with full time teaching stream faculty, which reviewers note as an important step towards enhancing the quality of the program, by encouraging continuity, stability and a commitment to students
 - ▶ Recent hires have brought energy and vision to the study of Christianity and Science

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

- Faculty
 - ▶ It is “unfortunate” that recent hiring has not increased gender or racial diversity in the program

4. Administration

Note: Issues that are addressed through specific University processes and therefore considered out of scope for UTQAP reviews (e.g., individual Human Resources issues, specific health and safety concerns) are routed to proper University offices to be addressed, and are therefore not included in the Review Summary component of the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Students note a strong sense of community with each other, and with faculty in the program
 - ▶ Good morale and rapport observed among faculty and students
 - ▶ “There is a vibrant social life that includes both faculty and students, and the student journal, the SMC research colloquium and sponsored annual lecture series make for a vibrant intellectual scene for CC students and faculty alike”
 - ▶ Faculty members avail themselves of their connections with other units on campus
 - ▶ New St. Michael’s College Principal “brings a collaborative and creative leadership model that will certainly benefit the programs going forward”
 - ▶ Contributing faculty have been working to foster connections between the program and Catholic Schools

- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Organizational and financial structure of the programs generally seem appropriate and effective
 - ▶ Programs enjoy stable funding and administrative support in St. Michael's College
 - ▶ Programs are supported by world class library collections
 - ▶ St. Michael's College provides welcoming and appropriately resourced spaces for instruction, and for student and faculty life
 - ▶ Recent classroom updates have largely addressed concerns about outdated technology
- International comparators
 - ▶ Programs are quite unique in Canada and North America
 - ▶ Most appropriate comparators are Canadian Catholic Studies programs, which also tend to be small undergraduate programs housed in colleges, and rely on course offerings in cognate units to round out student degree requirements; both St. Michael's College programs under review are overall quite strong when compared with these offerings

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

- Relationships
 - ▶ Programs lack visibility due to a lack of promotion beyond St. Michael's College, and "are still struggling to attract students after the termination of the CTEP Religious Education Major"
 - ▶ Program has struggled with its community-engaged programming
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ "The main challenge the programs face to long term planning are relatively small enrolments"
 - ▶ No immediate avenues for substantial program growth are observed
- International comparators
 - ▶ Difficulty noted in finding appropriate North American and international comparators, due to uniqueness of programs
 - ▶ Programs do not compare well with offerings in Religious Studies departments, because their scope is much smaller and their focus is mainly on western Latin Catholicism

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ "Given that no new hires are imminent or anticipated, it is all the more important to address the diversity concern in other ways, including greater collaboration with programs within the 'Faculty of Arts and Science'—to which a number of the current faculty are already appointed"
 - ▶ Opportunities noted for the program to strengthen relationships and enhance collaboration with cognate FAS units, in particular the Department for the Study of Religion

- ▶ Program encouraged to focus attention to significantly improving outreach and promotion in the coming years, in collaboration with St. Michael's College leadership and administrative staff
- ▶ Explore reestablishing connections to the Catholic School Boards in Ontario, to identify whether the programs could serve teachers in a new capacity (given the cessation of the CTEP program)
- ▶ Potential noted to leverage connections with the Centre for Community Partnership, and pursue opportunities for local engagements/internships with social justice organizations
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Program members should work in consultation with cognate units and programs, and St. Michael's leadership to develop a clear articulation of the nature and identity of the program, that can be used as the basis for the creation of promotional materials
 - ▶ Reviewers generally supportive of exploring the possibility of developing a minor or certificate in Christianity and Science, getting "breadth requirement" listings for courses in Science for Arts students, and vice versa
 - ▶ Explore the possibility of developing a certificate program that would attract students interested in becoming teachers, in consultation and potential collaboration with the Department for the Study of Religion



2 Administrative Response & Implementation Plan

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

September 12, 2024

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

**RE: UTQAP cyclical review of Christianity & Culture and Christianity & Education programs,
University of St. Michael's College**

Dear Prof. McCahan,

I write in response to your letter of March 27, 2024, regarding the October 18, 2023, UTQAP cyclical review of the Christianity & Culture and Christianity & Education programs, University of St. Michael's College and requesting our Administrative Responses. The programs reviewed were: Christianity and Culture, HBA: Major, Minor; Christianity and Education, HBA: Minor.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers, Profs. P. Travis Kroeker, McMaster University, and Heidi Marx, University of Manitoba, for their very comprehensive review of the programs. We would also like to thank the Principal of St. Michael's College, the Program Coordinator, faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study. We also wish to thank the many staff, students, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided thoughtful feedback. The UTQAP cyclical review process is an invaluable exercise that affords us the opportunity to take stock of our academic units and programs, to recognize achievement, and identify areas for improvement.

The review report was finalized on November 24, 2023, after which the Principal shared it widely with stakeholders in the programs. We are extremely pleased with the reviewers' positive assessment of the overall strength of the Christianity & Culture and Christianity & Education programs and their outstanding, productive faculty. The reviewers noted a strong sense of community among students, and between students and faculty, flexible and student-centred programs that attract high achieving students, and faculty who are leading researchers in the field. The review report also raised several issues and challenges and identified areas for enhancement, including lack of diversity at the level of faculty cohort and in the curriculum, the unclear core identity of the program, and the lack of visibility beyond St. Michael's College.

Each of these recommendations has been addressed in the attached Review Recommendations Table that outlines the unit's response, the Dean's response, and an Implementation Plan identifying action items and timelines for each recommendation. My Administrative Response and Implementation Plan was developed in consultation with the Principal of St. Michael's College and with the Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, and senior leadership within my office. The Implementation Plan provided identifies timeframes of immediate- (six months), medium- (one to two years), and longer- (three to five years) term actions and who (Faculty, Dean, unit) will take the lead in each area. I also identified any necessary changes in organization, policy, or governance where appropriate, as well as any resources, financial or otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.

The next UTQAP cyclical review of the Christianity & Culture and Christianity & Education programs will take place no later than the 2030-31 review cycle. My office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with program leadership. I also acknowledge that your office will request a brief Interim Monitoring Report midway between the October 2023 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2030-31 to report on progress made on the Implementation Plan as outlined in the accompanying Review Recommendations Table.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to respond to the review report. The reviewers' comments and recommendations will help inform the future priorities of the Christianity & Culture and Christianity & Education undergraduate programs.

Sincerely,



Antoinette Handley
Acting Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Professor, Department of Political Science

cc.

- Irene Morra, Principal and Vice-President, St. Michael's College
- Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science
- Caitlin Burton, Manager, Academic Change & Reviews, Faculty of Arts & Science
- Lachmi Singh, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
- Andrea Benoit, Academic Planning & Review Officer, Faculty of Arts and Science

2023-24 UTQAP Review of the FAS Christianity and Culture, and Christianity and Education programs - Review Recommendations

Please do the following for each recommendation in the table:

- If you **intend** to act on a recommendation, please provide an **Implementation Plan** identifying actions to be taken, the time frame (short, medium, long term) for each, and who will take the lead in each area. If appropriate, please identify any necessary changes in organization, policy or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.
- If you **do not** intend to act on a recommendation, please briefly explain why the actions recommended have not been prioritized.
- In accordance with the UTQAP and Ontario's Quality Assurance Framework, "it is important to note that, while the external reviewers' report may include **commentary** on issues such as faculty complement and/or space requirements when related to the quality of the program under review, **recommendations** on these or any other elements that are within the purview of the university's internal budgetary decision-making processes must be tied directly to issues of program quality or sustainability" (emphasis added)
- You may wish to refer to the [sample table](#) provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Program Response	Dean's Response
<p>The reviewers observed a lack of clarity around the programs' core identity and objectives to individuals outside of the St. Michael's College community, coupled with a related lack of visibility across the broader University. They recommended that the programs, in consultation with USMC leadership and with affiliated units and programs across U of T, develop and communicate a clear articulation of their identity and aims.</p>	1	<p>"We also recommend that program members, in consultation with affiliated departments and programs across campus, as well as in regular and close conversation with the Principal of St. Michael's College, come up with a clear articulation of the nature and identity of the program that can be used as the basis for creating promotional materials"</p>	<p>ACTION (short-medium term):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - informed both by the program's recent production of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for this Self Study and strategic priorities identified in relation to program development (e.g. social outreach, experiential learning, and Catholic teacher education), establish a consultative and collaborative relationship with affiliated departments and programs through organized, formal meetings. <p>Topics to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the distinctiveness of the CHC program - where resonances with affiliated departments and programs exist, how to ensure effective collaboration with them (e.g. continued exploration of joint-coding and/or cross-listings of courses, cross-promotion of relevant courses and initiatives, co-organized lectures/student events) <p>LEADS: Principal and Program Coordinator in collaboration with Program Faculty.</p>	<p>The Dean's office supports the program's and College's plans to make contact with cognate units and engage in deep consultation with stakeholders to address the reviewers' recommendations. The Dean's office will facilitate these conversations.</p>
	2	<p>"our conversations with faculty, staff, and students has led us to conclude that these programs would benefit from further reflection on both what makes them unique (i.e., how do folks in the program understand what they are doing as distinct from</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See points 1 and 6c. 	<p>The Dean's office acknowledges that the program and College leadership has already initiated this recommendation, noted above #1.</p>

		<p>other related programs and how do they communicate this beyond the program?), and also what connects them to other programs and departments at the University of Toronto (i.e., where are there existing relationships that can enrich program students' experience and are there additional possibilities for collaboration and connection?)."</p>		
3		<p>"One area where the program could improve significantly is in terms of its outreach and promotion. We would encourage program members to focus attention in this area over the next few years, given they are still struggling to attract students after the termination of the CTEP Religious Education Major. We would encourage the program members to work with [the USMC Principal] and administrative staff in the college on promotional materials, as well as a promotion plan that involves social media, a connection with the Catholic school boards in Ontario, and the faculty's external relations department."</p>	<p>NOTE: some of this action has already commenced since the Self Study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - production of program-specific recruitment cards for distribution across the University/in schools (Principal's Office in collaboration with Program Faculty) - initial meetings with representatives of the Toronto Catholic School Board to discuss collaborative (and thus recruitment) initiatives between schools and the program and the expansion of Continuing Education to provide Additional Qualification (AQ) certification (Principal and Director of Continuing Education; FURTHER LEAD ACTION in relation to this initiative will also involve collaboration with Programs Administrator, Program Coordinator, and Program Faculty) <p>FURTHER ACTION</p> <p>a) (Medium Term): Building on the PLOs as drafted for the Self Study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - leverage recent addition of programs recruitment to the role of the current Programs Administrator to ensure strategic oversight of the production of promotional material - ensure robust articulation of program objectives and offerings on new SMC College website (anticipated launch late spring 2025) <p>LEADS: Principal, Programs Administrator in close collaboration with Program Coordinator and Program Faculty</p> <p>b) (Medium/Long Term) continue conversations between CHC, the Continuing Education division, and the Catholic</p>	<p>The Dean's office is pleased to see that work has begun on addressing the reviewers' recommendations in the short-term, and that a longer-term plan for outreach is being carefully built by the program and the College. The Dean's office and Office of the Faculty Registrar will also connect with the College to coordinate recruitment activities.</p>

			School Boards in Ontario both in relation to the provision of AQs and the visibility of the CHC program to schools and students. LEADS: Principal's office, Program Coordinator, Program faculty, and Director of Continuing Ed.	
The reviewers strongly recommended a program-wide curriculum review with an eye to examining and updating course titles and descriptions. They broadly recommended using this opportunity to assess and potentially revise the structure of the programs, to encourage more overt collaboration with the wider University.	4	"...we strongly recommend a program wide curriculum review that re-examines not only course titles and descriptions (there are too many "Christianity and . . .") that better represent and advertise course materials and aims, but also the structure of the program that includes more overt collaborations with the wider university. That would also have the effect of changing some perceptions that CC is really a "Catholic Studies" program more narrowly located in a somewhat inward looking SMC institution. It is our impression that this need not be the case, but it will require the work of communicating both within the CC program and beyond to address this concern."	ACTION a: See #1. ACTION b: (Short/Medium term): revisit course descriptions and titles to ensure a) visible trajectory within the program; b) avoidance of the appearance of an excessively survey-based curriculum; c) clear recognition of the diversity inherent in any historic or contemporary study of the subject of Christianity and the multi-faceted connotations of "culture." LEAD: Principal, in collaboration with Program Faculty	The Dean's office is pleased to note that the program and College have already begun responding to the recommendation. In the immediate-to-medium term, the Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, and the Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning, are available to work with the Department on proposed changes to curriculum and program enhancements. The program and College can also reach out to the Curriculum Development Specialist in the Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education, for further guidance on curricular development and other matters.
	5	"Small class sizes are seen by both students and faculty as an advantage of the program, although some courses have had to be canceled for low enrolments. Our main recommendations may help prevent this in future by making course titles more appealing and through concerted efforts to promote the programs."	ACTION: See 4b. We also anticipate that the actions itemized in 1 and 3 will address these recommendations.	The Dean's office acknowledges that the program and College leadership have already initiated this recommendation, noted above #4.
The reviewers noted concerns regarding a lack of diversity at the level of faculty cohort, that is also reflected in program curricula. Observing that no new USMC hires are planned or anticipated in the near future, and noting student interest in the study of a wider range of religious traditions, they urged the program to pursue opportunities to diversify the programs at the curricular	6	"If the programs cannot pursue diversity through hiring based on student numbers and financial realities, we recommend that its members work to diversify the programs at the curricular level, both at the level of courses, and within courses through a variety of means discussed in more detail below"	ACTION a: (Short/Long term): We have already begun a process of reviewing primary and secondary source materials assigned in our courses, with a view to assessing and increasing breadth and diversity of subject coverage. The results of this process will inform further curricular development and reform. LEADS: Principal, Program Coordinator, and Faculty. b: (short/medium term): invite select faculty members from affiliated departments/programs to sit on CHC program committee with a view to ensuring a broader peer facilitation of diversity awareness, curricular and co-curricular development, experiential opportunities, and	The Dean's office applauds program and College leadership for the wide consultation process planned in the immediate-to-longer term. The Dean's office also directs the College leadership to the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation (CTSI) for additional guidance and best practices it can offer on increasing diversity in pedagogy practices and curricula. As well, Faculty of Arts and Science hired a Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in early 2022 who is also available to offer guidance on how to best implement EDI initiatives at the departmental level and who can also advise of divisional plans.

level, and stressed the critical importance of close consultation and collaboration with cognate units in the Faculty of Arts and Science, in particular the Department for the Study of Religion.			potential collaboration. LEAD: Principal, in collaboration with Program Faculty.	
	7	“As mentioned above, more creativity and more infusion of universal principles of design into course assessments would benefit current students and likely serve to attract additional ones to the CC courses and programs. Program members might benefit from consultation with the new EDI Lead in the faculty and any pedagogical experts around innovative assessments. But they might also look to leaders in other departments and programs as well”	See 6c.	The Dean’s office acknowledges that the program and College leadership have already initiated this recommendation, noted above #6.
	8	“Individual faculty members have worked to increase diversity in the curriculum on an ad hoc basis, but a coordinated effort in this regard is something we strongly recommend, given it is unlikely that the program will be able to meet this goal through hiring in the near future. This would also increase the programs’ accessibility, as more students would see themselves reflected in course content.”	See points itemized in 6.	The Dean’s office acknowledges that the program and College leadership have already initiated this recommendation, noted above #6.
	9	“This diversity in disciplinary approaches and subject areas is an impressive strength which should be further leveraged, but it should be noted that the lack of diversity (gender, race, culture) in the faculty complement is a concern—also noted as such by all the SMC people we spoke with at the on site review. Given that no new hires are imminent or anticipated, it is all the more important to address the diversity concern in other ways, including greater collaboration with programs within the ‘Faculty of Arts and Science’—to which a number of the current faculty are already appointed.”	See points itemized in 1 and 6.	The Dean’s office acknowledges that the program and College leadership have already initiated this recommendation, noted above #6.
	10	“In keeping with this recommendation is our perception that the CC program...could benefit from greater collaboration with other related departments in the ‘Arts and Science Faculty’—especially the Department for the Study of Religion. In fact Religion also has scholars with strong expertise in Christianity and Culture who would be interested in such	See points itemized in 1 and 6. ACTION (ongoing): Continue to build on existing curricular and co-curricular initiatives (the Alway Symposium on Interfaith Dialogue, the <i>Saeculum</i> magazine essay prize in Jewish-Christian relations), and on other issues identified	The Dean’s office acknowledges the program’s and College’s plan, as outlined above in #1, to increase outreach to leadership and faculty in cognate units to explore more inter- and cross-disciplinary synergies and is available to help facilitate

		collaboration. Given [one professor's] cross-appointment there, it would make sense to pursue program collaboration. The CC students we met also indicated interest in expanding program requirements to include the study of other religious traditions, especially those in the "Abrahamic traditions" (Judaism and Islam) and Indigenous spirituality—such as are already offered in the Religion program. While the CC program does have students who are neither Catholic nor confessionally Christian, such collaborations (and we could include English and History here as well) could enhance the diversity of the student cohort and possibly result in greater student interest in the CC major and minor (or certificate) programs."	as priorities at USMC, especially Reconciliation (TRC), and Indigenous spirituality. LEADS: Program Faculty.	and support any such discussions if requested.
Highlighting faculty strengths and the increasing popularity of courses in Christianity and Science, the reviewers noted opportunities to explore the development of additional offerings in this area, to potentially appeal to the growing population of science and technology students.	11	"The recent hires...have brought new energy and vision to the study of Christianity and Science. They teach courses (Faith and Physics, The Bible and the Big Bang, Christianity and Science) that attract growing numbers of students, and there are good opportunities to develop new course offerings on Artificial Intelligence and Alchemy, Astrology, and Magic that would appeal to science and technology students (one of the fastest growing subject areas in the university). Ideas here include developing a minor or certificate in Christianity and Science, getting 'breadth requirement' listings for courses in Science (for Arts students) and Arts (for Science students). We encourage the program to pursue these directions, not only by developing interesting courses but also by articulating for students and departments in the wider university what this program offers"	ACTION taken: a new year 1 course on Alchemy, Astrology, and Magic has been listed for 2024/2025 and has already acquired a considerable waiting list. ACTION taken: a program faculty member already co-teaches a course on Artificial Intelligence at the year 1 level. This is a limited-enrolment course that is very popular. ACTION taken: the addition of BR5 to CHC courses is already on the agenda for the first CHC program committee (September 2024). ACTION (medium term): explore the possibility of offering a certificate (or even a joint minor) in Christianity and Science in collaboration with IHPST and RLG. LEADS: Principal in collaboration with Program Coordinator and Faculty.	The Dean's office is pleased to note that additions course offerings are already underway in the program at the college. In the short-medium term, the Dean's office encourages the program and College leadership to discuss new minor or Certificate program options with the Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, and the feasibility of submitting an outline to the Dean's Advisory Committee on Academic Change (DACAC) for its consideration before moving forward to the program proposal stage.
The reviewers recommended exploring approaches to reinvigorating and enhancing opportunities for community-engaged learning and internship in the programs,	12	"We also see potential to renew community engaged learning, especially learning focused on social justice, and internship opportunities for students and urge program members to work on reinvigorating these as well"	ACTION (Medium term): Resume offering Internship (CHC471H). This internship can be applied to various community engagement contexts and might also benefit from collaboration with other departments and programs with established social justice and outreach initiatives. (See priority action 6c).LEADS: Program Faculty, in collaboration with Principal.	The Dean's office supports the program's and College's plan to consult with other A&S programs to explore synergies and collaborations in internship opportunities. Expanding experiential opportunities for undergraduate students is one of the

particularly in areas related to social justice.				strategic initiatives in the 2020-25 Faculty of Arts & Science Academic Plan. The Experiential Learning & Outreach Support (ELOS) office 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. In the short-to-medium term, the program and College leadership is encouraged to reach out the ELOS team for further guidance and support on reactivating the current-existing internship opportunity and for systematically exploring new possibilities and options.
The reviewers recommended exploring the reestablishment of connections with the Ontario Catholic School Boards, to identify whether and how the programs might serve teachers in new capacities, going forward.	13	“It would also benefit the programs if faculty members and the Principal were to work on reestablishing a connection to the Catholic School Boards in Ontario to see if the programs could serve teachers in a new capacity given the cessation of the CTEP program”	See 3b.	The Dean’s office acknowledges that the program and College leadership have already initiated this recommendation, noted above #3.
	14	“In terms of Education, it may be possible to develop a certificate program that would attract students interested in becoming teachers—especially if this were also coordinated with the Religion program, since the teaching of world religions is part of the Ontario curriculum in both regular (public) and Catholic school systems.”	See 3b.	As noted above #11, the Dean’s office encourages the program and College leadership to discuss new minor or Certificate program options with the Vice-Dean, Academic Planning before moving forward to a proposal stage.

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 programs as flexible and student-centred, attracting high-quality and high-achieving students who finish their degrees in a timely manner. Students are taught by leading instructors and researchers in the field and appreciate a strong sense of community in the programs, both with one another and with contributing faculty. Faculty members make use of connections with cognate U of T units, and have worked hard to articulate meaningful and timely Program Learning Objectives that can serve as a basis for future curriculum review and change; the programs also have a number of popular courses and themes that might be leveraged to increase visibility and attract more students. Finally, the programs have stable funding and administrative support in St. Michael's College, and are supported by world-class library collections.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: developing and communicating a clear articulation of the programs' identity and aims, in consultation with St. Michael's College leadership and with affiliated units and programs across U of T; conducting a program-wide curriculum review with an eye to examining and updating course titles and descriptions, and using this opportunity to assess and potentially revise the structure of the programs, to encourage more overt collaboration with the wider University; pursuing opportunities to diversify the programs at the curricular level in close consultation and collaboration with cognate units in the Faculty of Arts and Science; exploring the development of additional offerings in the area of Christianity and Science; reinvigorating and enhancing opportunities for community-engaged learning and internship in the programs; and exploring the reestablishment of connections with the Ontario Catholic School Boards.

The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty 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 monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with program leadership. The office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs will request a brief Interim Monitoring Report midway between the October 2023 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2030-31 to report on progress made on the Implementation Plan as outlined in the accompanying Review Recommendations Table.

The next UTQAP cyclical review of the Christianity & Culture and Christianity & Education programs will take place no later than the 2030-31 review cycle

6 Distribution

On June 30th 2025, 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 program leadership.

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

1 Review Summary

Program(s) Reviewed:	Ethics, Society & Law (HBA): Major
Division/Unit Offering Program(s):	Program housed in Trinity College
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Peter C. Caldwell, Samuel G. McCann Professor of History; Director, Program in Politics, Law, and Social Thought, Department of History, Rice University • Professor Katherine Fierlbeck, McCulloch Research Chair; Professor & Chair, Department of Political Science, Dalhousie University
Date of Review Visit:	March 22, 2024
Review Report Received by VPAP:	April 24, 2024
Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:	September 12, 2024
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 22, 2024

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: January 14-15, 2016

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- Rich undergraduate academic experience that combines the impressive, internationally recognized research accomplishments of FAS with the interdisciplinary, community oriented, small class focus of Trinity College
- Undergraduates address complex social issues from a variety of disciplinary points of view within small-group courses
- Numerous opportunities for students to conduct research and prepare for publication, including through the Law Workshops and the student journal, *Mindful*
- Graduates are highly qualified and well suited to a variety of outcomes, including graduate school and law school
- FAS faculty who teach in the program are world-class researchers publishing highly relevant research

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Balancing the benefits and costs of curricular freedom, including a lack of cohort cohesion, inattention to the course listed as fulfilling program requirements, and the potential for students' educational experiences to be unstructured
- Providing greater stability in the faculty involved in delivering the program to ensure both program quality and to improve morale among the teaching staff
- Addressing structural challenges in the academic program and complexities in academic governance, including the complex relationship between the Faculty of Arts & Science, Trinity College, and the University, noting that the majority of students in the program are not members of Trinity College; and developing greater ties with other units, especially with the Chairs of those departments involved in delivering key courses in the program.

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

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

Consultation Process

Vice-Dean, Academic Planning; Interim Associate Dean, Unit-Level Reviews; Provost, Trinity College; Dean of Arts, Trinity College; Program Director; Program Associate Director; Leads in

Community Research Partnerships in Ethics course; Continuing Faculty; Adjunct faculty; Undergraduate students; Administrative staff; and members of relevant cognate units (Centre for Criminology and Sociolegal Studies; Philosophy; Sociology; Political Science; Center for Ethics; School of the Environment).

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
 - ▶ The Ethics, Society and Law (ES&L) program provides course content and curricular opportunities that are not available elsewhere in the University and are valuable to both Trinity College and FAS
 - ▶ Program is “vibrant and stable”
- Objectives
 - ▶ ES&L combines the history of political and ethical thought with coverage of contemporary ethical and political issues
 - ▶ Program is succeeding in its goal of offering opportunities to excellent, committed students that they might have difficulty finding elsewhere in such a large and complex university setting
 - ▶ Program appears to be meeting its objectives of offering a carefully considered and truly interdisciplinary experience, and of providing undergraduate students with an understanding of what is involved in the study of the Law
 - ▶ Program exhibits a clear sense of purpose and mandate, and students and faculty express a clear understanding of how ES&L differs from other cognate offerings
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Program admission is quite selective, and demand is consistently high
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Courses are carefully designed and culminate in small seminars that focus on research and writing
 - ▶ Program combines a scaffolded core curriculum with abundant elective choices and innovative experiential learning opportunities
 - ▶ Elective offerings are spread across several units, “allowing students to create focal points in their own major”
 - ▶ Program’s home in Trinity College permits an independent and focused curriculum, without duplicating curricula of cognate FAS units

- Innovation
 - ▶ Several adjunct faculty, who are largely legal practitioners, deliver single classes for the program; this allows ES&L to offer innovative capstone seminar topics lead by excellent and experienced instructors
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Assessment of learning in ES&L classes appears appropriate
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ ES&L students are highly engaged and find it easy to connect with fellow students, particularly in upper year classes
 - ▶ Required fourth year seminar courses are small, and provide students with opportunities to develop advanced research and communication skills, and direct contact with instructors who can offer mentorship and letters of recommendation
 - ▶ Opportunities for experiential learning, which are available by competitive application to some of the ES&L cohort, are comprehensive and carefully designed
 - ▶ Students appreciate optional experiential learning opportunities; reviewers note these are perceived as “essential and even transformative”
 - ▶ Community Research Partnerships in Ethics (CRPE) program is a “gem”, and noted as superior to many experiential learning offerings at other universities
 - ▶ Law Workshops are seen by students as intellectually demanding, and are rated especially highly by those wishing to attend Law School; reviewers highlight the Associate Director’s energetic and excellent commitment to this program
 - ▶ Students involved in the Humanities for Humanity (H4H) program report very positive experiences
 - ▶ Student satisfaction scores are consistently high relative to U of T and other Ontario universities
 - ▶ Polled alumni responded strongly that they would recommend ES&L to others
 - ▶ A notable aspect of the program is the way in which undergraduate research programs are facilitated by faculty
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ Student outcome indicators are consistently high

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Students and faculty note challenges for ES&L students in accessing elective courses in other units
 - ▶ Reviewers note concerns that some program requirements are now obsolete and/or redundant, and include courses that are not offered on a regular basis
 - ▶ Reviewers caution that reducing the number elective courses in cognate units that are available to ES&L students would make the program more dependent on cognate units’ willingness to routinely offer these classes

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ ES&L leadership encouraged to monitor planned changes in registration protocol for elective courses in cognate units, and advise students of any new opportunities
 - ▶ Review course requirements, and adjust those that are no longer relevant
 - ▶ Maintain existing breadth of available elective courses in cognate units
 - ▶ Ensure sufficient faculty resources to keep upper year seminars small
 - ▶ Ensure appropriate TA supports for the relatively large second-year classes, to maintain focus on writing assignments

2. Graduate Program(s) – n/a

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ “Core teaching faculty are dedicated, highly capable, and enthusiastic”
 - ▶ Adjunct instructors are carefully chosen, have considerable relevant experience and appear to feel supported in the program and find their contributions very rewarding
- Research
 - ▶ The research records of contributing faculty members appear appropriate to their circumstances
- Faculty
 - ▶ Program has recently been supplemented by two tenure stream positions, cross-appointed with Political Science; this provides greater long-term stability and continuity for ES&L

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

- Faculty
 - ▶ Program Director and Associate Director are continuing limited term appointments; both have substantial teaching and administrative loads
 - ▶ Faculty outside of the program who supervise ES&L student research projects do not appear to receive recognition for this work

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ FAS leadership should ensure that all faculty are appropriately recognized for supervising ES&L student research projects

4. Administration

Note: Issues that are addressed through specific University processes and therefore considered out of scope for UTQAP reviews (e.g., individual Human Resources issues, specific health and safety concerns) are routed to proper University offices to be addressed, and are therefore not included in the Review Summary component of the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Leadership is energetic, contributing faculty and project coordinators are committed and students are enthusiastic
 - ▶ Collegiality among contributing faculty, including those in other units, is quite strong
 - ▶ Students and faculty highly praise the program
 - ▶ Relationships with organizations involved in the CRPE program appear sturdy
 - ▶ Relationships between ES&L and heads of cognate divisions appear robust
 - ▶ Faculty and students are “effusive in noting the superlative capability and assistance” of the program’s part-time administrative staff member
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Administrative organization of the program appears to work well, despite requiring considerable coordination across multiple units
 - ▶ Program administration has been supported by a 50% administrative position shared with Trinity’s International Relations program
 - ▶ Trinity College anticipates that a planned new building, the Lawson Centre, will be operational in fall 2025, which is expected to be advantageous for the ES&L program
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Overall assessment is very positive
 - ▶ “ES&L is a popular, successful, and intellectually rigorous program”
 - ▶ Program has worked to address “sustainability challenges” raised in the previous review, with the support of higher administration; continues to actively address these issues “in a positive and forward-looking way”
 - ▶ Reviewers impressed with changes made since the previous review, which have created a strong program with consistent and well-considered academic plans in several areas:
 - Addressing the ethical, social and political aspects of law in a manner useful to both pre-law and other interested students
 - Engaging deeply with substantive moral, ethical and political aspects of contemporary issues
 - Developing a solid and focused curriculum that affords both interdisciplinary openness and core coherence, and includes access to smaller classes and research projects in upper years
 - Providing opportunities to participate in carefully structured experiential learning

- International comparators
 - ▶ “The list of international programs resembling ES&L is most striking because of its variety”
 - ▶ ES&L and comparable programs elsewhere have found “ingenious” ways to integrate substantive courses in ethics, philosophy, politics, policy, history, and sociology into an interdisciplinary program with a significant legal component
 - ▶ Compared to other similar offerings, ES&L “certainly shines in its ability to marry interdisciplinary breadth and intellectual rigour into a thematically coherent program that students find engaging and relevant, and instructors find rewarding”

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

- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Reviewers note limited opportunity to grow program enrolment, so long as the program continues to (justifiably) prioritize small core courses at the advanced levels, and operate with a limited number of instructors
 - ▶ Some program sustainability challenges remain, and reviewers note these are likely common in any non-departmental program that relies heavily on external providers of experiential education, and non-tenure-stream faculty
 - ▶ “An interdisciplinary program lodged in a college is always going to be exposed to challenges over time simply because it relies on so many other pieces of the institutional system to thrive”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Reviewers highlight the importance of nurturing relationships among contributing faculty and more broadly of encouraging “program-specific camaraderie”, and recommend that Trinity College make funds available to support the planning and delivery of a regular social event for ES&L faculty and students
 - ▶ ES&L leadership urged to schedule regular meetings with heads of cognate units involved in the program, to keep them apprised of any issues arising in the program or any relevant new opportunities
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Consider capitalizing on the success of the program, and explore the possibility of expanding to offer a Specialist (reviewers note that this would require additional resources, if pursued)
 - ▶ Reviewers note that leadership continuity is essential to ES&L, and that the program should actively plan for eventual changes (and potential leaves) in the coming years
 - ▶ Reviewers note that ensuring the continuity and quality of contributing faculty is also essential to the program’s long-term health, and careful planning in this regard will remain important
 - ▶ Continuing to build community among students, faculty, adjunct instructors and alumni will be key to the program’s ongoing success

- ▶ Program leadership, in consultation with leaders at Trinity College and FAS, are encouraged to develop a planning document that outlines in detail the resources needed to maintain program robustness in the long term, as well as the resources that would be required for any potential program expansion



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

September 12, 2024

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

RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Ethics, Society & Law program

Dear Prof. McCahan,

I write in response to your letter of June 3, 2024, regarding the March 22, 2024, UTQAP cyclical review of the Ethics, Society & Law undergraduate program and requesting our Administrative Responses. The program reviewed is: Ethics, Society and Law, HBA: Major.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers, Professor Peter C. Caldwell, Rice University, Professor Katherine Fierlbeck, Dalhousie University, for their very comprehensive review of the Ethics, Society & Law program. We would also like to thank the Dean of Arts & Vice-Provost of Trinity College, the program director, faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study. We also wish to thank the many staff, students, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided thoughtful feedback. The UTQAP cyclical review process is an invaluable exercise that affords us the opportunity to take stock of our academic units and programs, to recognize achievement, and identify areas for improvement.

The review report was finalized on April 23, 2024, after which the Dean of Arts & Vice-Provost of Trinity College shared it widely with stakeholders in the Ethics, Society & Law program. We are extremely pleased with the reviewers' positive assessment of the overall strength of the Ethics, Society & Law program and its outstanding, productive faculty. The reviewers noted a "vibrant and stable program" with energetic leadership, innovative capstone seminar topics led by outstanding instructors, and "smart, energetic, and committed students" who have a strong sense of community. The review report also raised several issues and challenges and identified areas for enhancement, including difficulty for students in accessing elective courses in other units, some program requirements that are now obsolete, substantial teaching and administrative loads for program leadership, and limited opportunity to grow program enrolment.

Each of these recommendations has been addressed in the attached Review Recommendations Table that outlines the unit's response, the Dean's response, and an Implementation Plan identifying action items and timelines for each recommendation. My Administrative Response and Implementation Plan was developed in consultation with the Dean of Arts & Vice-Provost of Trinity College and the program director of the Ethics, Society & Law program and with the Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, and senior leadership within my office. The Implementation Plan provided identifies timeframes of immediate- (six months), medium- (one to two years), and longer- (three to five years) term actions and who (Faculty, Dean, unit) will take the lead in each area. I also identified any necessary changes in organization, policy, or governance where appropriate, as well as any resources, financial or otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.

The next UTQAP cyclical review of Ethics, Society & Law program will take place no later than the 2031-32 review cycle. My office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with program leadership. I also acknowledge that your office will request a brief Interim Monitoring Report midway between the March 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in the 2031-32 review cycle to report on progress made on the Implementation Plan as outlined in the accompanying Review Recommendations Table.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to respond to the review report. The reviewers' comments and recommendations will help inform the future priorities of the Ethics, Society & Law undergraduate program.

Sincerely,



Antoinette Handley
Acting Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Professor, Department of Political Science

cc.

- Nicholas Terpstra, Provost & Vice-Chancellor, Trinity College
- Kevin Lewis O'Neill, Dean of Arts & Vice-Provost, Trinity College
- John Duncan, Program Director, Ethics, Society & Law program, Trinity College
- Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science
- Caitlin Burton, Manager, Academic Change & Reviews, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
- Lachmi Singh, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
- Andrea Benoit, Academic Planning & Review Officer, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science

2023-24 UTQAP Review of the FAS Ethics, Society and Law (ES&L) Program, housed in Trinity College - Review Recommendations

Please do the following for each recommendation in the table:

- If you **intend** to act on a recommendation, please provide an **Implementation Plan** identifying actions to be taken, the time frame (short, medium, long term) for each, and who will take the lead in each area. If appropriate, please identify any necessary changes in organization, policy or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.
- If you **do not** intend to act on a recommendation, please briefly explain why the actions recommended have not been prioritized.
- In accordance with the UTQAP and Ontario's Quality Assurance Framework, "it is important to note that, while the external reviewers' report may include **commentary** on issues such as faculty complement and/or space requirements when related to the quality of the program under review, **recommendations** on these or any other elements that are within the purview of the university's internal budgetary decision-making processes must be tied directly to issues of program quality or sustainability" (emphasis added)
- You may wish to refer to the [sample table](#) provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Program Response	Dean's Response
The reviewers noted that some of the program's course requirements appear to be obsolete or redundant. They recommended conducting an assessment of these requirements, and making adjustments as appropriate.	1	"Given that the current system of class progression fulfills the original intent to provide students with a general thematic introduction to the program, the [current requirement] is both obsolete and redundant (as well as frustrating to the students in their lack of predictable accessibility). This requirement can now be removed."	The program agrees with the recommendation. Please see the next item.	The Dean's office acknowledges that the program will remove this requirement and will support the modification to do so. Please see below, #2.
	2	"The requirement that students "take 1.0 credit from ETH201H1, ETH210H1, ETH220H1, ETH230H1, ETH350H1, ETH401H1, PHL265H1, PHL275H1, POL200Y1, to be taken in any year of registration in the program" should be eliminated. The courses noted here can simply be listed under the category stipulating that students must take "3.0 credits from Groups A-D, including at least a 0.5 credit from each of Groups A-C and at least 1.5 credits at the 300+ level."	The program agrees with the recommendation. The requirement in question responded to a recommendation from the previous UTQAP review. However, since that review the program also doubled the number of its required courses by adding TRN203H1H, TRN204H1H, and TRN312H1H (to the previously existing list of PHL271H1H, TRN303H1H, and TRN412H1H), making the addition of the requirement in question largely unnecessary. Furthermore, although the requirement – which is to "take 1.0 credit from ETH201H1, ETH210H1, ETH220H1, ETH230H1, ETH350H1, ETH401H1, PHL265H1, PHL275H1, POL200Y1 ... in any year of	As above #1, these changes in program requirements will require a major modification and the Dean's office will support that proposal. In the immediate-to-medium term, the modification will be developed this year and likely go through Faculty governance in 2024-25, to be effective September 2025.

			<p>registration in the program” – does include choice on paper, the full list of courses is rarely offered in reality, significantly reducing choice, which in turn unduly limits timetable options for students.</p> <p>To remove the requirement: The program would seek modifications in 2024-25. The current 5th requirement would be removed altogether, turning requirement 6, the final requirement, into the new 5th (and still final) requirement. The required number of credits to be taken in the new 5th requirement would go up from 3.0 to 4.0. Thus, requirement 6 – “3.0 credits from Groups A-D, including at least a 0.5 credit from each of Groups A-C and at least 1.5 credits at the 300+ level. Courses taken in fulfillment of requirement 5 above may not be counted toward the Group courses here” – would become the new requirement 5: “4.0 credits from Groups A-D, including at least a 0.5 credit from each of Groups A-C and at least 1.5 credits at the 300+ level.”</p> <p>Thus, students would be required to take 3FCEs in ES&L core courses (TRN203H1H, TRN204H1H, PHL271H1H, TRN303H1H, TRN312H1H, and TRN412H1H), and 4 FCEs from courses in the program’s optional courses in Groups A (Ethics), B (Society), C (Law) and D (Other), including at least a 0.5 credit from each of Groups A-C and at least 1.5 credits at the 300+ level.</p>	
<p>The reviewers highlighted the importance of nurturing and maintaining current positive relationships among faculty that contribute to the program, and recommended that Trinity College prioritize and provide supports</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>“Trinity College should consider making available a small sum of money at the start of each fiscal year to enable ES&L more easily to organize a regular social event for faculty and students”</p>	<p>The program agrees with the recommendation.</p> <p>The Dean of Arts (Trinity) has authorised an annual budget of \$5000 for the program for</p>	<p>The Dean’s office supports the College’s plan to commit funds from the Trinity College Dean of Art’s budget to support program initiatives such as those recommended by the reviewers.</p>

to enable regular social events for ES&L faculty and students.			activities including regular social events for faculty and students.	
The reviewers recommended that ES&L conduct regular meetings with the heads of cognate units to maintain robust relationships, facilitate communication regarding the organization and operation of the program, and to keep cognate units apprised of any relevant emerging issues or opportunities.	4	“ES&L should schedule one meeting every year with heads of the cognate departments involved in the program, in order to keep them up to date on any issues that may be arising in the program, or any new opportunities that may emerge respecting the program.”	<p>The program agrees with the recommendation.</p> <p>ES&L will schedule an annual meeting with the heads (or their designates) of ES&L’s cognate units – units related to, or involved in, the program -- in order to keep the heads up to date on any issues that may be arising in the program, or any new opportunities that may emerge respecting the program.</p> <p>The Dean of Arts (Trinity) has authorised an annual budget of \$5000 for the program for activities including the expenses involved in an annual meeting with heads of the cognate units.</p>	The Dean’s office supports the program’s plan that, as part of the Trinity College Dean of Art’s budget, the program director now has additional resources and will use them to meet with cognate chairs yearly. This offers an opportunity to enhance current relationships with cognate units and discuss curricular matters that support continuous improvement to the program.
The reviewers observed that some of the sustainability challenges raised in the previous review of ES&L remain, and “indeed are probably part of any such non-departmental program that relies heavily on external providers of experiential education and non-tenured faculty.” They broadly recommended that the program work in consultation with Trinity College and the Faculty of Arts and Science to develop a detailed strategic plan that outlines the resources needed to maintain long-term program robustness, as well as resources that would be required for any potential expansion.	5	<p>“In discussion with both the College and the Faculty, the Director and Associate Director should develop a planning document that outlines in granular form what is needed to keep the program robust over the longer term (5-15 years), the particular shape that a Specialist program of study in ES&L would take, and the kinds of resources that would be needed were the program to expand into a Specialist program.</p> <p>This document could focus on long-term staffing, including the possibility of requesting cross-appointed faculty with cognate units (potentially in the form of teaching professorships), succession planning, and the workload of administrative staff; curriculum development; the possibility of expanding the capstone programs; and methods of maintaining a closer relationship with alumni.”</p>	<p>The program agrees with this recommendation in general, although some details require modification.</p> <p>In consultation with program stakeholders, including Trinity College and FAS, the ES&L program will develop a planning document to maintain the program in robust form over the longer term.</p> <p>The recommendation to consider the expansion of ES&L with the possible addition of a specialist program, as part of the planning exercise, is welcome but requires modification. In consultation with the College and FAS, it has become clear that specialist programs in general are less popular than they once were, somewhat resource intensive, and difficult to maintain if enrollments decline at all. A specialist is not likely a good fit for ES&L.</p>	<p>The Dean’s office acknowledges that the program is interested in expanding the major program enrolment, but not interested in moving forward in exploring the feasibility of a specialist program.</p> <p>The cross-appointment model is working well for the program and the Dean’s office supports its continuation.</p> <p>In the immediate-medium term, the Dean’s office encourages the program leadership to discuss enrolment expansion options with the Vice-Deans Academic Planning and Undergraduate.</p> <p>The Dean’s office supports the Trinity College’s plan to develop a granular unit level plan and the Vice-Dean, Academic Planning can advise on best practices for developing such a document that attends to the topics</p>

			<p>Nevertheless, expansion is a welcome recommendation “to keep the program robust over the longer term,” as the reviewers recommend.</p> <p>The number of ES&L subject-POST requests over the last 8 years averages 585 requests for 75 new seats per year (year 2016, 599 requests; 2017, 629; 2018,581; 2019, 463; 2020, 599; 2021, 572; 2022, 599; 2023, 638). Currently, only about 15% of applicants are enrolled in ES&L each September. The program has sufficient excess demand to increase enrolment by two-thirds and easily maintain a minimum entrance requirement score of 80% for all students – e.g., during the summer of 2024, 220 students with 80+% relevant averages requested ES&L in the first round alone.</p> <p>Planning a pathway to expansion would address the reviewers’ recommendation that ES&L engage in a planning process “that outlines in granular form what is needed to keep the program robust over the longer term (5-15 years), the particular shape that [...] [expansion] in ES&L would take, and the kinds of resources that would be needed were the program to expand [...].”</p> <p>Other elements would be included in the planning process, including: (1) developing ES&L’s relationship with cognate units such as the Center for Ethics (which is located at Trinity and which does not host an undergraduate programs); (2) the continuation of the both cross-appointed faculty model and Trinity’s continuing faculty appointments model.</p>	<p>mentioned in the recommendation by the reviewers.</p>
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			In general, Trinity College and ES&L are open to the recommendation to expand that has come out of the UTQAP process. The college and the program intend to explore collaborations with FAS around both developing a stronger relationship with the Center for Ethics, and continuing to develop the cross-appointed faculty model.	
	6	“second-year classes are relatively large, and should have sufficient TAs to ensure that they can continue to focus on the writing assignments (which are very labour intensive).”	<p>The program agrees with the recommendation.</p> <p>Currently, the student-TA ratio in ES&L’s 3 large lecture courses is 25:1, wherein a single TA is paid to instruct 3 tutorial sections of up to 25 students each. The number of hours designated for such instruction, including grading, etc., is about 180 per term. The program is committed to retain this ratio.</p>	The Dean’s office acknowledges that the program feels that there is sufficient TA support at current enrolment levels. Should the program expand, as described above #5, the TA-student ratio could be revisited. The Dean’s office also suggests the program explore the Writing-Integrated Teaching program (WIT) as a source of additional support.
Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response	7	“We were told [...] that faculty outside the program who are engaged in supervising students’ projects do not receive recognition for their work (e.g., that this is not formally counted towards their service work) which, if true, should be addressed by the FAS.”	<p>The program agrees with the recommendation.</p> <p>The program proposes to prepare a brief letter to acknowledge the program supervisory work of each faculty member outside the program. In late April / early May, Trinity’s Dean of Arts would send such letters to both (a) the faculty members themselves, and (b) their chairs (or equivalent) for the purposes of PTR.</p>	The Dean’s office supports the College’s proposal outlined here for formalizing faculty service and teaching in the program.

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 Ethics, Society & Law (ES&L) program as vibrant and stable, and observed that it fulfills an important role at the University. They noted that despite its interdisciplinary nature, the program is thematically coherent, and has a clear sense of its purpose and mandate relative to other cognate units and offerings. ES&L provides unique curricular opportunities that are valuable to both Trinity College and the Faculty of Arts and Science, and offers exceptional experiential learning opportunities to a subset of its students. ES&L has worked to address the sustainability challenges raised in its previous review, and has recently been supplementing the program with two tenure stream cross appointments, which provide greater long-term stability and continuity; and well-qualified adjunct faculty contribute to unique capstone seminar topics. The reviewers highlight ES&L's energetic leadership, committed instructors and project coordinators, and enthusiastic students who find the program engaging and relevant. Collegiality among ES&L faculty (including those who reside in other units) is currently solid, and a planned new Trinity College Building is expected to benefit the program.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: conducting an assessment of course requirements that may be obsolete or redundant, and making adjustments as appropriate; nurturing current positive relationships among faculty that contribute to the program, and prioritizing and providing supports to enable regular social events for ES&L faculty and students; conducting regular meetings with the heads of cognate units to maintain robust relationships, facilitate communication regarding program organization and operation, and to keep cognate units apprised of any relevant emerging issues or opportunities; and working in consultation with Trinity College and the Faculty of Arts and Science to develop a detailed strategic plan that outlines the resources needed to maintain long-term program robustness, as well as resources that would be required for any potential expansion.

The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty and program's 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 monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with program leadership. The office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs will request a brief Interim Monitoring Report midway between the March 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the

year of the next site visit to report on progress made on the Implementation Plan as outlined in the accompanying Review Recommendations Table.

The next UTQAP cyclical review of Ethics, Society & Law program will take place no later than the 2031-32 review cycle.

6 Distribution

On June 30th 2025, 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 unit/program leadership.

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

1 Review Summary

Program(s) Reviewed:	<p><u>Undergraduate Programs:</u> <i>Programs reviewed are no longer available for enrolment as of September 21, 2023:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slavic Languages and Cultures (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor (Major/Minor Streams: Czech and Slovak, Polish, Russian, South Slavic; Ukrainian); • Russian Literature in Translation Minor <p><i>For reference: Undergraduate programs available for enrolment as of March 1, 2024:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor (Language Areas: Czech & Slovak, Polish, Russian, South Slavic, Ukrainian, Finnish, Estonian) • Slavic and East European Literature in Translation, Minor <p><u>Graduate Programs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slavic Languages & Literatures: MA, PhD
Unit Reviewed:	Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David L. Cooper, Associate Professor, Head, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Administration, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign • Yana Hashamova, Arts and Sciences Distinguished Professor, Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures, Ohio State University • Olga Maiorova, Associate Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures and of History, University of Michigan
Date of Review Visit:	February 1-2, 2024
Review Report Received by VPAP:	April 22, 2024

Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:	September 12, 2024
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 22, 2024

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: March 6-7, 2014

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- The Department is "...a jewel in the crown of the University of Toronto, Canada, and North America"
- Stimulating, interdisciplinary curriculum
- Outstanding course offerings at all levels achieved through collaboration and creative teaching
- Notable quality of undergraduate and graduate students
- Stellar mentoring and advising provided for undergraduate and graduate students
- Highly impressive body of scholarship produced by faculty

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Using standardized measures in assessing students' language proficiency
- Strengthening students' language proficiency through international experiences
- Continuing to track student and alumni metrics to aid in demonstrating the Department's strong international standing
- Increasing support for conference participation and professional mentoring for graduate students
- Examining the impact of graduate student funding, especially relative to time-to-completion
- Reviewing faculty areas of expertise as part of the complement planning process

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

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

Consultation Process

Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science; Vice-Dean, Academic Planning and Interim Associate Dean, Unit-level Reviews, Faculty of Arts & Science; Department Chair; Undergraduate and Graduate Associate Chairs; Department faculty; Slavic Resources Coordinator & Co-Director of the Petro Jacyk Program for the Study of Ukraine; Senior program administrators; Undergraduate and Graduate students; Administrative staff; as well as members of relevant cognate units (History; Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies; Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian 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**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures (SLL) has a long history of being a “full service” Slavic department offering full undergraduate majors and graduate study in several Slavic languages/literatures other than Russian
 - ▶ Undergraduate curriculum revisions represent a foundational change that keeps SLL in the forefront of the field and promises great benefit to students
- Objectives
 - ▶ Revised undergraduate programs balance and integrate the SLL’s various language and cultural streams and respond to recent external reviews, to the impetus to decolonize study of the region, to larger trends in the field in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and to the FAS strategic priority to reimagine and reinvent undergraduate education
 - ▶ Restructured undergraduate curriculum will bring pedagogical efficiency by offering integrated comparative options requiring faculty to cross the boundaries of their national literary areas and collaborate across languages and cultures
 - ▶ Restructured undergraduate programs reflect a thoughtful approach to maintaining equitable options across Slavic language areas, adding Estonian and Finnish as well
 - ▶ Department is gradually shifting toward more of a cultural studies approach, offering new courses in areas like diaspora and migration, race and gender studies, media and film studies that often cross old disciplinary boundaries and attract new students
 - ▶ Programs offer a broad and comparative approach that speaks to a variety of student intellectual interests; transition to a more comparative curriculum follows the best disciplinary developments
 - ▶ Program learning outcomes are aligned with institutional expectations for student learning outcomes

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Admission requirements are appropriate
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Restructuring of undergraduate programs to integrate all streams under the rubric of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures, harmonizing coursework requirements, and introducing shared core courses noted as a significant innovation
 - ▶ Curriculum revisions promote a more inclusive and egalitarian balance of programs that is no longer dominated by Russian and Soviet topics, and promises a number of other positive outcomes including greater instructional efficiency and improvements in stimulating student cohort cohesiveness and collaboration
 - ▶ SLL considers the range of students' skills and backgrounds and adapts language classes and cultural curriculum to meet their diverse needs
 - ▶ Language program follows a communicative model to build both linguistic and cultural proficiencies
 - ▶ Flexible program options allowing students to take some comparative courses or courses in cognate disciplines reflect a more interdisciplinary, comparative, and forward-looking approach to the field
 - ▶ Program requirements are well designed to enable students to achieve the department's thoughtfully articulated program learning outcomes
 - ▶ SLL's programs offered in-person in lecture, seminar, and mixed lecture/discussion formats, in line with disciplinary norms and best practices
 - ▶ Current research informs the content of existing classes and the addition of new classes in the department
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Department provides support for students seeking assistance with using gender-inclusive language in language courses
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Program assessment practices offer a solid baseline for monitoring student growth and pedagogical effectiveness
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students are passionate about their studies and they admire their professors
 - ▶ SLL has been active and successful in raising funds to attract new students to their undergraduate programs
 - ▶ Smaller classrooms offer better engagement of faculty and students
 - ▶ Students expressed wide enthusiasm for the high standards for learning and engagement they encountered in the department
 - ▶ Undergraduate students expressed appreciation of the quality of education they are receiving, and voiced loyalty and commitment to the program
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ Impressive and commendable enrollments in SLL language classes, particularly in the absence an undergraduate foreign language requirement
 - ▶ Course evaluations and surveys indicate that students are achieving desired institutional degree outcomes through study in SLL

- ▶ Student evaluations of teaching quality in the department are high relative to FAS as a whole
- ▶ Rate at which 4th year SLL students' participate in at least one high-impact practice is higher than University or provincial rates
- ▶ 100% of polled SLL 4th year students respond that they would attend the same university and program if they could start over again
- Student funding
 - ▶ Department prioritizes community fundraising efforts, which help diversify curriculum and support undergraduate scholarships

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

- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Reviewers caution that students with interest or need for support using gender-inclusive language in language courses may not feel empowered to ask for it
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students expressed some dissatisfaction regarding unequal support of students specializing in different national cultures; reviewers attribute this to faculty departures and the inability of temporary faculty to provide the same level of support as tenure-stream faculty
 - ▶ Reviewers note that students appear to often find themselves lacking clear information regarding available courses, course schedules, and other opportunities

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Continue the general transformation of the department toward a cultural studies approach
 - ▶ Develop comparative and cross-disciplinary courses, integrating new topics, approaches, and material into the cultural curriculum
 - ▶ Enable further integration of the various language-area streams by allowing a greater number of courses to count toward requirements
 - ▶ Expand opportunities for students to communicate research results, offering options to present results in blogs, podcasts, websites and other forms of media, in addition to traditional research papers
 - ▶ Explore ways to understand and better serve students' professional aspirations
 - ▶ Students expressed interest in more interdisciplinary and cultural studies courses offering thematically broader topics to take them beyond literary studies and provide broader cultural and social contexts
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Continue to consider students' diverse needs, including providing language classroom models for students wishing to use gender-inclusive language
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Consider adding additional small assessment practices to monitor students' progress toward program-level learning outcomes

- ▶ Consider additional methods of assessing students' language proficiency to determine if they are meeting program goals
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Reviewers note that better communication regarding courses, course schedules, and other opportunities could improve students' experience
 - ▶ Reviewers recommend careful use of student evaluations in monitoring programs for potential issues
 - ▶ Seek institutional support to study the undergraduate students' profiles and career outcomes
 - ▶ Further integrate career preparation and development of transferrable skills into programs
 - ▶ Continue involvement with the FAS Backpack to Briefcase program

2. Graduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures (SLL) has a long history of being a "full service" Slavic department offering full undergraduate majors and graduate study in several Slavic languages/literatures other than Russian
- Objectives
 - ▶ Programs are appropriate to their goal of preparing university-level researchers and teachers in the field
 - ▶ Program learning outcomes are aligned with institutional expectations for student learning outcomes
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Standards for admission to MA and PhD programs are field appropriate and comparable to top peer institutions
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Diversified MA program now includes a two-year option to expand opportunities for advanced study to students not fully prepared by their undergraduate programs
 - ▶ Graduate program structure and requirements are in line with the expectations of top programs at peer institutions
 - ▶ SLL's programs offered in-person in lecture, seminar, and mixed lecture/discussion formats, in line with disciplinary norms and best practices
 - ▶ Program structure is appropriate to the degree of mastery expected upon completion
 - ▶ Time-to-completion expectations are reasonable
 - ▶ Department is able to offer enough graduate courses to meet student demand and to ensure that they can meet program completion requirements
 - ▶ Current research informs the content of existing classes and the addition of new classes in the department

- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Department provides support for students seeking assistance with using gender-inclusive language in language courses
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Program assessment practices offer a solid baseline for monitoring student growth and pedagogical effectiveness
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students expressed wide enthusiasm for the high standards for learning and engagement they encountered in the department
 - ▶ Course evaluations and surveys indicate that students are achieving desired institutional degree outcomes through study in SLL
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ PhD graduates enjoy a high success rate on the academic job market
 - ▶ Some PhD graduates have launched successful academic careers in North America and Western Europe
 - ▶ Success of PhD alumni indicates that program’s field-appropriate learning outcomes are being achieved
- Quality indicators – faculty
 - ▶ Faculty advance research topics and use methods that educate and train their graduate students with the latest developments in the field
- Student funding
 - ▶ SLL has been active and successful in raising funds to supplement graduate funding

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

- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Reviewers caution that students with interest or need for support using gender-inclusive language in language courses may not feel empowered to ask for it
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students expressed some dissatisfaction regarding unequal support of students specializing in different national cultures; reviewers attribute this to faculty departures and the inability of temporary faculty to provide the same level of support as tenure-stream faculty
 - ▶ Reviewers note that students appear to often find themselves lacking clear information regarding available courses, course schedules, and other opportunities
- Student funding
 - ▶ Low levels of graduate student funding are a fundamental barrier to recruiting top students and to their timely completion of their programs
 - ▶ Current funding packages do not provide adequate living resources for students given the high cost of living in Toronto

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Reviewers support planned modifications to graduate program curricula, including removal of the coursework plus research paper option from the MA program and removal of the Slavic linguistics field option from the PhD program
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Continue to consider students' diverse needs, including providing language classroom models for students wishing to use gender-inclusive language
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Consider adding additional assessment practices to monitor students' progress toward program-level learning outcomes
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Reviewers recommend careful use of student evaluations in monitoring programs for potential issues
 - ▶ Seek institutional support to study non-academic career outcomes for PhD graduates and
 - ▶ Explore opportunities to provide guidance regarding non-academic careers for graduate students, e.g., providing information about existing workshops, information sessions, or training for careers beyond academia
 - ▶ Further integrate career preparation and development of transferrable skills into programs, including presenting information and research results in blogs, podcasts, websites and other forms of media
 - ▶ Reviewers note that better communication regarding courses, course schedules, and other opportunities could improve students' experience
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ Reviewers support efforts to eliminate some program requirements and reduce time to completion rates
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ Explore opportunities to gather more comprehensive data on alumni career outcomes, to inform career preparation and skill development components within programs
- Student funding
 - ▶ “We recommend in the strongest possible terms that the university prioritize increasing funding levels for graduate students if it aims to continue to be a leading research institution”

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ SLL faculty are well recognized and respected for their service to the profession, serving on many boards and committees and supporting a wide range of North American and European journals

- ▶ Department is well positioned for leadership continuity with a pool of talented faculty at various stages of development
- ▶ Faculty commitment to student mentoring is reflected in undergraduate student satisfaction and graduate student citations of faculty availability for consultation and openness in the classroom
- Research
 - ▶ Tenured, tenure track, and teaching stream faculty are renowned scholars who produce a high volume of important publications in a broad array of sub-disciplines
 - ▶ “Enviably” quantity of books produced by the Department in the past decade
 - ▶ Faculty demonstrate admirable success in receiving grant awards through national competitions administered by SSHRC
 - ▶ Impressive research output and collaborations in joint research ventures with peer institutions in North America, the UK, and Western Europe
 - ▶ SLL faculty organize and frequently participate in conferences and other academic gatherings worldwide
- Faculty
 - ▶ SLL faculty are committed to maintaining and increasing the Department’s current standing as an internationally recognized premier center for research and teaching in Slavic and East European languages, literatures, and cultures
 - ▶ SLL faculty are highly skilled scholars and teachers, well qualified to realize the program’s goals and successful in fostering the program’s academic environment
 - ▶ SLL faculty work on projects with international experts from the U.S. and Europe is a strong testament to their international reputation
 - ▶ Collaborative research efforts of SLL faculty are remarkably robust for a field in which individual authorship and research projects are the norm
 - ▶ Faculty promote innovation and foster a rigorous intellectual climate for their graduate students, evident in the innovative interdisciplinary coursework offered in the program and in the performance of their graduates on the competitive academic job market
 - ▶ Faculty are remarkably balanced and egalitarian in the sharing of doctoral student supervision responsibilities
 - ▶ Several SLL faculty have received FAS and college teaching awards
 - ▶ Mid-career and junior faculty members are well-established or show great potential for success
 - ▶ Teaching stream professor in Russian language pedagogy has built a strong reputation of engaging with the most current pedagogy and being supportive of teaching assistants
 - ▶ Successful tenure and promotion processes in the period under review indicate the effectiveness of the Department’s PTR Committee

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

- Faculty
 - ▶ Reviewers note the current non-alignment of faculty expertise with all of the Slavic language/literature areas programmatically covered as a challenge to programs' sustainability
 - ▶ Czech/Slovak and Polish streams in undergraduate and graduate programs are served by limited time teaching stream faculty with some support from part-time visiting faculty
 - ▶ Unsuccessful attempts to secure administrative approval to address concerns regarding faculty disciplinary coverage have left the department leadership frustrated and demoralized as they aspire to continue to be a "full service" Slavic department offering full undergraduate majors and graduate study in several Slavic languages/literatures other than Russian

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ Undergraduate curriculum revisions will require faculty to cross the boundaries of their national literary areas and collaborate across languages and cultures.
 - ▶ Reviewers support the Department's proposed approach to hire Slavic comparatists who can cover more than one language/literature area, and who also address the trend toward interdisciplinary and cultural studies approaches in the field
 - ▶ Reviewers strongly recommend the approval of the current proposed hire of a Slavic comparatist in digital culture and new media as an investment in a promising strategic direction; "...the proposed hire would help SLL to implement with a greater degree of success the curricular modifications to the undergraduate programs, as well as both MA and PhD levels"
 - ▶ Request for new hire should be framed in the context of efforts to expand curricula and course offerings to include innovative interdisciplinary topics, issues, and methodologies
 - ▶ Limited-term teaching stream and part-time visiting faculty should not be envisioned as a permanent solution to concerns regarding faculty disciplinary coverage in areas with recent faculty losses, but as a temporary solution to maintaining those streams as the process of shifting new faculty expertise into those areas continues; "for program quality and sustainability, the final goal should be core faculty coverage of these areas"
 - ▶ Consider joint hires with other units

4. Administration

Note: Issues that are addressed through specific University processes and therefore considered out of scope for UTQAP reviews (e.g., individual Human Resources issues, specific health and safety concerns) are routed to proper University offices to be addressed, and are therefore not included in the Review Summary component of the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Collegial and courteous professional relationships among faculty
 - ▶ SLL has developed important and productive relationships with local and national Slavic diaspora communities, enabling creation of a broad slate of student awards and prizes; Department has a strong history of community fundraising
 - ▶ Gradual shift toward a more cultural studies approach to the discipline has enabled SLL to build vital relationships with cognate units
 - ▶ Collaborative relationships are evident in the Department's cross-listed courses with no fewer than 13 programs and centers
 - ▶ Participation in several graduate collaborative specializations benefits students and speaks of the openness of the Department and the collaborative work of the faculty
 - ▶ SLL faculty offer lectures and presentations to the local community
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Current Chair has been "a most capable, dedicated, and far-sighted leader"
 - ▶ Duties appear to be well divided and shared among the core faculty contingent
 - ▶ Department functions well with current administrative structure (Department Chair, Associate Chair-Graduate, Associate Chair-Undergraduate and two administrative staff members) and various committees
 - ▶ Staff members have excellent working relationships and appear committed to the Department
 - ▶ SLL's physical space is adequate for the department; recent renovations added utility and modern atmosphere
 - ▶ U of T Libraries and their holdings and resources for Slavic studies are extraordinary and offer a wealth of resources to students for research; scholarly support provided by the libraries is ahead of that available in many peer departments
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ SLL belongs among the most elite Slavic departments in North America for the quality and breadth of its faculty, research, and academic programs
 - ▶ SLL is the only full-service Slavic department in Canada and one of the few that has been able to sustain programs across multiple Slavic areas at a high level, including undergraduate majors and PhD specializations and not just language instruction
 - ▶ SLL has shown itself to be responsive to indications of potential problems and ever engaged in a process of program improvement
 - ▶ Recent undergraduate program reforms and the ongoing shift in the department toward a more cultural studies and interdisciplinary approach keep it on the cutting edge of developments in the field

- ▶ Efforts in research, curricular reform and innovation, and community outreach serve the strategic priorities of the Faculty of Arts & Science to push the boundaries of research excellence, enhance academic programming and the student experience, and build partnerships with local and global communities
- ▶ FAS Language Citation initiative is a unique program to recognize achievements in the study of foreign languages
- ▶ Commendable fund-raising initiative could boost undergraduate program enrolments
- ▶ Department has distinguished itself with long-standing commitment to disciplinary diversity and the wide range of East European languages and cultures taught and studied
- ▶ SLL's comprehensive programs of study in several languages and cultures, including less commonly taught languages, are among its greatest strengths
- ▶ SLL is in the "vanguard" of the discipline-wide initiative to decolonize Slavic studies to make the field more inclusive and open to the previously marginalized cultures of Eastern Europe; "This feature of the Unit is a great asset to the profession"
- International comparators
 - ▶ SLL is the only full-service Slavic department in Canada and belongs among the most elite Slavic departments in North America for the quality and breadth of its faculty, research, and academic programs
 - ▶ SLL is internationally recognized as a center of Ukrainian studies comparable, in the Western hemisphere, to only a few high-profile institutions
 - ▶ SLL has done a remarkable job of maintaining program enrollments that are near the top among its peers
 - ▶ Faculty grant success and publication productivity compares favorably with Slavic departments in the U.S.

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

- Relationships
 - ▶ Reviewers observe some tension between experts in different national cultures (though they note that this does not appear to be detrimental to the working environment of the Department and is common in the field)

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Continue to seek more collaborations with cognate units and programs through cross-listed courses, joint programs, and joint hires
 - ▶ Advance and expand community outreach efforts, to increase the public engagement of faculty and students and enhance the Department's social impact
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Proposed renaming of the department should be part of efforts to rebrand SLL as a unit dedicated to interdisciplinary language and culture study to attract a broader cohort of students to its programs and increase its enrollments

- ▶ In collaboration with the Faculty of Arts & Science and other language departments, develop a larger initiative designed to bring attention to the University of Toronto as a flagship Canadian institution for world and less commonly taught languages; such an initiative could highlight existing opportunities for foreign language and culture study, enable expansion of co-curricular opportunities, demystify career pathways for students, and enable recruitment
 - Departments could pursue outside grant funding to finance this initiative
- ▶ Explore strategies to increase publicity for the FAS Language Citation initiative, as part of a larger project to highlight the unique opportunities for language study available at the University, generate interest and excitement among students, and as a potential opportunity for growth
- ▶ Reviewers support current plan to create a new curriculum committee to guide the implementation of the new undergraduate curriculum changes, and to lead further curriculum additions
- ▶ Establish a permanent scholarship committee comprising the Department's continuing faculty on an annually rotating basis
- ▶ "...In the context of limited resources and in the face of shrinking enrollments, the shifting of faculty expertise may have to happen over a longer term and one or two of the areas with the smallest enrollments may have to be let go. We recommend frank discussion between the department and the administration on these issues."
- ▶ Leverage community partnerships and donor relationships as part of Departmental revenue generation efforts
- ▶ Consider diversification of enrollment strategies in order to attract students who are majoring in disciplines other than Slavic studies, but who have an interest in acquiring knowledge of Eastern Europe and Central Eurasia
- International comparators
 - ▶ Leverage practices already implemented by peer institutions in North America as part of broader project to re-package cultural curriculum, in order to target a broader undergraduate student population and facilitate enrollment growth



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

September 12, 2024

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

RE: UTQAP cyclical review of Department of Slavic & East European Languages & Cultures (formerly Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures)

Dear Prof. McCahan,

I write in response to your letter of June 18, 2024, regarding the February 1-2, 2024, UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Slavic & East European Languages & Cultures (formerly Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures) and requesting our Administrative Responses.

The following programs were reviewed: Slavic Languages and Cultures (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor (Major and Minor Streams: Czech and Slovak, Polish, Russian, South Slavic, Ukrainian); Russian Literature in Translation (Minor); Slavic Languages & Literatures: MA, PhD.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers, Professor David L. Cooper, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Professor Yana Hashamova, Ohio State University, and Professor Olga Maiorova, University of Michigan, for their very comprehensive review of the Department. We would also like to thank the department chair, program coordinator, faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study. We also wish to thank the many staff, students, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided thoughtful feedback. The UTQAP cyclical review process is an invaluable exercise that affords us the opportunity to take stock of our academic units and programs, to recognize achievement, and identify areas for improvement.

The review report was finalized on April 19, 2024, after which the chair shared it widely with stakeholders in the Department. We are extremely pleased with the reviewers' positive assessment of the overall strength of the Department and its outstanding, productive faculty. The review report noted the recently restructured undergraduate program and its more comparative curriculum, with its flexible program offerings and well-designed requirements to achieve the program learning outcomes and the high standards for learning and engagement at both undergraduate and graduate levels, with PhD graduates enjoying a high success rate on the academic job market. The report applauded the faculty as renowned scholars who produce a high volume of important publications in a broad array of sub-disciplines and who are also well recognized and respected for their service to the profession. The review report also raised several issues and challenges and identified areas for enhancement, including the need to provide language classroom models for students wishing to use gender-inclusive language, developing better communication

regarding courses, course schedules, and other opportunities, and identifying the low levels of graduate student funding as a barrier to recruiting top students.

Each of these recommendations has been addressed in the attached Review Recommendations Table that outlines the unit's response, the Dean's response, and an Implementation Plan identifying action items and timelines for each recommendation. My Administrative Response and Implementation Plan was developed in consultation with the department chair and with the Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, and senior leadership within my office. The Implementation Plan provided identifies timeframes of immediate- (six months), medium- (one to two years), and longer- (three to five years) term actions and who (Faculty, Dean, unit) will take the lead in each area. I also identified any necessary changes in organization, policy, or governance where appropriate, as well as any resources, financial or otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.

As this UTQAP cyclical review was deferred twice (from the 2021-22 and 2022-23 review cycles), the next UTQAP cyclical review of the Department will take place no later than the 2029-30 review cycle. This date reflects the original UTQAP review cycle (2021-22) and is stipulated in the most recent deferral response from your office dated October 21, 2022.

My office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with program leadership and through the Department's five-year unit-level academic planning process, which will begin at the conclusion of the cyclical review. I also acknowledge that your office will request a brief Interim Monitoring Report midway between the February 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in the 2029-30 review cycle to report on progress made on the Implementation Plan as outlined in the accompanying Review Recommendations Table.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to respond to the review report. The reviewers' comments and recommendations will help inform the future priorities of the Department of Slavic & East European Languages & Cultures (formerly Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures) and its undergraduate and graduate programs.

Sincerely,



Antoinette Handley
Acting Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Professor, Department of Political Science

cc.

- Leonid Livak, Chair, Department of Slavic & East European Languages & Cultures, Faculty of Arts & Science
- Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science
- Caitlin Burton, Manager, Academic Change & Reviews, Faculty of Arts & Science
- Lachmi Singh, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
- Andrea Benoit, Academic Planning & Review Officer, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science

2023-24 UTQAP Review of the FAS Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures - Review Recommendations

Please do the following for each recommendation in the table:

- If you **intend** to act on a recommendation, please provide an **Implementation Plan** identifying actions to be taken, the time frame (short, medium, long term) for each, and who will take the lead in each area. If appropriate, please identify any necessary changes in organization, policy or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.
- If you **do not** intend to act on a recommendation, please briefly explain why the actions recommended have not been prioritized.
- In accordance with the UTQAP and Ontario's Quality Assurance Framework, “it is important to note that, while the external reviewers’ report may include **commentary** on issues such as faculty complement and/or space requirements when related to the quality of the program under review, **recommendations** on these or any other elements that are within the purview of the university’s internal budgetary decision-making processes must be tied directly to issues of program quality or sustainability” (emphasis added)
- You may wish to refer to the [sample table](#) provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Unit Response	Dean’s Response
The reviewers recommended that SLL continue the general transformation of the department toward a cultural studies approach and encouraged the development of additional comparative and cross-disciplinary courses; they also voiced support for plans to create a new curriculum committee to guide the implementation of the new undergraduate curriculum changes and to lead further curriculum adjustments.	1	“We recommend that SLL continue the general transformation of the department, in line with the transforming discipline, toward a cultural studies approach.”	This transformation is ongoing. The new suite of the Department’s modified undergraduate programs, enhancing interdisciplinarity and covering the full range of creative cultural expression beyond literature, took effect in March 2024. The Department’s medium-term goal is to ensure the smooth transition, for students and for faculty, from the old to the new suite of undergraduate programs. The long-term goal, fully contingent on the Department’s future faculty complement, is the expansion of our interdisciplinary and comparative course offerings in cultural history and in various forms of creative cultural expression that link all seven language and culture areas we teach (Czech and Slovak, Estonian, Finnish, Polish, Russian, South Slavic, Ukrainian) in one intellectually coherent and integrated curriculum which has been put in place during the recent modification of our undergraduate programs.	The Dean’s office celebrates the significant, perhaps unprecedented curricular renewal of the undergraduate program that the Chair has led over the past two years. The Department’s curricular work is ongoing, and departmental leadership is encouraged to work with the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation (CTSI) for additional guidance.
	2	“We encourage the development of additional comparative and cross-disciplinary courses (diaspora studies, race and gender, media, digital humanities) and the further integration of the various language-area	The creation of more comparative and interdisciplinary courses integrating all language and culture areas taught at the Department is our academic unit’s medium-term curricular priority. This is because our	The Dean’s office directs the Chair and department faculty to the Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, who is available to the Department for guidance on curricular matters

		streams by allowing a greater number of such courses to count toward requirements.”	modified suite of undergraduate programs, which came into effect in March 2024, has a significant comparative component in two different course categories (“Core courses” and “Comparative courses”) representing over 30% of the required coursework in each modified Minor, Major, and Specialist program. More such courses will be created in the forthcoming academic year, drawing on the expertise of our current faculty. In the long term , however, the success of the Department’s recent curricular renewal (which aims, among other things, to enhance comparativity and interdisciplinarity in our undergraduate programs of study) will depend on the renewal of our faculty complement, particularly with an eye on colleagues trained in more than one language and culture area and whose research specialization fills the Department’s current disciplinary lacunae – media studies, digital culture, and environmental humanities.	in addition to CTSI mentioned above #1. The Associate Dean, Teaching & Learning, and Faculty Liaisons are available to assist with pedagogy and course design.
3		“We support the chair’s plan to create a new curriculum committee, which can guide the implementation of the new undergraduate curriculum changes but can also lead and supervise further curriculum additions.”	The curriculum committee, consisting of the Department’s officers (Chair, Associate Chair-Undergraduate, and Associate Chair-Graduate), was created in the academic year 2023-2024. In the medium-term , we will continue fine-tuning the committee’s functioning, especially as concerns the creation of new undergraduate and graduate courses and the modification of existing courses, with special focus on our academic unit’s new curricular needs as our faculty and students transition from the old suite of undergraduate programs to the modified suite of programs which came into effect in March 2024.	The Dean’s office applauds the Department’s formation of a curriculum committee and is available for guidance on best practices.
4		“We recommend that the Department continue to seek even more collaborations [with cognate units] through cross-listed courses, joint programs, and joint hires.”	For the past fifteen years, the Department has been and remains at the forefront of collaborative curricular initiatives. The list of our courses that count toward program requirements in other academic units is long	The Dean acknowledges the rich currently existing relationships the Department has with cognate units within Arts & Science. In the short-to-medium term, the Dean’s office will work with the Unit to develop a forward-

			<p>(see the self-study) and still growing. In the long term, we plan to continue the practice of creating courses that both appeal to students outside the Department's own programs of study and meet the requirements and expectation of cognate academic units. In the medium term, the Department's proposed hire in the tenure stream – a Slavic comparativist specializing in media studies and digital culture – will allow our academic unit to expand existing collaborative relations or establish new such relations with units and programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, to wit, Book and Media Studies at St. Michael's College; the digital humanities program at Woodsworth College; and the Graduate Collaborative Specialization in Book History and Print Culture at Massey College. Although our repeated requests for this new hire have been denied by the FAS faculty appointments committee, we will renew our hire request in 2024-25.</p>	<p>looking academic plan as part of the upcoming 5-year unit-level academic planning process, to commence upon completion of the UTQAP review.</p> <p>Each unit is asked to create a 5-year academic plan that includes goals for research, curriculum, faculty support and administrative staff support. As part of this process, the Department is also asked to outline its complement needs over the next five years. The ULP process for the Department is currently scheduled for 2025-26.</p>
5		<p>“What, however, can help the Department to increase its prominence at the UofT and help grow its enrollment in the near future is focusing on students who are majoring in disciplines other than Slavic studies but who potentially might be open to acquiring some knowledge of Eastern Europe and Central Eurasia. We recommend that the Department seek pathways to attract such students to its broader course offerings.”</p>	<p>As detailed in the self-study, the Department has long endeavored, through the design and delivery of its undergraduate courses, to attract students from disciplinary fields other than Slavic and East European Studies. To this end, we offer a broad variety of courses in cultural history and cultural expression (literature, cinema, theatre, cultural history, folklore, etc.) that are taught entirely in English with all materials in English translation. The recent modification of our undergraduate programs significantly expands the thematic breadth of our curricular offerings through comparative and interdisciplinary coursework, which is also taught in English. This practice of targeting students from disciplinary field outside Slavic and East European studies is integral to the Department's teaching philosophy and will continue in the long term. In the medium</p>	<p>The Dean's office will connect the Chair to the Office of the Faculty Registrar to facilitate the Department's participation in the many events it offers to communicate program choice information to students, such as the following:</p> <p>Through the Sidney Smith Commons, the Faculty of Arts & Science offers a series of in-person and online events, workshops and resources through Program Exploration Days to support students as they prepare to make their program selection. The Program Exploration Fair offers two full days for students to explore over 300 programs available to Arts & Science students and learn about experiential learning including research, internships and international opportunities. The weekly AMA (Ask Me Anything) event</p>

			<p>term, we plan to enhance this practice through new faculty hires whose expertise will complement the Department’s thematic lacunae, broadening our course offerings. The first such proposed hire in the tenure stream will be a Slavic comparativist specializing in media studies and digital culture. Although our repeated requests for this new hire have been denied by the FAS faculty appointments committee, we will renew our hire request in 2024-25.</p>	<p>in February features upper year students talking about their experiences and offering tips for navigating program selection and learning about program options and experiential learning opportunities. Program Planning Days also offer students insight into how to choose a program of study and understand program requirements. Program student unions also participate in “Clubs Fair” held at the beginning of each academic year.</p> <p>The Dean’s office also encourages the Chair to reach out directly to the Colleges for guidance on how to expand the visibility of Slavic programs through College channels. The Vice-Dean, College Relations, can assist the Chair in this matter.</p> <p>U of T participates in the Universities Fair each year, and the Department is encouraged to participate directly in that event.</p> <p>The Dean’s office also suggests that Chair also explore the most common program pairings with Slavic, and initiate discussions with those units to amplify the visibility and relevance of Slavic programs. The Dean’s office can assist the Chair in navigating data resources to identify these pairings.</p>
<p>The reviewers recommended that SLL continue to consider the diverse needs of students and integrate new topics and material into the curriculum, including “the thorny problem of gender-inclusive language in Slavic languages”.</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>“The reviewers recommend that the department continue to consider the diverse needs of its students and integrate new topics and material into its curriculum, for example, addressing the thorny problem of gender-inclusive language in Slavic languages and providing models in the language classroom to students who want to use such language.”</p>	<p>Addressing current social issues in the process of language instruction is part and parcel of the Department’s culturally contextualized language pedagogy which targets not only competence in the target language but competence in the culture where the target language is spoken. The Department agrees with the reviewers’ recommendation and will continue its longstanding practice of encouraging Teaching Assistants and Instructors to address and explore current social issues in the process of culturally</p>	<p>Immediate term: The Dean’s office supports the Department in exploring ways of incorporating curricular changes that address gender-inclusive language in the teaching of Slavic languages. TA Training is available through the Teaching Assistants’ Training Program (TATP) sessions, run through the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation. The (TATP) supports teaching at the university and beyond by delivering programs and workshops that foster inclusive and innovative teaching practices for first-time</p>

			contextualized language teaching. This would necessarily include the relation of gender as a social construct to its function as a grammatical category, as well as the transferability of the Western theory and practice of gender-inclusive language to Slavic and East European cultural contexts where the target languages are spoken.	TAs and Course Instructors and those wishing to develop a range of teaching specializations. These resources can advise on best practices in further developing facility with gender-inclusive language. As well, all units have access to Faculty Liaisons in the A&S Teaching and Learning team, to advise on pedagogical matters and highlight divisional Teaching and Learning resources available to faculty.
The reviewers recommended a number of changes to undergraduate program curricula, including further integration of language-area streams, incorporating support for developing transferable skills, additional types of assessment practices, and increasing the use of comparative coursework in areas with limited faculty support to reduce dependency on individual instructors.	7	“The reviewers suggest that the department consider counting more comparative coursework, particularly in language areas where faculty support is currently diminished, to further reduce dependency on a sole instructor...”	The Department’s new suite of modified undergraduate programs of study, which came into effect in March 2024, aims to make our curriculum more integrated across language and culture areas, as well as significantly more comparative, thereby reducing the dependence of a given language and culture area on a single instructor, as has been the case in Czech, Estonian, and Finnish streams. In the modified undergraduate programs, the ratio of comparative to area-specific courses is about 35% to 65% respectively. As a result, the new suite of programs engages the Department’s faculty in significant collaboration across language and culture areas. The Department’s medium-term goal is to ensure smooth transition from the old to the new, much more comparative undergraduate programs. Our long-term goal is further to increase the ratio of comparative to area-specific courses by drawing on the expertise of the Department’s proposed new hire – the Slavic comparatist specializing in media studies and digital culture.	As above, the Dean’s office supports the Department leveraging the resources of A&S Teaching and Learning team and CTSI for guidance on best practices in assessment design to diversify the curriculum and take full advantage of faculty expertise.
	8	“Given the small percentage of undergraduates who go on to graduate study in the field, we would encourage the department to expand on the kinds of genres students are required to practice for communicating their research results, not abandoning the research paper (also a vital skill outside the academy) in all	The Department agrees that its current continuing faculty complement, by virtue of its academic training and research focus, is not versed in novel online discursive forms which could be used as pedagogical tools. That is one of the reasons we have repeatedly asked for a tenure-stream appointment in media studies and digital culture. Although	The Dean’s office will direct the Chair to several divisional and institutional resources which can enable faculty in the Department to expand their facility with different types of assignments and assessments. In addition to leveraging the expertise of CTSI, the Faculty of Arts & Science Teaching & Learning team can provide one-on-one and group

		classes but offering options to present results in blogs, podcasts, websites and other forms of media as well.”	our request has been denied by the FAS faculty appointments committee, we will renew it in the upcoming academic year.	consultations on alternative and innovative forms of student communication and evaluation, and also hosts a Teaching & Learning Community of Practice (CoP) that was established in 2015 to create a collegial forum for faculty and instructors to meet and share teaching practices and strategies across fields and disciplines.
The reviewers advised that SLL seek institutional support to study the profile and career outcomes of its undergraduate students, along with the non-academic career outcomes of its PhDs, and that it further integrate career preparation into its programs at all levels.	9	“We recommend that SLL seek institutional support to study the profile and career outcomes of its undergraduate students, along with the non-academic career outcomes of its PhDs, and that it further integrate career preparation into its programs at all levels.”	In the past, the Department has been unable to track systematically career outcomes of its undergraduates, because of confidentiality concerns regarding personal information of our alumni. This information can only be collected and passed on to the Department by U of T administration. In the short and medium term , the Department looks forward to working with appropriate FAS offices on collecting career outcomes information of our undergraduate alumni which will permit, in the long term , to finetune our academic unit’s undergraduate curriculum better to reflect the professional interests and needs of undergraduates in our programs of study. At the graduate level, the Department has ample information about its alumni, most of whom are pursuing academic careers, as detailed in the self-study (either doctoral studies in the case of MA alumni or college and university positions in the case of PhDs). In the short term , to bolster the non-academic career outcomes of our graduate students, the Department is going to introduce a module on non-academic careers into its required doctoral proseminar. We plan to invite colleagues from the SGS specialized in non-academic career training to run the proseminar’s session on non-academic careers in 2024-25. In the medium and long term , we plan to make non-academic career training a regular component of the required doctoral proseminar, based on the result of the session newly introduced in 2024-25.	The Dean’s office encourages the Chair to work with the Coordinator, Graduate Professional Development in the A&S Office of Graduate Professional Development & Student Success (GPDSS) for consultation about developing professionalization modules. This office supports the academic, non-academic, and pedagogical development of graduate students in the Faculty of Arts & Science through a variety of faculty-wide and unit-specific activities. The Coordinator can work with the Chair to advise on new or existing program offerings such as the creation of curricular or co-curricular professionalization courses, and the Dean’s office provides support to move such offerings through governance. In the short-term, the Dean’s office has connected the Chair to the Coordinator to begin this discussion. The Faculty of Arts & Science encourages units to develop strong alumni relationships.

	10	<p>“The reviewers would also like to see additional steps in the enhancement of professionalization and career preparation for both undergraduates and graduates, following on those already taken in response to prior reviews. In particular, we recommend increased efforts to advise PhD students on careers outside the academy (in parallel to the FAS Backpack to Briefcase program the department works with for undergraduates) and efforts to track career outcomes for BAs, aside from graduate school admissions, and PhDs that leave the academy.”</p>	See the response above (#9).	<p>In addition to #9 above, the Coordinator, Graduate Professional Development in the A&S Office of Graduate Professional Development & Student Success (GPDSS) can facilitate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the A&S Pathways for PhDs workshop series that introduces A&S doctoral students to strategies and resources for finding meaningful work outside the traditional academic job market. • working directly with graduate units to create or develop professionalization activities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate professional skills workshops (academic or non-academic), including tailored versions of A&S workshops • Contribute to existing unit-level activities (e.g. offering guest presentations to professionalization courses, arranging alumni speakers for career panels). • Assist and offer feedback on the development of public-facing resources (e.g. alumni and career resource pages for unit websites or Quercus). <p>As noted in #9 above, the Chair has been connected to the Coordinator to begin this work.</p> <p>At the undergraduate level, the Program Exploration Days also offers career guidance for undergraduates. At these events, students are offered the opportunity to explore various career pathways and deepen their understanding of how to connect their program selection to their career goals.</p>
The reviewers noted that despite significant and successful efforts to raise funds to supplement funding packages, graduate	11	<p>“We recommend that the U of T as an institution and FAS make serious efforts to address the inadequacy of graduate student funding (as prioritized in FAS’s</p>	The Department agrees with the reviewers’ recommendation and hopes that “U of T as an institution and FAS make serious efforts to	The A&S Dean’s office recognizes that this review report recommendation regarding graduate funding is an ongoing concern for

<p>student funding remains “a fundamental barrier to recruiting top students and to their timely completion of their programs.”</p>		<p>academic plan for 2020-25), which constitutes a major barrier for SLL and similar departments to recruiting highly qualified students and the most significant obstacle for timely degree completion for PhD students in SLL.”</p>	<p>address the inadequacy of graduate student funding,” as such efforts are outside the Department’s mandate and competence. Our academic unit has done its utmost to raise supplementary funds for our graduate students, as detailed in the self-study, and will continue to do so in the future.</p>	<p>the Faculty and has taken steps to address it, increasing the minimum level of graduate funding yearly since 2018-19. Further improvement in funding is an ongoing Faculty priority.</p>
	12	<p>“We recommend in the strongest possible terms that the university prioritize increasing funding levels for graduate students if it aims to continue to be a leading research institution.”</p>	<p>The Department agrees with this recommendation and hopes that “the university will prioritize increasing funding levels for graduate students,” since such funding lies outside the Department’s mandate and competence. As an academic unit, we have done our utmost to raise supplementary funds for our graduate students, as detailed in the self-study, and will continue to do so in the future.</p>	<p>The issue of funding, addressed above in #11, remains a topic of ongoing discussion among the stakeholders in the University.</p>
<p>To address concerns regarding the distribution of disciplinary expertise in the faculty complement, the reviewers endorsed the Department’s proposed renaming of the department, and its approach to pursue hires of Slavic comparatists who can cover more than one language/literature area and address the trend toward interdisciplinary and cultural studies approaches in the field.</p>	13	<p>“The proposed renaming of the department should be part of efforts to rebrand SLL as a unit dedicated to interdisciplinary language and culture study to attract a broader cohort of students to its programs and increase its enrollments. We recommend the approval of the current proposed hire of a Slavic comparatist in digital culture and new media as an investment to advance this promising strategic direction.”</p>	<p>The Department’s renaming process, launched in the fall of 2023, was successfully completed in the spring of 2024. As of July 1, 2024, the Department’s new name – Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures – will reflect the evolution of our academic unit’s geographic and disciplinary expertise. In addition to five Slavic language and culture areas, we have recently integrated into the main suite of our undergraduate programs of study two non-Slavic areas – Finnish and Estonian – and we plan to keep expanding in the medium to long term the number of national language and culture areas we research and teach. In addition, the Department’s curriculum has long gone beyond language and literature: we presently offer a broad variety of courses in cultural history and creative cultural expression. Our unit’s new name accounts for this evolution, charting the Department’s future toward further curricular enrichment and thematic diversity. The Department concurs with the</p>	<p>Since the site visit and review report, the Dean’s office has worked with the Department to facilitate the formal proposal to change the Department’s name and supported its completion and subsequent pathway through Faculty governance in Spring 2024.</p> <p>Regarding to the recommendation for a new hire, the Dean’s office notes that all requests for new positions across the Faculty are submitted yearly to the Faculty Appointments Committee (FAC), which includes representation across its sectors (Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences) and from the Colleges. All FAC requests must include discussion of EDI. The FAC reviews all requests for new positions and makes recommendations to the Dean regarding which requests should be granted. In any given year, there are many more requests for new positions than available positions.</p> <p>Longer-term complement planning is also included as part of the A&S 5-year unit-level academic planning (ULP) exercise. Following</p>

			<p>reviewers' opinion that, in the medium and long term, our proposed new hire in the tenure stream – Slavic comparativist in media studies and digital culture – will solidify and enhance our academic unit's movement toward greater comparativity and interdisciplinarity which inform the curricular structure of the Department's recently modified suite of undergraduate programs.</p>	<p>a UTQAP review, each unit is asked to create a 5-year academic plan that includes goals for research, curriculum, faculty support, administrative staff support, and complement planning. As part of this process, the Department will be asked to outline their complement needs over the next five years. The ULP process for the Department is currently scheduled for 2025-26.</p>
	14	<p>“we recommend that new hires (when possible) should have not only proficiency in more than one national language and culture but also in interdisciplinary areas (medical or environmental humanities; disability studies; gender studies, etc.)”</p>	<p>The Department concurs with the reviewers' recommendations. Our proposed new hire in the tenure stream is a Slavic comparativist (i.e. working in at least two different language and culture areas) specialized in the interdisciplinary fields of media studies and digital culture. The new colleague's research focus will enhance our modified undergraduate programs' comparative nature, beginning with a core course that introduces students to digital media, online communities, and social network practices in Slavic and East European countries. Our graduate students' training will also benefit tremendously from instruction and thesis supervision in the fields of media studies and digital culture, currently not taught at the Department for lack of specialists. In the short term, we will continue to ask for this position, hoping that the external reviewers' recommendations will bolster our case with the FAS appointments committee which has repeatedly rejected our new hire request.</p>	<p>The Dean's office acknowledges the Chair's plan to submit a new request for a scholar in media studies and digital culture to the Faculty Appointments Committee at its next cycle in Spring 2025.</p>
<p>The reviewers recommended that SLL work with cognate units to develop an initiative designed to bring attention to U of T as “a flagship Canadian institution for world and less commonly taught languages” in order to highlight available opportunities for foreign language and culture study, invest in expanding co-</p>	15	<p>“We recommend that SLL, together with FAS and other language departments, develop a larger initiative designed to bring attention to the U of T as a flagship Canadian institution for world and less commonly taught languages.”</p>	<p>The Department will gladly participate in any FAS initiative to promote the study of foreign languages and U of T.</p>	<p>In the short-long term, the Dean's office encourages the Department to optimize its participation in the Global Language Initiative as part of a collaborative effort to bring together units to increase access to language instruction. The Global Languages Initiative (GLI) is the collaborative effort of over 15 Departments, Programs, Colleges, Centres, and Institutes to increase access to additional</p>

curricular opportunities, and demystify career pathways.				language instruction, such as in indigenous, foreign, official, and ancient languages. It is committed to promoting intercultural competence and global fluency, supporting the revitalization of lesser-taught and Indigenous languages, and engaging local and global communities.
	16	“More publicity about the program could further the cause of bolstering enrollments in languages at U of T. It could become a component of a larger project to highlight the unique opportunities for language study available at the U of T and generate interest and excitement among students, as the reviewers here are recommending as a potential opportunity for growth.”	As detailed in the self-study, the Department has unique advantages and disadvantages compared to similar units at peer American institutions. As the only full-service Slavic department in Canada, we teach a variety of less commonly taught languages unavailable at most other universities in Canada. The Department’s linguistic and cultural breadth has few rivals in North America. These advantages are offset by the fact that, unlike our American peer institutions, U of T has no foreign language requirement and, unlike cognate units at U of T, we do not teach languages offered in Canadian high schools. This significantly reduces our ability to attract undergraduate students. In addition, unlike the US federal government, the Canadian federal government has no targeted funding for encouraging the teaching and learning of strategically important foreign languages. As a result, faculty- and university-level publicity, as suggested by the reviewers, would be of great help to the Department’s effort to recruit students into its undergraduate programs. In the short to medium term , we look forward to working with the university administration on a publicity campaign raising awareness of our language and culture offerings.	In addition to #5 and #15 discussed above, if the Chair wishes to explore further promotional strategies and to support its reputation-building, in the short-medium term, the Department is encouraged to work with A&S Communications & Public Affairs to help promote its news and events within the University community and beyond. The Dean’s office can facilitate that when the Department is ready. Once the Department determines appropriate student content to help improve academic wayfinding, the Department can engage the A&S offices of Communications and Information & Instructional Technology (IIT) for advice on how to implement any changes on its website.
The reviewers observed that in the context of limited resources and reduced enrolments in some programs, the Department may need to consider longer-term strategic planning for their faculty	17	“...given the current faculty composition, we concur with the department’s plans to eliminate the MA option for coursework plus research paper and the PhD specialization in Slavic Linguistics.”	The MA option for coursework plus research paper and the PhD specialization in Slavic linguistics have been officially removed from the Department’s graduate programs as of July 1, 2024.	The Dean’s office supported the Department’s decisions in these curricular matters, and facilitated these major modifications to the graduate programs, which moved through Faculty governance this past spring 2024.

complement development and program offerings	18	<p>“We also recognize that in the context of limited resources and in the face of shrinking enrollments, the shifting of faculty expertise may have to happen over a longer term and one or two of the areas with the smallest enrollments may have to be let go. We recommend frank discussion between the department and the administration on these issues.”</p>	<p>The Department has recently completed major modifications to its undergraduate curriculum, pivoting away from the traditional model of faculty as specialists in a single national area. The restructured curriculum, which went into effect in March 2024, is designed to enhance the Department's teaching efficiency, since all faculty will henceforth teach in a single, fully integrated suite of comparative programs. The modifications will stimulate undergraduate enrollments by refocusing our curriculum from single language and culture areas to transnational and interdisciplinary studies that broaden students' intellectual horizons. In the medium term, our academic planning will target the refining and delivery of the modified curriculum. Faculty members who can teach in several language and culture areas are key to the success of our curricular renewal. Our proposed next hire will specialize in at least two such areas, becoming an engine of the unit's curricular renewal, since presently only two of our tenured faculty are trained comparativists. The proposed hire will also address the Department's research lacunae. In the short term, we are eager to have a frank discussion with the university administration, as recommended by the reviewers, concerning the Department's repeatedly denied request for the Slavic comparatist specialized in media studies and digital culture.</p>	<p>In the medium term, the 5-year unit-level academic planning process, to be launched for the Department in 2024-25, will enable the unit to outline its complement planning. Part of the process in developing a 5-year plan is the opportunity for the Chair to meet with the Dean and the entire Faculty Management Team to discuss the written plan and offer concrete suggestions and guidance for its optimization. As noted in #13, the Slavic ULP is currently scheduled to for 2025-26.</p>
	19	<p>“SLL has a small number of limited-term teaching stream and part-time visiting faculty at the moment, helping to provide expertise largely in the areas where faculty losses have made that necessary to continue to provide support for streams in the undergraduate major (Czech/Slovak and Polish) and graduate programs. This is not, nor should it be, envisioned as a permanent solution to instruction in those areas, but as the process of shifting new faculty expertise into those areas continues, the university should continue to support</p>	<p>Given the very significant number of tenured faculty retirements since the Department's last UTQAP review, and the administrative secondment of yet another tenured faculty member, the renewal of our tenure-stream faculty complement is the Department's most urgent academic priority, especially when it comes to Slavic Comparativists who can teach in more than one language and culture area in</p>	<p>As noted above #1, with the UTQAP cyclical review in hand, the Dean's office acknowledges the Chair's plan to submit a new request to the Faculty Appointments Committee at its next cycle in Spring 2025 for a scholar in media studies and digital culture.</p>

this as a temporary solution to maintaining those streams, so long as they remain a strategic priority for the department. For program quality and sustainability, the final goal should be core faculty coverage of these areas.”

support of our recently modified curriculum. As outlined in our self-study, the Department’s severely reduced tenured complement undermines our ability to administer undergraduate and graduate programs, to staff committees, to engage in required service at the departmental and FAS levels, and to supervise doctoral theses. The proposed hire in the tenure stream will make an urgently needed contribution to all these academic and service priorities. Pedagogical continuity in Czech / Slovak and Polish areas is among the challenges the Department faces in **the short to medium term** because the faculty teaching in these areas have limited-term appointments (CLTAs). While our temporary faculty are highly qualified and devoted instructors, their limited-term contracts inevitably have adverse effects on pedagogical continuity in the Czech/Slovak and Polish streams. To improve undergraduate experience in these areas, both need to rely on tenured faculty members. With an eye on filling these lacunae, the Department has repeatedly requested a new tenure-stream position for a Slavic Comparatist qualified to teach in more than one language and culture area. Our request has been denied, but we will renew it in the forthcoming academic year.

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 of Slavic Languages and Literatures (SLL) as belonging “among the most elite Slavic departments in North America for the quality and breadth of its faculty, research, and academic programs.” They noted that the department has been able to sustain high-level programs across multiple areas at both undergraduate and graduate levels, with offerings beyond language instruction. They highlighted the “significant and successful” responses to previous external reviews, most prominently through the restructuring of the undergraduate programs, “integrating all of the specialist, major, and minor programs as streams under the rubric of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures”. They observed that the FAS Language Citation initiative is a unique program to recognize achievements in the study of foreign languages. The reviewers applauded SLL’s graduate programs for their rigorous intellectual climate, innovative interdisciplinary coursework, and graduates’ success in the competitive academic job market. The reviewers commended SLL faculty as renowned scholars producing a high volume of important publications in a broad array of sub-disciplines, and noted their remarkable success in securing SSHRC grants. Finally, they noted the collegiality within the department, their strong relationships with other units within the University, and their engagement with the local community. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: continuing the general transformation of the department toward a cultural studies approach and developing additional comparative and cross-disciplinary courses; continuing to consider the diverse needs of students and integrate new topics and material into the curriculum; consideration of a number of changes to undergraduate program curricula including further integration of language-area streams, support for developing transferable skills, additional types of assessment practices, and increasing the use of comparative coursework in areas with limited faculty support to reduce dependency on individual instructors; seeking institutional support to study the profile and career outcomes of its undergraduate students and the non-academic career outcomes of its PhDs; integrating career preparation into programs at all levels; exploring ways to address concerns regarding graduate funding packages; continuing to pursue hires of Slavic comparatists who can cover more than one language/literature area and address the trend toward interdisciplinary and cultural studies approaches in the field; working with cognate units to develop an initiative designed to bring attention to U of T as “a flagship Canadian institution for world and less commonly taught languages” in order to highlight available opportunities for foreign language and culture study, invest in expanding co-curricular opportunities, and demystify career pathways; and consideration of longer-term strategic planning for their faculty complement development and program offerings. The Dean’s Administrative Response describes the unit’s 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 monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with program leadership and through the Department's five-year unit-level academic planning process, which will begin at the conclusion of the cyclical review. The office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs will request a brief Interim Monitoring Report midway between the February 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit to report on progress made on the Implementation Plan as outlined in the accompanying Review Recommendations Table.

The next UTQAP cyclical review of the Department will take place no later than the 2029-30 review cycle.

6 Distribution

On July 15th 2025, 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 & 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 unit/program leadership.

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

1 Review Summary

Program(s) Reviewed:	English (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor Canadian Studies (HBA): Major, Minor Theatre & Drama Studies (HBA): Specialist (joint program with Sheridan College) Dramaturgy & Drama Studies (HBA): Major, Minor Creative Writing, Minor
Division/Unit Reviewed OR Division/Unit Offering Program(s):	Department of English & Drama
Commissioning Officer:	Vice-Principal, Academic & Dean, University of Toronto Mississauga
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Kevin Gilmartin, Vice President for Student Affairs, California Institute of Technology • Professor Marlis Schweitzer, Department of Theatre & Performance, York University
Date of Review Visit:	September 28-29, 2023
Review Report Received by VPAP:	February 2, 2024
Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:	September 16, 2024
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 22, 2024

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: March 5-6, 2015

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- Excellent curriculum balancing traditional literature and innovations, including the Department's first-year writing initiative
- Very strong range of research-intensive, undergraduate courses, including Research Opportunity Programs (ROPs) and independent studies courses
- Significant proportion of Theatre and Drama Studies (TDS) honours students relative to the total UTM population
- High levels of student satisfaction
- Significant stature and productivity of the faculty
- Strong morale among departmental members

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Strengthening the curriculum by creating common first-year experiences and more diverse offerings in upper years, and by engaging the whole Department in curriculum development
- Better representing Canadian literature in the curriculum
- Addressing the size of writing sections to improve student learning
- Building a strong core of continuing faculty, enabling student interaction with them earlier in the programs, while maintaining an appropriate balance across appointment categories
- Addressing the advancement of female faculty and the question of diversity in future appointments
- Promoting a culture of respect and recognition within the faculty, and a greater sense of community and shared responsibility among Departmental members
- Addressing instances of sexism experienced by students and faculty within the Department

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Terms of Reference; Department of English and Drama Self-Study 2023, Previous Review Report and Administrative Responses; UTM Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (2022); University of Toronto's Facts and Figures (2021); UTM Vision Statement (2017), UTM Divisional Academic Plan (2017); UTM's Viewbook (2023-24); University of Toronto's "Framework for a New Structure of Academic Administration for the Three Campuses" (aka Tri-Campus Framework); Access to all English and Drama course descriptions; Access to the curricula vitae of faculty.

Consultation Process

As determined by the Commissioning Officer, the reviewers met with Vice-Principal Academic & Dean and Vice-Dean Teaching & Learning; Department Chair; Associate Chair (English); Associate Chair (Drama); Associate Chair (Research); Undergraduate Students; Tenured and Promoted Faculty; Pretenure and Limited-Term Faculty; Librarians (Interim Chief Librarian, Interim Deputy Chief Librarian, and Head of Collections and Digital Scholarship); Manager of Theatre Operations; Theatre Staff; Department of English & Drama Administrative Staff; leadership of English & Drama Student Society; Sessional lecturers; and Associate Dean of Visual & Performance Arts of Sheridan College.

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
 - ▶ Hybridity noted as a distinguishing characteristic of the department, reflected in its name and program offerings
 - ▶ Impressive integration and alignment of program offerings, evident in the experience of faculty, students, and support staff
 - ▶ Theatre and Drama Studies Specialist program noted as one of the most competitive and attractive programs at the University; “there is no program like this in Canada”
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Notable depth, breadth, and flexibility of the newly revamped curriculum across all programs
 - ▶ Concerted effort since the last program review to establish curricular autonomy by differentiating course offerings from those offered at the St. George campus has yielded positive results, with the department now in a much better position to respond to student interests and urgent social questions, offer a greater variety of courses, and highlight faculty expertise
 - ▶ New courses include strong emphasis on Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora, and Indigeneity; gateway courses are designed to strengthen the department’s relationships to other UTM programs and attract new students
 - ▶ Recently introduced “Acting for Non-Majors” courses have attracted first and second year students and should continue to serve as a consistent revenue source for the department going forward
- Innovation
 - ▶ Revamped English curriculum includes a greater range of courses that move away from traditional, Eurocentric, white canons to better represent diverse perspectives of racialized and other minoritized groups

- ▶ Flexible new special topics course option at the 3rd-year level encourages faculty to design courses on topics that not only reflect their research expertise but respond to the contemporary moment and engage student interests
- ▶ Creative Writing Minor has introduced new courses taught by professional artists and writers including the University's first course on spoken word poetry
- ▶ Planned Writers-in-Residence program will align with curricular innovation in Drama
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Broad range of assessment methods are consistent with disciplinary best practices
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students attest to strong peer engagement and effective staff and faculty commitment and support
 - ▶ Students spoke enthusiastically about their programs, their faculty and coursework, peer interactions, and learning opportunities
 - ▶ Students are actively encouraged to pursue a diverse range of Minors to complement their Major areas of study; customizable structure enhances interdisciplinary learning opportunities
 - ▶ Department actively supports a range of extracurricular clubs, publications, festivals, info-sessions, and related activities for students; "the department is to be commended for fostering these organizations and activities, and for providing student programs with advising and financial support"
 - ▶ Emergence of new student organizations focusing on issues related to EDI and social justice offer strong evidence of student engagement and commitment to building community
 - ▶ UTM's Research Opportunity Program (ROP) provides opportunities for students to work with faculty on research projects for course credit
 - ▶ Students have opportunities to share research through clubs, publications, and performances
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ High school admission averages have remained consistently high over the past eight years, for the two Specialist programs in particular
 - ▶ Sustained student enrolment numbers are "exceptional and extraordinary" in an era of declining enrolments in humanities, liberal arts, and arts programs; "the department of English & Drama at UTM provides positive evidence of the case for the humanities, and for English and Drama"
 - ▶ Upward trends in student CGPAs are consistent with upward trends observed in admission averages across all programs; indicating that admission requirements are appropriate to the outcomes established for program completion

Student feedback from the NSSE survey has been consistently positive, with English and Drama consistently scoring above all University of Toronto disciplines as well as all Ontario disciplines in the areas of Higher-Order Learning, Reflective and Integrative Learning, and Learning Strategies; 2020 NSSE results also show very high ratings in the area of Effective Teaching Practices
- Student funding
 - ▶ Reviewers note appropriate levels of student financial aid

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

- Innovation
 - ▶ Notable sharp decline in the number of senior-year students participating in High-Impact Practices between 2017 and 2020
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Reviewers note coordination challenges between UTM and Sheridan College related to the scheduling of courses across the two programs and student movement back and forth between the two campuses
 - ▶ Reviewers note concerns regarding “the optics of students effectively paying to work for well-funded faculty researchers when other training models exist”
 - ▶ Faculty members expressed some concern about the effectiveness of the ROP program
 - ▶ Students commented on challenges communicating with the Registrars’ Office and expressed concerns about that office as a resource for program advising; reviewers note that department staff and faculty are often called upon to answer questions or intervene in problem-solving scenarios when the Registrar’s Office is unable to do so
 - ▶ Departmental staff work hard to support the department’s outreach and promotion efforts but are stretched thin and lack sufficient capacity to pursue valuable initiatives around community engagement, publicity, and advancement
 - ▶ Reviewers heard some concerns that a new, mandatory first year writing course would impact enrollment on existing courses offered by English and Creative Writing (but note that the anticipated decline had not yet occurred)

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Reviewers note the importance of TA support for higher enrollment 1st and 2nd year courses
 - ▶ Share learnings from the pilot “online by design” project with the full department and develop a plan for future courses, in keeping with the department’s wider curricular objectives; this plan should be incorporated into the department’s Five-Year Plan
- Innovation
 - ▶ Continue to offer graduating students enhanced opportunities to collaborate and learn outside the classroom by supporting student associations, clubs, journals, and academic associations
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Consider ways to provide enhanced opportunities for students to be employed as research assistants, including through the expansion of work study categories to include research assistants
 - ▶ Department’s programs are sufficiently rich and complex to merit enhanced staff advising capacity for students, specifically keyed to this department

2. Graduate Program(s) n/a

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Research
 - ▶ Faculty produce high quality award-winning research with strong social impact, including articles, books, plays, novels, and performance art
 - ▶ Strong research culture is reflected in the department's ability to secure two Canada Research Chair nominations since the last program review, one (now approved) with an emphasis on Indigenous Performance and Digital Arts, and the other in Black Theatre and Performance; CRCs expected to continue to contribute meaningfully to the elevation of the department's research culture
 - ▶ Many faculty members have achieved national and international recognition; most are well-supported by internal funding and some have also successfully held funding from external sources including SSHRC and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
- Faculty
 - ▶ Dramaturgy & Drama Studies (DDS) programs will benefit from two recent tenure-track hires in Black Theatre and Performance and/or Diasporic Theatre and Performance
 - ▶ Department has articulated clear goals for faculty complement plan over the next several years, in alignment with existing growth opportunities
 - ▶ Department benefits from group of committed, long-serving Sessional Lecturers who have played a critical role in recent curricular revisions and teach large numbers of undergraduate courses

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

- Research
 - ▶ Reviewers note a recent decrease in the number of applications for Tri-Council funding, especially SSHRC; participation rates are below averages across humanities departments and the University overall for the 2019-20 academic year
 - ▶ Reviewers note comments from faculty and administrators describing reasons faculty feel disincentivized to apply for external funding, including: sufficient funding from internal funding sources; time spent on grant proposals detracts from focusing on research outputs; time spent administering external grant funds results in less time to devote to research and writing; and perceptions that UTM's Research Office does not prioritize their research in the same way it does STEM projects, resulting in insufficient support for grant development and administration
 - ▶ Reviewers observed a disconnect between faculty's general sentiment towards external grant applications and senior UTM administrators' expectation for faculty to secure external funding as a mark of excellence; reviewers note concerns that

perceived faculty resistance to applying for external funding could have potential negative impacts on the department's long-term reputation

- Faculty
 - ▶ Faculty and Sessional Lecturers expressed concerns about the negative impact of high enrollment caps for writing-intensive courses, TA allocation processes for 300-level courses, and overall concerns regarding course teaching loads; discussions of these topics raised a range of related concerns for faculty including course enrollments and the allocation of TAs to courses at other levels, overall course teaching loads, heavy grading expectations, and incentive structures
 - ▶ Reviewers note comments from faculty that supporting students in the ROP can be burdensome as they do not receive additional credit or compensation for this work
 - ▶ Reviewers note significant gaps in current faculty complement for several programs
 - ▶ Unanticipated faculty losses have placed an additional burden on some racialized junior faculty

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
 - ▶ Encourage senior faculty with a proven track record of external grant funding to involve junior faculty in partnership-building and connection opportunities in order to seed future grant success for a wider community of scholars
 - ▶ Actively encourage faculty to apply for external/Tri-Council funding to support individual and collective research projects, including through smaller incentive grants
 - ▶ Provide additional incentives for faculty to employ undergraduate and graduate students as research assistants to support grant development and administration and enhance the overall research culture
- Faculty
 - ▶ Conduct a departmental assessment of the allocation of TA support for high enrollment 3rd year (300 level) courses, and determine how to align course delivery and TA allocation with instructional workloads and assignments across the full range of course levels and degree programs
 - ▶ To realize its full potential going forward, the department requires faculty replacement and growth hires in several core areas including game studies, creative writing, and post-colonial literature
 - ▶ Develop a handbook for all faculty with information on research opportunities and clear guidelines to help them meet research expectations for tenure and promotion, including teaching resources and expectations and clear guidelines around service expectations for the department

4. Administration

Note: Issues that are addressed through specific University processes and therefore considered out of scope for UTQAP reviews (e.g., individual Human Resources issues, specific health and safety concerns) are routed to proper University offices to be addressed, and are therefore not included in the Review Summary component of the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Remarkably high morale among faculty, students and staff, and a shared confidence about the quality of the instructional and research programs, the effectiveness and sensitivity of departmental leadership, and the overall direction of the department and its programs
 - ▶ Staff and faculty across all programs commended new chair for providing effective and sensitive leadership, consensus-building, and commitment to program rejuvenation
 - ▶ Staff team is a closely-knit, committed, and multi-generational group that has helped shepherd the department through an extended period of pandemic disruption, leadership transition, and curriculum change
 - ▶ Staff value the University's commitment to hybrid work schedules and capacity for remote work
 - ▶ Positive collaboration with the Institute for Communication, Culture, Information, & Technology in the development of the Game Studies program
 - ▶ Department is actively seeking opportunities to build new curriculum with other units, a positive sign of willingness to stretch beyond disciplinary boundaries and build strong relationships with other UTM programs
 - ▶ Relationship with Sheridan College for the Theatre and Drama Studies joint program is a distinctive asset for the department that is being designed and managed in an effective fashion, with faculty, staff, and students all reporting positive experiences
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Department benefits from strong leadership, with a committed chair and group of three Associate Chairs performing important tasks on behalf of specific programs and/or research needs
 - ▶ Faculty spoke enthusiastically about the value and work of the recently appointed Associate Chair & Research Officer
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Department's programs are well positioned to advance priorities outlined in UTM's Strategic Framework; recent and successful revisions to curriculum, strong enrollments, effective planning for program development and growth, appropriate cross-university collaborations, a strong track-record in recent hires, and effective, efficient leadership, all indicate a shared vision that drives collaborative work
 - ▶ Centre for New Theatre presents a unique development opportunity for the department and has tremendous potential to foster collaboration and provide exciting experiential learning opportunities for students

- ▶ Department understands the correlation between strong enrollments and faculty complement requests and is eager to maintain and grow enrollment by developing courses and programs that appeal to students
- International comparators
 - ▶ Department makes a strong case that its programs are among the strongest not only in Canada but throughout North America, with specific comparisons made to the University of Chicago and New York University
 - ▶ In terms of its blend of programs, its curricular development, and faculty expertise, the department is keeping pace with the best English and Drama programs in North America

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

- Relationships
 - ▶ Reviewers observe that faculty meet formally only once a semester and note a sense that junior faculty desire and would benefit from opportunities to meet all faculty members at an Orientation session early in the semester
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Departmental staff team are “clearly over-extended and under-supported”; reviewers note particular need for further staff capacity in finance, student support, recruitment and admissions, alumni engagement, and community outreach and special events
 - ▶ Reviewers note resource challenges with respect to classroom spaces and room allocations, including travel between classes as well as classroom technology and accessibility needs
 - ▶ Concerns regarding decreasing office space for short term instructors and TAs
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Canadian Studies program lacks clear mission, direction and consensual support; the lack of Canadian Studies-focused faculty “has led to drift and a kind of caretaker status” for the program
 - ▶ Conversations around curricular development between UTM and Sheridan sometimes hampered by the fact the relationship is managed by a single representative from each institution, with limited opportunities for all faculty from both institutions to meet and discuss curriculum alignment
 - ▶ Some concerns expressed by faculty about a perceived lack of clarity/transparency on the nature of the relationship with Sheridan, indicative of larger issues around communication between the two institutions
 - ▶ Plans for operating the Centre for New Theatre going forward are unclear, including those regarding decision-making, funding, and supporting the department’s curricular goals

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Consider instituting a “Welcome” or “Welcome back” meeting early in the Fall semester as an opportunity for faculty to greet new colleagues and reconnect with those returning from leave
 - ▶ Maintaining a strong relationship with Sheridan College and its Acting program is critical to the success of the Drama Specialist program
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Conduct a departmental assessment of the allocation of TA support for high enrollment 300-level courses, and determine how to align course delivery and TA allocation with instructional workloads and assignments across the full range of course levels and programs; University leadership should respond to such an assessment with additional budget resources for TA staffing
 - ▶ Enhanced staff support will also allow the department to achieve its outreach efforts and continue to attract strong students to its programs and thereby maintain and even grow enrollment
 - ▶ Continue to identify and track success indicators for the Associate Chair & Research Officer position, including external grant participation numbers, and look to expand the pilot project into a permanent Associate Chair position
 - ▶ Enhance staff support in areas including appropriate budgetary expertise, student recruitment and engagement, student advising, community and alumni outreach and engagement, and the promotion of faculty research
 - ▶ Prioritize concerns related to classroom spaces/room allocations including technology and accessibility needs
 - ▶ Consider ways to address office space needs for short term instructors and TAs
 - ▶ Consider renting out performance space in the summer as an opportunity for new revenue generation
 - ▶ Continue offering high enrollment courses such as “Acting for Non-Majors” to generate new revenue
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Develop a departmental five-year plan in alignment with the new UTM Strategic Framework
 - ▶ Articulate departmental leadership succession plans as part of the five-year plan and take steps to foster the leadership potential of faculty at all levels
 - ▶ Following an extended period of change, disruption, and leadership turnover, the department should continue to prioritize stability and consolidation of current programs and priorities
 - ▶ University leadership should understand that they have the opportunity to foster and support an exceptional arts and humanities instructional program
 - ▶ Growth of Creative Writing program and newly-created Game Studies programs present opportunities to advance existing strengths and realize new goals
 - ▶ Explore strategies for advancing faculty engagement and student recruitment to ensure that the Canadian Studies Major and Minor are sustainable long-term,

- including preparation of program learning objectives and collaboration with other units to build and sustain the program
- ▶ Regarding the Theatre & Drama Studies Joint Specialist program:
 - Complete the MOU process as soon as possible
 - Faculty from UTM and Sheridan should meet collectively at least once a semester to identify shared interests, communicate curricular goals, and address any concerns that may have arisen in the intervening period
 - Ensure that faculty and staff involved in delivering instruction understand their institutional counterparts, and that the student experience is prioritized in program design
 - ▶ Develop and articulate a clear mission statement for the Centre for New Theatre, with corresponding governance documents; seek partnership and development opportunities to enhance visibility and ensure sustainability



September 16, 2024

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

RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of English and Drama and its programs

Dear Professor McCahan,

Thank you for your letter of May 16, 2024 requesting the decanal administrative response to the September 28-29, 2023 review of the Department of English and Drama and its undergraduate programs: English (HBA) Specialist, Major, Minor; Canadian Studies (HBA) Major, Minor; Theatre & Drama Studies (HBA) Specialist Joint program with Sheridan College; Dramaturgy & Drama Studies (HBA) Major, Minor; Creative Writing minor.

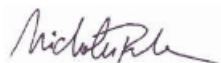
On behalf of the University of Toronto Mississauga, we would first like to thank the reviewers, Marlis Schweitzer, York University, and Kevin Gilmartin, California Institute of Technology, for their very comprehensive review of the Department of English and Drama and its programs. We would also like to thank the Chair, Prof. Jacob Gallagher-Ross, and faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study. We also want to thank the many staff, students, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided thoughtful feedback.

In their report, the reviewers noted the unique hybridity of the department and praised the steady and increasing enrolments in English and Drama courses and programs. The reviewers noted the innovative curricula of the programs offered by the department and discussed the extraordinarily high morale of the faculty, staff, and students of the department, especially under current leadership. In their recommendations, the reviewers emphasized the importance of UTM's relationship with Sheridan college and recommended creating steady channels of communication. They also recommended that the department create a 5-year plan, including developing succession plans, and that UTM should support new hires in fields such as postcolonial studies and game studies when opportunities permit, and further developing the Centre for New Theatre.

The reviewers' recommendations have been addressed in the enclosed Review Recommendations Table that outlines the Department's response, the Decanal response, and the Implementation Plan identifying action items and timelines for each recommendation (immediate, medium, or long term). This response was developed in consultation with the Department through a Town Hall held on May 30, 2024, and from a Chair's administrative response submitted by the Chair of the Department.

Progress checks and monitoring of the implementation plan will occur through the Chair's Annual Report to the Dean. We also acknowledge your office will request a brief Interim Monitoring Report midway between the September 2023 review and the next cyclical review, which is scheduled to take place in the **2029-30** academic year.

Sincerely,



Nicholas Rule
Vice-Principal, Academic & Dean

Encl.: 2023-24 UTQAP Review of the UTM Department of English and Drama – Review
Recommendations (table)

CC: Jacob Gallagher-Ross, Chair, Department of English and Drama, University of Toronto
Mississauga
Bryan Stewart, Vice-Dean, Academic Programs, University of Toronto Mississauga
Ferzeen Sammy, Manager, Academic Programs, Reviews & Quality Assurance, University of
Toronto Mississauga
Tatevik Nersisyan, Research Analyst, Academic Programs & Reviews, University of Toronto
Mississauga

2023-24 UTQAP Review of UTM Department of English and Drama - Review Recommendations

Please do the following for each recommendation in the table:

- If you **intend** to act on a recommendation, please provide an **Implementation Plan** identifying actions to be taken, the time frame (immediate, medium, long term) for each, and who will take the lead in each area. If appropriate, please identify any necessary changes in organization, policy or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.
- If you **do not** intend to act on a recommendation, please briefly explain why the actions recommended have not been prioritized.
- In accordance with the UTQAP and Ontario's Quality Assurance Framework, "it is important to note that, while the external reviewers' report may include **commentary** on issues such as faculty complement and/or space requirements when related to the quality of the program under review, **recommendations** on these or any other elements that are within the purview of the university's internal budgetary decision-making processes must be tied directly to issues of program quality or sustainability" (emphasis added)
- You may wish to refer to the [sample table](#) provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Re c. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Unit Response	Dean's Response	Implementation Plan <i>Timeline: immediate (6 months to 1 year), medium (1 to 3 years) and long (4 to 7 years) term. Lead (e.g. Program Director, Dean)</i>
Observing a decline in the number of senior-year students participating in High-Impact Practices, the reviewers recommended that the department continue to offer enhanced opportunities for collaboration and learning outside the classroom; they also recommended exploring ways to increase research opportunities for students.	1	"We do note a sharp decline in the number of senior-year students participating in High-Impact Practices... While we expect that the challenges of the pandemic offer some explanation for this decline in HIP, we nevertheless encourage the department to continue to offer graduating students enhanced opportunities to collaborate and learn outside the classroom."	As the reviewers note, the pandemic limited opportunities for in-person experiential learning and research collaboration and the survey results no doubt reflect that fact. Nevertheless, we are eager to offer more such opportunities to our graduating students and have several initiatives in progress: We have recently added a fourth-year capstone course to our curriculum (ENG400H5) to provide graduating English students with an intensive research and writing experience comparable to a graduate seminar. We have revived our experiential Repertory in Theatre in Practice course (DRE380H5), which brings students to the Shaw Festival and immerses them in the production season and day-to-day life of one of Canada's largest repertory theatres. We will also seek to begin a new commissioning cycle for the Centre for New Theatre, our new play commissioning program. We have offered expanded departmental	The Office of the Vice-Principal, Academic and Dean (OVPAD) supports the Department's plans for the curriculum. The Programs and Curriculum Unit (PCU) is available to guide the Department through curriculum changes in this area if needed. The Experiential Education Unit (EEU) is available to guide the Department with increasing research opportunities for students.	Immediate (6 to 12 months): Continue to prioritize offering existing experiential learning opportunities, including capstone courses and student-driven workshops and events. (Dept Chair) Medium to long-term (2 - 4 years): Explore possibilities for sustainable internship and co-op courses in English, Drama, and Game Studies. (Dept Chair, and OVPAD - Director, EEU, and Associate Dean, Academic Experience)

			<p>funding and advice to our two student groups Literature is Alive (about intersections of the humanities and social justice) and the English and Drama Student Society. Both offer a range of events, guest speakers, workshops, and hands-on learning opportunities (editing a journal, producing theatrical performances) that respond to student interests and create opportunities for experiential learning. In the longer term, we will explore opportunities for internship courses for English, Drama, and the new Game Studies programs.</p>		
	2	<p>“UTM should consider expanding work study categories to include research assistants... We understand that efforts to address this recommendation must be consistent with existing university frameworks.”</p>		<p>U of T Work Study program added Research stream positions in May 2023. This option is available at UTM, and faculty members can apply for research stream work study positions through the existing Work Study program.</p>	<p>Immediate. (6 to 12 months) (Dept Chair)</p>
	3	<p>“Provide additional incentives for faculty to employ undergraduate and graduate students as research assistants to support grant development and administration and thereby enhance the overall research culture.”</p>	<p>We would welcome additional UTM resources being put toward creating incentives to hire undergraduate students as research assistants and would be keen to discuss this possibility with both OVPAD and OVPP. We note that, based on previous experience, the existing ROP program does not serve the discipline-specific needs of researchers in our department very well.</p>	<p>By fostering faculty-student collaboration in research, the Research Opportunity Program is currently the most popular form of experiential learning among students at the Mississauga campus and continues to grow in faculty projects and student enrolment each academic year. To support faculty with training and integrating undergraduate students into their research, the OVPAD Experiential Education Unit (EEU) offers funding for faculty research projects and access to loaner equipment through its sustainability program.</p>	<p>Medium-term (1 to 3 years). (OVPAD - Director, EEU)</p>

				EEU remains committed to offering undergraduate students access to curricular research opportunities across all disciplines. If there are discipline-specific needs that are not currently being met by the Research Opportunity Program, the EEU welcomes further discussion with the unit on how the program can be expanded to better support student integration into all types of faculty research.	
The reviewers observed that the Canadian Studies program “lacks direction and consensual support,” and recommended that the department work to increase faculty engagement and student recruitment in order to support the long-term stability of the program.	4	“Department leadership should undertake the necessary work of advancing faculty engagement and student recruitment, to ensure that the Canadian Studies Major and Minor are sustainable long-term. We do not recommend new faculty appointments for the Canadian Studies Major and Minor, but ways should be found to make the program more broadly understood and supported by current faculty. Prepare program learning objectives, and collaborate with other departments and units to build and sustain Canadian Studies program that is more attractive to students.”	We are eager to pursue curricular renewal in the Canadian Studies programs, as recommended. Prompted by the review report, we have already formed a Canadian Studies Focus Group, chaired by Prof. Colin Hill, the current Director of Canadian Studies, to create new program learning outcomes and make recommendations about updates to courses and to the existing program structure. Our departmental teaching and learning expert, Prof. Chet Scoville, and our recent hire in Canadian multicultural theatre, Prof. Signy Lynch, will also serve. In the longer term, we will look for new opportunities to engage with other units with Canadian-focused courses, so as to elevate the structure of the program from sheer course crosslisting to active interdisciplinary engagement.	The Office of the Vice-Principal, Academic and Dean (OVPAD) supports the Department’s plans for the curriculum. The Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning is leading a review of Program Learning Outcomes and curriculum mapping across all units in 2024-25 and will support the unit in this work.	Immediate (6 to 12 months): Canadian Studies Focus Group will meet regularly in 2024-2025 and develop learning outcomes. (Dept Chair) Medium-term (1 to 3 years): The CSFG will build on the new outcomes to revisit the program structure and pursue opportunities for curricular renewal, including invigorated partnerships with contributing departments. (Dept Chair)
The reviewers recommended that the department assess Teaching Assistant allocation for high enrollment 300-level courses, and that they explore strategies to better align TA allocation with course delivery and instructional demands	5	“Conduct a departmental assessment of the allocation of TA support for high enrollment 3rd year (300 level) courses, and determine how to align course delivery and TA allocation with instructional workloads and assignments	Prompted by the review and our own internal discussions and analysis, we have concluded that one or both of the following revisions to the existing TA rationale will best fulfill this recommendation: 1.) Lowering usual caps in 300-level English classes to 35 from 45, and/or 2.) Lowering the enrollment threshold at which the department provides TA support to 40	OVPAD has worked closely with the unit to create and update a tailored TA rationale funding document to meet current resource needs. The unit can submit future resource requests through the existing TA rationale process.	Immediate (6 to 12 months): The OVPAD will work with the Department in 2024-25 to determine the most viable way to address TA resourcing. (Dept Chair and Vice-Dean, Undergraduate).

<p>across its full range of courses and programs.</p>		<p>across the full range of course levels and degree programs. University leadership should respond to such an assessment, effectively conducted, with additional budget resources for TA staffing.”</p>	<p>students (it is currently set at 50). We will consult with OVPAD in the coming year about the most viable course of action based on this result.</p>		
<p>The reviewers recommended that the department provide faculty with enhanced guidance on research opportunities as well as clear guidelines to help them meet research, teaching, and service expectations for tenure and promotion.</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>“Develop a handbook for all faculty with information on research opportunities and clear guidelines to help them meet research expectations for tenure and promotion; this handbook will be particularly useful to new faculty but should also include information for faculty looking to advance to Full Professor. Such a handbook should also include teaching resources and expectations, and clear guidelines around service expectations for the department, consistent with wider university-level expectations.”</p>	<p>These resources have already been created or are available from University sources: our Associate Chair, Research maintains a page on our website collecting internal and external grant and other funding opportunities and regularly circulates these by email. The department announces an annual call for internal funding opportunities with clear guidelines for use and application and communicates it by both email and our website. (Because of the dynamic nature of this information, we have found that website pages are a more efficient way to share it within the department.) Our undergraduate advisor circulates important teaching resources at the beginning of each term; instructors have access to all previous syllabi in the courses they teach.</p> <p>The Chair meets regularly with all pretenure faculty, and both the Chair and Associate Chair Research are available for individual consultation about research projects or teaching questions. We will hold further informational meetings with pretenure faculty to ensure that they know where to find all relevant policies and information. (Each new faculty member is also assigned both a teaching and a research mentor.)</p> <p>The UTM Academic Handbook, published each year, provides authoritative policy guidance for teaching. U of T’s policies governing tenure and promotion process are available online for consultation by any faculty member. Robust divisional guidelines for the evaluation of</p>	<p>The OVPAD supports Units in the tenure and promotion process, by offering workshops for Chairs/Directors and separately for faculty on the tenure process, continuing status review process, and the promotion to full professor process.</p>	<p>Immediate (6 to 12 months): Continue updating existing resources and ensuring that faculty know where to find them. (Dept Chair)</p> <p>Medium-term (1 to 3 years): Consult with OVPAD and VP-FAL about codifying departmental research/creative professional practice standards for tenure and promotion. (Dept Chair and Vice-Dean, Faculty)</p>

			<p>teaching already exist at the UTM level. Because tenure and promotion processes are not simply departmental, but involve participation from the graduate units and external referees; oversight by the Dean's Office and a final decision by the President; and because of the diversity of research and creative professional practice in the unit, it would be difficult precisely to codify research expectations for tenure and promotion, but we would be very happy to consult with both the Vice-Dean Faculty and VP-FAL about how best to do so in line with university policies. (As noted in the AAPM, service is not a criterion for tenure or promotion at U of T except in exceptional cases.)</p>		
<p>The reviewers observed that careful and strategic faculty complement planning is critical to support strategic advancement of the department's research and teaching programs.</p>	7	<p>"University leadership should support the department's request for new hires in Game Studies and Creative Writing. These are critical to the strategic advancement of the department's research and teaching programs. Further, university administration should support a plan to replace the faculty position in post-colonial literature, with an appointment in that or a closely related field."</p>	<p>We concur about the strong need for these hires and will continue to request them via UTM's complement planning process. In the past two years, we have already requested the recommended hire in Postcolonial Literatures and the hire in Creative Writing. We will repeat these requests and will also ask for a hire in Game Studies in the near future.</p>	<p>The Department may proceed through the faculty complement planning process to request new faculty positions. In this process, the Department's request will be considered alongside all other units' requests for new positions and are assessed based on criteria set by the OVPAD complement planning committee and available campus budget allocation for new faculty searches.</p>	<p>Medium to long-term (2 – 5 years): The department will request all three positions via the complement planning process. (Dept Chair)</p>
<p>The reviewers recommended exploring ways to enhance collegiality and a sense of community in the department, including holding timely events to welcome new colleagues and reconnect with those returning from leave.</p>	8	<p>"The department should consider instituting a "Welcome" or "Welcome back" meeting early in the Fall semester as an opportunity to greet new colleagues and reconnect with those returning from leave."</p>	<p>We agree entirely, and, in the wake of the pandemic, rebuilding community has been an important focus for the department. In the last two years, we have held multiple weeks of community lunches—for faculty, staff, sessional instructors, postdocs and TAS—at the department at the beginning of the year to welcome everyone back to the department and the campus. This year we will also revive the pre-pandemic tradition of a "welcome back event" for core faculty and staff off-campus in the first weeks of semester. (We also host a</p>	<p>The OVPAD supports these initiatives at the department level and looks forward to ongoing updates on their success.</p>	<p>Immediate/ongoing: Welcome Back event will take place on September 20th, 2024, with community lunches preceding it. (Dept Chair)</p> <p>Ongoing: We will continue to offer a robust calendar of communal and collegial events. (Dept Chair)</p>

			wide array of coffeehouse working sessions, faculty-student pizza parties, awards galas, workshops, guest speakers, end-of-term celebrations, and other community and collegial events throughout the year.)		
Regarding the Theatre and Drama Studies Joint Specialist program, the reviewers recommended that UTM and Sheridan College complete the Memorandum of Understanding process as soon as possible; they also recommended increased communication between faculty at the two institutions to identify shared interests, communicate curricular goals, and address any concerns that arise.	9	“UTM and Sheridan should complete the MOU process as soon as possible, and faculty instructors should commit to meeting collectively at least once a semester to identify shared interests, communicate curricular goals, and address any concerns that may have arisen in the intervening period.”	We agree that regular meetings of the Theatre and Drama Studies program bringing together both sides of the program will be a productive addition. We have already consulted with the Sheridan Associate Dean, and she is in favour as well. We will plan to implement the meetings during the 2024-2025 academic year. Sheridan faculty are currently on their summer hiatus and will need to be consulted as well.	The Office of the Vice-Principal, Academic and Dean (OVPAD) is currently engaged in consultations with partners at Sheridan College to renew and update the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Joint Programs offered with UTM and Sheridan. The revised MOU will be developed in 2024-25 and include provisions for regular meetings of UTM and Sheridan proponents, to review curriculum and issues raised for Joint Programs.	Immediate (1 year): Revised MOU to be completed in 2024-25 (Vice-Dean, Undergraduate and Director, Academic Operations) Medium-term (1 to 2 years): Institute regular meetings between all Theatre and Drama Studies Faculty in the 2024-2025 academic year. (Dept Chair)
	10	“Leadership in the two institutions should ensure that faculty and staff involved in delivering instruction understand their institutional counterparts, and that the student experience is prioritized in program design.”	The meetings described above will help to achieve this goal, as will continuing collegial communication between Sheridan and UTM leadership. Student experience has been at the forefront of all recent changes in the program.		
The reviewers identified the need for increased staff support in the areas of student recruitment, engagement, and advising; community and alumni outreach; and the promotion of faculty research. They recommended increasing the department’s staff complement to address this need.	11	“Enhance staff support with two new full-time staff members. One of these should have appropriate budgetary expertise. Across the two positions, there should be a remit for the range of critical staff support gaps that we have identified over the course of this report: student recruitment and engagement, student advising, community and alumni outreach and engagement, and the promotion of faculty research.”	As noted by the reviewers, staffing has not kept pace with the size and complexity of our department. We strongly agree that English & Drama needs both of the new staff positions they recommend, especially as we contemplate further growth in the Game Studies and Creative Writing programs. On the departmental side, we are among the most understaffed units on campus, with 2.5 FTE (not including theatre staff, who are unique to the production aspects of those programs). We will also pursue the recommended position in outreach and engagement, as recommended by the reviewers.	UTM has a formal process for requesting additional funding for new staff positions, which requests are reviewed by the Vice-President and Principal and the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC). The Department may submit a request for consideration by this committee. The OVPAD is working with English and Philosophy on their 1.0 FTE request and is happy to discuss other requests when the department is ready to do so.	Immediate (6 to 12 months): Consult with OVPAD about adding both positions as described to the Department complement. (Dept Chair and Vice-Dean, Undergraduate)

<p>The reviewers recommended that the department leverage the self-study/external review process to inform the development of a five-year strategic plan in alignment with the UTM Strategic Framework; they recommended that the departmental plan include discussion of curricular priorities, a clear mission for the Centre for New Theatre, and leadership succession planning.</p>	12	<p>“The department should take the opportunity provided by its recent Self Study and this External Review to develop its own five-year plan in alignment with the new UTM Strategic Framework.”</p>	<p>We have already completed a draft of the kernel of a departmental plan, as part of UTM’s academic planning process in 2023-2024. We will expand it in the coming year, in dialogue with that document, the Strategic Framework, and these recommendations.</p>	<p>The OVPAD supports the department’s strategic planning initiatives in the coming year.</p> <p>The UTM Academic Plan will proceed to governance in 2024-25. The OVPAD looks forward to working with English and Drama and all academic units to support unit-level planning in line with the Academic Plan and Strategic Framework.</p>	<p>Immediate to medium-term 6 months to 3 years): Complete strategic plan in the 2024-2025 academic year. (Dept Chair)</p>
	13	<p>“Share learnings from the pilot “online by design” project with the full department and develop a plan for future courses, in keeping with the department’s wider curricular objectives. This plan should be incorporated into the department’s Five Year Plan...”</p>	<p>These discussions are ongoing and will remain at the forefront of our department’s agenda as we complete our strategic plan. Our recent experiments with flexible delivery in the summer of 2024 have indicated strong appetite for online summer courses among our students, which is in keeping with recent UTM enrollment strategy. We will discuss these findings in the department this fall and continue to build our online strategy together.</p>	<p>OVPAD developed an Online Learning Planning Guide in 2023 to support units in reviewing their curriculum for potential courses that may be offered online, to provide flexible options for students. Summer 2024 was a successful opportunity for units to explore how online offerings can play a role in helping students flexibly meet their program requirements. The OVPAD is mindful that online delivery is best prioritized for courses that are both suited to online delivery for pedagogical purposes and that will have the most impact for students.</p>	<p>Immediate to medium-term (6 months to 3 years): Incorporate strategy for judicious online offerings into planning process. (Dept Chair)</p> <p>Ongoing: Continue to discuss the balance between in-person and online pedagogy in the department in light of overall goals and objectives. (Dept Chair)</p>
	14	<p>“Develop and articulate a clear mission statement for the Centre for New Theatre, with corresponding governance documents; seek partnership and development opportunities</p>	<p>At present, the New Theatre initiative is a course-based experiential education project tied to the DRE360H5 (Developmental Dramaturgy) course and faculty research and intended to create High Impact quasi-professional experiences for theatre studies. It is instructor-driven and funded by the Department and other</p>	<p>The OVPAD can support the Department in developing proposals for an EDU:C or an EDU:D if the unit identifies scaling of the Centre for New Theatre as a priority.</p>	<p>Medium to long term (2 to 7 years): The OVPAD will work with the Office of the Vice-President and Principal and the Department on potential options for growing the Centre for New Theatre.</p>

		to enhance visibility and ensure sustainability.”	internal sources, without an independent institutional life or infrastructure. But we agree with the reviewers that there is great potential for it to grow into a larger hub for practice-informed teaching and research. We have already begun consulting about possible opportunities. Should such funding and growth prove possible, we will certainly develop the appropriate governance and policy structure.		(Dept Chair and Vice-Dean, Academic Programs)
	15	“To avoid another prolonged leadership transition period, the department would do well to articulate its leadership succession plans as part of its five-year plan... and take steps to foster the leadership potential of faculty at all levels.”	The department benefits from the leadership and commitment of three exceptional Associate Chairs (one of whom was recently nominated by the Dept. to participate in the U of T Provost’s Leadership Academy in 2023-2024). We have also been supportive of several other faculty currently serving in important administrative roles elsewhere in the University: as Director, Associate Director (MA), and Placement Officer, in the Graduate Program in English; and, most recently, as Interim Associate Vice-Principal Research at UTM. Given this wealth of administrative experience, we are confident the Department’s leadership succession will be smooth. We will also prioritize providing pretenure faculty with committee assignments that will build administrative experience without overburdening them.	The OVPAD acknowledges that the appointment of a Chair is outside the scope of the Department. Following the process outlined by the Policy on Appointment of Academic Administrators, the appointment of a Chair begins with the President’s appointment of a search committee, in consultation with the Dean. The Dean then transmits the recommendation of the committee to the President, who will then transmit the recommendation for approval in University Governance. The OVPAD works with Chairs/Directors to identify potential Associate Chairs with a lens focused on EDI and succession planning.	Ongoing. (Dept Chair)
Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response:					
	16	“Continue to identify and track success indicators for the Associate Chair & Research Officer position, including external grant participation numbers, and look to expand	We have already begun to do so and will continue to track this data. The position of Associate Chair Research was renewed for 2024-2025, following the submission of a detailed rationale and activity report to OVPAD.	The Vice-Dean, Faculty will consult with the Department on the feasibility of continuing this role into a permanent position.	Ongoing. (Dept Chair and Vice-Dean, Faculty)

		the pilot project into a permanent Associate Chair position.”		The OVPAD is undertaking an analysis of non-AAA department administrative roles and compensation packages across the campus to ensure equity (i.e., compensation appropriately reflects workload). Once the analysis is completed, the OVPAD may adjust various compensation packages (e.g., teaching reduction) on a case-by-case basis	
	17	“Actively encourage faculty to apply for external/ Tri-Council funding to support individual and collective research projects (this might be achieved through smaller incentive grants)... Career success with granting bodies like SSHRC can be aided by starting small (e.g. SSHRC Connections Grant) and building on these successes over the years. Senior faculty with a proven track record of external grant funding should be encouraged to involve junior faculty in partnership-building and connection opportunities (e.g. Connection grants) and thereby seed future grant success for a wider community of scholars.”	We are eager to support faculty to pursue grant funding that best serves their research programs. Our Associate Chair Research and Chair provide bespoke consultation to faculty who need it and assist in connecting faculty with advice and support in OVPR and beyond. We also offer seed research funding and publication assistance when departmental funds allow.	The OVPAD supports the Department’s approach.	Ongoing. (Dept Chair)
	18	“We learned of resource challenges with respect to classroom spaces/room allocations. Faculty and staff face challenges in getting across campus from one classroom to the next. Tech needs in classrooms are not always met, nor are student	We agree entirely with this recommendation but understand, of course, that the lack of teaching and office space is a campus-wide issue and will require campus-level solutions.	Classroom spaces and technology are managed at the campus level. The OVPAD continues to engage with other campus portfolios to ensure consideration of space and technology requirements as part	Ongoing. (Vice-Dean, Undergraduate)

		accessibility issues. We appreciate that these are challenges across all universities. We urge UTM to prioritize these concerns. There is also a sense that office space for short term instructors and TAs are shrinking. Capacity needs to be considered.”		of the academic planning process.	
	19	“Opportunities for new revenue generation. Renting out performance space in the summer... or other periods when the spaces aren’t being used for curricular purposes. Continuing to offer high enrollment non-majors courses such as “Acting for NonMajors.”	We are actively exploring opportunities for revenue generation through space rentals, in collaboration with OVPPP. And we are thrilled by the recent success of our high enrolling Acting for Non-Specialists class (DRE201H5: Acting); we will continue to offer it regularly. This year, we’ll also introduce a successor course (DRE202H5: Intermediate Acting). The first offering of the course is already full, with a waitlist.	The OVPAD supports the Department’s approach.	Ongoing/immediate: Continue to offer acting classes for non-majors/non-specialists, including the new successor course. Look for other opportunities to increase enrollment with similar general-interest elective courses. (Dept Chair)

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 hybrid nature of the department as a distinguishing characteristic, noting that “students are actively encouraged to pursue a diverse range of Minors to complement their Major areas of study.” They highlighted the “impressive integration and alignment” of the Department’s programs, as well as the recent curriculum revisions and new course offerings that better represent diverse perspectives of racialized and minoritized groups. They applauded the faculty for their high quality, award-winning research, “ranging from articles and books to plays, novels, and performance art.” They commended the Department’s “extraordinary ability to sustain enrolments in a time where humanities enrolments and live theatre have both experienced widespread and devastating declines” as well as their clear vision for future curricular developments. They emphasized the remarkably high morale among faculty, students and staff, as well as the effectiveness and sensitivity of departmental leadership, and the overall direction of the department and its programs. Finally, the reviewers praised the Department’s “strong and inclusive sense of community” and its “sense of shared and meaningful mission.”

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: continuing to offer enhanced opportunities for collaboration and learning outside the classroom and exploring ways to increase research opportunities for students; working to increase faculty engagement and student recruitment in order to support the long-term stability of the Canadian Studies program; assessing Teaching Assistant allocation for high enrolment 300-level courses and exploring strategies to better align TA allocation with course delivery and instructional demands across its full range of courses and programs; providing faculty with enhanced guidance on research opportunities as well as clear guidelines to help them meet research, teaching, and service expectations for tenure and promotion; engaging in careful and strategic faculty complement planning to support strategic advancement of the department’s research and teaching programs; exploring ways to enhance collegiality and a sense of community in the department; completing the Memorandum of Understanding process for the Theatre and Drama Studies Joint Specialist program as soon as possible and increasing communication between faculty at the two institutions; exploring ways to address the need for increased staff support in the areas of student recruitment, engagement, and advising; community and alumni outreach; and the promotion of faculty research; and developing a five-year strategic plan in alignment with the UTM Strategic Framework including discussion of curricular priorities, a clear mission for the Centre for New Theatre, and leadership succession planning.

The Dean’s Administrative Response describes the unit’s responses to the reviewers’ recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5 Monitoring and Date of Next Review

Progress checks and monitoring of the implementation plan will occur through the Chair's Annual Report to the Dean. The next external review of the Department of English & Drama will be commissioned to take place in 2029-30.

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than the 2027-28 academic year on the status of the implementation plans.

6 Distribution

On July 15th 2025, 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 and Dean of the University of Toronto Mississauga, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to unit/program leadership.

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

1 Review Summary

Program(s) Reviewed:	Linguistics (HBA): Major, Minor English Language Linguistics (HBA): Minor French Studies (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor French & Italian (HBA): Specialist Francophone Studies (HBA): Minor Functional French (HBA): Minor Italian (HBA): Specialist, Major Italian Language & Culture (HBA): Minor Chinese Language & Culture (HBA): Minor Language Teaching & Learning: French & Italian (HBA): Specialist Language Teaching & Learning: French (HBA): Major Language Teaching & Learning: Italian (HBA): Major Education Studies (HBA): Minor Certificate in Global Perspectives
Unit Reviewed:	Department of Language Studies
Commissioning Officer:	Vice-Principal Academic & Dean, University of Toronto Mississauga
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Archibald, Department of Linguistics, University of Victoria • David Birdsong, Department of French and Italian, University of Texas at Austin • Cristina Della Coletta, Dean, School of Arts and Humanities, University of California San Diego
Date of Review Visit:	February 26 – 27, 2024
Review Report Received by VPAP:	April 25, 2024
Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:	September 16, 2024
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 22, 2024

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: February 29 – March 1, 2016

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- High quality, popular programs with sharp, high-achieving students
- Remarkable Italian program with the right mix of language/cultural instruction, reflecting the strong community base in Toronto
- Impressive French course offerings, especially considering the size of the department
- Strong outreach programs with excellent reputations, including French Summer Camp, Italian play, and study abroad programs
- Highly productive faculty, especially given the small size of the complement, within a very collegial work environment
- Many professors collaborate with colleagues in other universities and organizations on research projects
- Sound organizational structure with well-handled finances
- Personnel are courteous and dedicated to the administrative and academic mission of the department
- Strong, well-balanced unit, with a great potential for increasing its already impressive ranking

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Consolidating the programs under the four disciplines—French, Italian, Linguistics and Teaching and Learning—in order to build on current strengths
- Examining the frequency of course offerings and a clear calendar of course offerings, the possibility of summer courses and, as the complement expands, offering classes with a popular cultural focus on a more regular basis
- Reflecting on the right mix of responsibilities and appointment categories to support its many programs and courses and to support the research mission
- Focusing on supporting existing programs in terms of faculty growth and research output, specifically in French and Italian rather than expanding into new academic programs
- Maintaining the strong outreach programs offered by the department

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Terms of Reference; Self-Study; Previous review documents (including External Reviewers Report, Summary Report, Decanal Administrative Response, and Final Assessment Report/Implementation Plan); UTM Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (UUDLEs); UofT Facts & Figures (2021); UTM Vision Statement (2017); UTM Academic Plan (2017); UTM Viewbook (2023-24); U of T's "Framework for a New Structure of Academic Administration for the Three Campuses" (aka Tri-Campus Framework); Access to all Visual Studies course descriptions; Access to the curricula vitae of faculty.

Consultation Process

As determined by the Commissioning Officer, the reviewers met with Vice-Dean, Teaching & Learning and Associate Dean, Academic Programs; Department Chair; Administrative Staff; Program Coordinators; Undergraduate Students; Tenure-Stream Faculty; Teaching-Stream Faculty; Sessional Lecturers; Teaching Assistants, Postdoctoral Fellows, and Research Associates; Chairs of Collaborating UTM Undergraduate Departments (Mathematical and Computational Sciences, Historical Studies, Psychology, English & Drama).

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
 - ▶ Department's linguistics programs described as "top-tier", offering a "first-rate program that stands with the best in North America"
 - ▶ Reviewers greatly impressed with the Italian Language and Culture programs, describing the Italian program's overall quality as "among the highest among competitors at other peer institutions despite the imminent lack of faculty resources"
 - ▶ The Chinese Language and Culture Minor has grown substantially and reflects the University's mission to "educate highly accomplished individuals who are capable of leadership in the global knowledge economy"
 - ▶ The Certificate in Global Perspectives is an interdisciplinary program with great value
- Objectives
 - ▶ Outcomes in all French programs "are consistent with UTM Degree Level Expectations"

- ▶ The Italian Major and Specialist programs are “well aligned with the University’s goal to educate future leaders to be global citizens by providing diverse courses ‘reflecting a priority to explore, challenge, and advance the role of Italian culture and identity in a globalized world’”
- ▶ Reviewers found the targeted learning outcomes of the Major in Language Teaching & Learning, French desirable for professional preparation
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Admissions requirements appear to be appropriate in all programs
 - ▶ Placement tests for the Minor in Chinese Language and Culture and the additional use of one-on-one interviews “is noteworthy and emphasizes the rigor of the program”
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ The Linguistics programs are well-structured, comprehensive, with additional breadth through a joint appointment in computational linguistics and the formal cross-listing of courses between Linguistics and Psychology
 - ▶ Linguistics students comprehend their program’s structure and requirements and appear to be well-satisfied; enrolment numbers are strong
 - ▶ Linguistics’ curriculum mapping is “thorough and informative”; all programs are consistent with UTM Degree Level Expectations
 - ▶ The English Language Linguistics Minor is distinct from the Linguistics Minor and clearly viable
 - ▶ The Functional French Minor has undergone a complete revision with a focus on course offerings, requirements, instructional methods and co- and extra-curricular learning enhancements; “these measures hold the promise of raising enrollments in the program”
 - ▶ Italian Language and Culture is “a leader in the field of Italian Studies because of its strong curriculum and program delivery.”
 - ▶ The Italian program has effectively diversified its course offerings, used technology to create high-impact educational practices, and strengthened its experiential learning opportunities “that are rarely available at other institutions”
 - ▶ “The curricular design of the Chinese Minor is strong, with structured scaffolding that allows students to build on their baseline proficiency and enhance their skills progressively”
 - ▶ Students commented favourably on the Language Teaching & Learning French Major, appreciating the small class sizes with enhanced opportunities for student-instructor interactions
 - ▶ The Language Teaching & Learning French Major provides students with opportunities to conduct faculty-supervised research, work as teaching assistances, and to participate in exchanges
 - ▶ The Language Teaching & Learning Italian Major has its curriculum “clearly mapped out... and includes an experiential learning component”
 - ▶ The Education Studies minor has shown continual growth since its launch in 2015

- Innovation
 - ▶ Instructors in the Chinese Language & Culture Minor learned from online teaching experiences during COVID-19 “and retained innovative instructional technologies that promote active participation and collaborative learning”
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Overall, the Department’s assessment methods are appropriate; the Chinese Minor in particular is rigorous with well-defined learning outcomes
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Reviewers commend initiatives in the French language programs that foster co-curricular and extracurricular activities, study abroad, internships, and other opportunities for enrichment
 - ▶ The French Studies Minor has had steady enrollments over the past ten years, “one likely factor in the program’s popularity is the relative freedom of choice of courses at all levels.”
 - ▶ Students in Chinese Language & Culture find their course requirements clear and instructors “accessible and accommodating of individual students’ needs”
 - ▶ Linguistics students spoke positively of the research opportunities made available to them by faculty members
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ Reviewers remarked that Italian Language & Culture students are very bright and expressed a “healthy sense of ‘ownership’ of and belonging in the program”
- Quality indicators – faculty
 - ▶ Both tenure and teaching-stream faculty appear engaged and productive

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ “Except for the Minor in French Studies, where enrollments have held steady over the past ten years, the numbers in all French programs are down significantly since Fall 2014.”
 - ▶ Reviewers note that curricular coverage in the French Studies Major is limited due to “the absence of instruction in the languages, literatures, cultures and histories of Francophone Africa, Magreb/Mashriq and the Caribbean”
 - ▶ Students expressed concern over the diversity of course offerings in the Italian Language & Culture program following the retirement of two key faculty members
 - ▶ Reviewers observed that the closure of the Concurrent Teaching Program has negatively impacted enrolments in the Italian Language & Culture Major
 - ▶ “Italian language classes have been eliminated from some of the local elementary and high schools and as a teaching subject recognized by the Ontario Ministry of Education. This has had a notable negative impact on enrollments in the program”
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Language proficiency does not appear to be systematically or objectively assessed
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ “The Self-Study mentions administrative obstacles to exchange opportunities with institutions in French-speaking Canada, particularly in Québec”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Consider a tenure-track specialist in the French of Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, and the Maghreb/Mashriq to better represent the historical and emergent Francophone world, its literatures, languages and cultures
 - ▶ The Language Teaching & Learning Italian program should “partner with the relevant unit at the University of Toronto to engage in a data-driven long-term assessment of student interest in the program, given the changing demographics of Mississauga and the greater Toronto region, and the new directives by the Ministry of Education” before attending to faculty hires
 - ▶ The administration should “infuse fresh resources into the Italian program” by filling the gaps caused by faculty retirements; additional cross-unit opportunities should also be considered
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Explore the use of adaptive computer-based assessment products to score language proficiency outcomes with standards set out in both the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR) and ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ “Expand student exchange and experiential learning in Francophone Canada, particularly Québec”
 - ▶ Consider additional experiential learning supports such as student participation in the Institute for Field Education (IFE) that could be offset by partial or full scholarships

2. Graduate Program(s) – n/a

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ “From our meetings with all faculty groups, we came away with strong impressions of collaboration, purposefulness and collegiality. These indicators of departmental morale translate tangibly into high levels of functionality and accomplishment”
- Research
 - ▶ Reviewers observed that the faculty’s research output is on par with peer-institutions
 - ▶ “Faculty prestige is also demonstrated by the number of grants and awards (with steady growth in both the highly competitive SSHRC and NSERC funding competitions)”
- Faculty
 - ▶ The department is very well-balanced across ranks

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

- Faculty
 - ▶ Retirements in the Italian program has resulted in a “problematic gap”
 - ▶ Faculty workload is at times described as “unsustainable” with program coordinators across the Department noting that their workload “limits their ability to interact with and learn from one another as well as pursue professional development opportunities”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ Reviewers recommend reducing course loads for teaching-stream faculty and program coordinators “to allow time for professional development and innovation in experiential learning methodologies and partnerships”
 - ▶ “We recommend rewarding this loyalty and deep commitment by investing forward in the department, as the return on investment will likely positively affect the university as a whole and help maintain its international prestige in very competitive times”
 - ▶ Explore a cross-appointment between Spanish and Italian to improve collaboration and innovation in such areas as translanguaging pedagogies and practices, and/or on multilingualism and intersectionality

4. Administration

Note: Issues that are addressed through specific University processes and therefore considered out of scope for UTQAP reviews (e.g., individual Human Resources issues, specific health and safety concerns) are routed to proper University offices to be addressed, and are therefore not included in the Review Summary component of the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Reviewers describe the Department’s climate as “excellent” with students commenting that professors were “open, accessible, and accommodating”
 - ▶ “The unit is fully devoted to the University’s mission and goals, something that the administration should appreciate and, indeed, celebrate”
 - ▶ Senior Teaching Stream faculty stated they were “‘at the table’ for departmental decision-making”
 - ▶ “Junior Teaching Stream Faculty members were generally pleased with the absence of stratification within DLS, and they felt supported and validated”
 - ▶ Sessional Lecturers appear to be a harmonious group
 - ▶ TAs were “enthusiastic ambassadors of UTM and felt it to be a collegial and congenial home”

- ▶ The Department has forged relationships and collaborated with several UTM units through cross-listed and joint courses, and joint hires.
- ▶ The Department has also formed relationships with several external institutions to the University, both within Canada and internationally
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Staff feel respected, heard, and supported by the Department and its “outstanding leadership”
 - ▶ “The Department of Language Studies is housed in a relatively new building, with ample and welcoming shared spaces”
- International comparators
 - ▶ The Department reflects the overall strengths of the University and is comparable to faculty at peer institutions
 - ▶ Reviewers note that compared to U.S. peers, U of T maintains “unrivalled pre-eminence in the Experiential Learning and Community Engagement arenas” and that the Department of Language Studies is no exception, “undoubtedly a leader in a global space where experiential learning opportunities are often tied to the science & technology sectors and their well-articulated practical requirements”

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

- Relationships
 - ▶ Some senior faculty members expressed difficulties navigating “the unwieldiness of programmatic expansions within DLS”
 - ▶ Junior faculty pointed to “issues of confusion around roles, identity, and goals”
 - ▶ Sessional lecturers expressed some displeasure “over workspace conditions: one communal office, with no window, is uncomfortably cramped and inhibits face-to-face meetings with students”
 - ▶ Some individual staff concerns with overlapping responsibilities and unclear delineation of positions and expectations.
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Reviewers noted some non-tenure stream faculty raised concerns over lack of office space, or having to share with colleagues
 - ▶ In discussions with TAs, reviewers became aware of the “lack of dedicated space to meet with students”
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ “A recurring issue that we heard about frequently was the teaching-stream faculty’s teaching load of 3.5 FCE per year”
 - ▶ Concern expressed by some teaching-stream faculty members over “the need to conduct research in combination with this heavy teaching load” possibly due to a perceived lack of clarity of the research demands of their position

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ “Reducing course loads for teaching-stream faculty and program coordinators will be essential to allow time for professional development and innovation in experiential learning methodologies and partnerships. Failure to attend to this urgent matter will adversely affect departmental climate and erode the overall excellence of its programs”
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Reviewers were pleased to learn of a planned hire to support the Global Leadership minor and Global Perspectives certificate and anticipated that this change will be helpful in alleviating some of the pressure points on workload for the Department, that is “providing a valuable service to the University by hosting this program”
 - ▶ Consider clarifying the definition of certain staff roles
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ The Department should explore the streamlining of some programs, possibly by utilizing streams to reflect distinct languages and requirements
 - ▶ “We recommend elimination of the Specialist in French Studies.”
 - ▶ “We recommend closing the Specialist in Italian Language & Culture.”
 - ▶ “Close the suspended programs: Specialist in French & Italian; Major in French Language and French Linguistics; Minor in Francophone Studies. These have been inaccessible to students for some time, and we see no reason to bring them back”
 - ▶ “The Department could consider whether the English Language Linguistics minor could be morphed into an [Language Teaching & Learning] (English) minor to further harmonize the terminology”
 - ▶ “Move Education Studies (EDS) to the Institute for the Study of University Pedagogy (ISUP). ISUP seemed like a natural home for the faculty members in EDS”
 - ▶ Reviewers encourage exploring ways to reduce the teaching-stream teaching load from 3.5 FCE to 3.0 FCE to reflect the heavy service loads carried by teaching-stream faculty within the Department
- International comparators
 - ▶ “We recommend sustaining the department’s (and University’s) global leadership in the experiential learning arena. The sophistication of the Canadian model is matched only by wealthy small liberal arts colleges in the U.S. and still fairly spotty in Europe”
 - ▶ To support maintaining the Department’s international standing, reviewers encourage providing faculty with the time to “build new opportunities and stay abreast of the swift evolution of global job markets” by addressing the teaching load concerns



September 16, 2024

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

RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Language Studies and its programs

Dear Professor McCahan,

Thank you for your letter of June 4, 2024 requesting the decanal administrative response to the February 26-27, 2024 review of the Department of Language Studies and its undergraduate programs: Chinese Language & Culture Minor; English Language Linguistics Minor; Francophone Studies Minor; French Studies (HBA) Specialist, Major, Minor; French & Italian (HBA) Specialist; Functional French Minor; Italian (HBA) Specialist, Major; Italian Language & Culture Minor; Language Teaching & Learning: French (HBA) Major; Language Teaching & Learning: French & Italian (HBA) Specialist; Language Teaching & Learning: Italian (HBA) Major; Linguistics (HBA) Major, Minor; Certificate in Global Perspectives.

On behalf of the University of Toronto Mississauga, we would first like to thank the reviewers, John Archibald, University of Victoria, David Birdsong, University of Texas at Austin, and Cristina Della Coletta, UC San Diego, for their very comprehensive review of the Department of Language Studies and its programs. We would also like to thank the Chair, Prof. Arsalan Kahnemuyipour, and faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study. We also want to thank the many staff, students, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided thoughtful feedback.

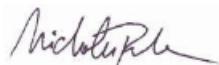
Overall, the reviewers found that the department is strong, with extraordinary levels of faculty accomplishment, engagement, and collegiality. The reviewer report noted that students, faculty, and staff all expressed a sense of belonging to the department and its programs. The reviewers also noted the appropriately structured admission and completion requirements for the programs and highlighted the sophistication of the experiential learning opportunities available to the students in the programs under review. In their recommendations, the reviewers advised expanding curricular coverage in French through a new faculty hire; revisiting teaching stream workload policy; engaging data-driven, long-term assessment of student interest to determine the future of Italian studies programs; and reassessing the future home of the Education Studies program.

The reviewers' recommendations have been addressed in the enclosed Review Recommendations Table that outlines the Department's response, the Decanal response, and the Implementation Plan identifying action items and timelines for each recommendation (immediate, medium, or long term). This response was developed in consultation with the Department through a Town Hall held on June 6, 2024, and from a Chair's administrative response submitted by the Chair of the Department.

Progress checks and monitoring of the implementation plan will occur through the Chair's Annual Report to the Dean. We also acknowledge your office will request a brief Interim Monitoring Report

midway between the February 2024 review and the next cyclical review, which is scheduled to take place in the **2030-31** academic year.

Sincerely,



Nicholas Rule
Vice-Principal, Academic & Dean

Encl.: 2023-24 UTQAP Review of the UTM Department of English and Drama – Review
Recommendations (table)

CC: Arsalan Kahnemuyipour, Chair, Department of Language Studies University of Toronto
Mississauga
Bryan Stewart, Vice-Dean, Academic Programs, University of Toronto Mississauga
Ferzeen Sammy, Manager, Academic Programs, Reviews & Quality Assurance, University of
Toronto Mississauga
Tatevik Nersisyan, Research Analyst, Academic Programs & Reviews, University of Toronto
Mississauga

2023-24 UTQAP Review of the UTM Department of Language Studies - Review Recommendations

Please do the following for each recommendation in the table:

- If you **intend** to act on a recommendation, please provide an **Implementation Plan** identifying actions to be taken, the time frame (immediate, medium, long term) for each, and who will take the lead in each area. If appropriate, please identify any necessary changes in organization, policy or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.
- If you **do not** intend to act on a recommendation, please briefly explain why the actions recommended have not been prioritized.
- In accordance with the UTQAP and Ontario's Quality Assurance Framework, "it is important to note that, while the external reviewers' report may include **commentary** on issues such as faculty complement and/or space requirements when related to the quality of the program under review, **recommendations** on these or any other elements that are within the purview of the university's internal budgetary decision-making processes must be tied directly to issues of program quality or sustainability" (emphasis added)
- You may wish to refer to the [sample table](#) provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec . #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Unit Response	Dean's Response	Implementation Plan <i>Timeline: immediate (6 months to 12 months), medium (1 to 3 years) and long (4 to 7 years) term.</i> <i>Lead (e.g. Program Director, Dean)</i>
The reviewers observed that "The French language, in all its varieties and in all its sociolinguistic and ethnic identities, in all its literary and cultural expressions, cannot be adequately studied or represented from European and Canadian perspectives," and recommended that the department consider expanding curricular coverage and faculty expertise to include French-speaking peoples and cultures of Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, and the Maghreb/Mashriq.	1	"To bring French quality up another notch, the UTM administration should take seriously the indisputable need for a tenure-track specialist in the French of Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, and the Maghreb/Mashriq. The French language, in all its varieties and in all its sociolinguistic and ethnic identities, in all its literary and cultural expressions, cannot be adequately studied or represented from European and Canadian perspectives."	The hiring of a faculty member in French studies outside of France and Quebec was already a departmental priority, not only for the future faculty members' contribution to diversification of our MAJ/SPEC in French studies as well as the French language series but also to address under representation of BIPOC faculty among our French professors and the departmental faculty more generally.	The Department may proceed through the faculty complement planning process to request new faculty positions. In this process, the Department's request will be considered alongside all other units' requests for new positions and are assessed based on criteria set by the OVPAD complement planning committee and available campus budget allocation for new faculty searches. The OVPAD received requests for over 40 faculty positions and only 10 were approved. We encourage the Department to consider resubmitting as part of the next	Immediate term (12 months): The Department will request a position in Black francophone media next year. (Dept Chair)
	2	"...curricular coverage in MajFS [the Major in French Studies] is limited due to the absence of instruction in the languages, literatures, cultures and histories of Francophone Africa,	Instruction in these areas is indeed important to a contemporary French Studies curriculum. Departmental French courses already include		

		Magreb/Mashriq and the Caribbean. Well-conceived courses in these areas would attract more students to MajFS (as well as to the other programs in French), while desirably representing the social, ethnic, and historical diversities that now characterize the Francophone world.”	FRE395H5 <i>Francophone Media and Global Culture</i> and FRE397H <i>Francophone African and Caribbean Cinema</i> . However, given the small number of French faculty (2) in literary & cultural studies due to retirements over the past five years, it is not currently possible to offer these courses.	complement planning cycle in Winter 2025. However, the Department may re-submit this proposal in Winter 2025 for consideration in the 2024/25 complement planning process.	new courses in the faculty member’s area of specialization aligned with the MajFS learning objectives. (Dept Chair)
The reviewers noted serious concerns regarding the department’s programs in Italian, observing that recent faculty retirements and changes in policy at the Ontario Ministry of Education have brought the program to “a major turning point”; they recommended engaging in a data-driven, long-term assessment of student interest in these programs to determine future directions for curriculum and faculty complement planning.	3	“Before attending to faculty hires, the LTL [Language Teaching and Learning] Program-Italian should partner with the relevant unit at the University of Toronto to engage in a data-driven long-term assessment of student interest in the program, given the changing demographics of Mississauga and the greater Toronto region, and the new directives by the Ministry of Education.”	The Language Teaching and Learning - Italian Major is currently undergoing changes to its curriculum and requirements which address the Major’s viability as a stand-alone program.	The Office of the Vice-Principal, Academic and Dean (OVPAD) supports the Department’s review of the curriculum. The Vice-Dean, Academic Programs and the Programs and Curriculum Unit (PCU) are available to guide the program through curriculum changes in this area.	Immediate to medium term (6 months to 1 year): Follow through with current changes to the Italian-LTL program. (Dept Chair) Medium term (2 years): A departmental committee has been struck to collapse the existing Italian LTL Major program into a new LTL Major program that will incorporate other languages of study offered by DLS. (Dept Chair)
	4	“... we urge the administration to infuse fresh resources into the Italian program. The gaps caused by the two retirements should be filled with two new hires to preserve the innovative research and teaching happening in the program.”	We are in full agreement with the reviewers’ recommendation. The addition of faculty positions are paramount to maintaining the quality and the mere presence of the Italian program. With replacement hires, Italian can respond to the increasing student interest in several of its course offerings, namely in Cultural Studies; sustain and expand its Experiential Learning - activities that make the program unique in North America; transform its curriculum and existing curricula in areas such as language,	As noted in recommendation 1, the Department may request a new position in Italian Studies through the faculty complement planning process.	Immediate term (12 months): The Department will request a faculty complement position in Italian in 2024-25. (Dept Chair)

			teaching and learning, and literature.		
5	“At least one research-stream hire in Italian will be essential to maintain the program’s viability and quality.”	We are in full agreement with the reviewers’ recommendation. Without a research-stream hire, the research, education and experiences for which Italian Studies are known are compromised. Course offerings cannot be sustained, the curriculum risks stagnation, and students will not be introduced to all of the facets of Italian Studies which heighten their appreciation for the area of study and which, in turn, motivate them to subscribe to Italian courses. New faculty positions in Italian should represent a wider range of perspectives that more accurately reflect today’s globalized experience of Italy and of Italian Studies which align with the areas of growth, in Cultural Studies, that have been noted in the Italian program.			
6	“A cross-appointment between Spanish and Italian could improve collaboration and allow innovation in areas such as translanguaging pedagogies and practices, and/or multilingualism and intersectionality.”	We find the reviewers’ recommendation worthy of further exploration. This is a natural pairing and both Italian and Spanish faculty are interested in seriously exploring this suggestion. A joint position would also be useful for the new LTL Major which intends to bridge multiple languages including Italian and Spanish.			<p>Immediate (6 months): The Italian and Spanish faculty will further explore this recommendation and will come up with a proposal to present to the faculty in 24-25 retreat. (Dept Chair)</p> <p>Medium term (2 to 3 years): Proposal will be discussed in 24-25 retreat and a decision will be made. If approved, a faculty complement request will be</p>

					submitted in 2025 or 2026. (Dept Chair)
The reviewers recommended that the department consider streamlining some of their program offerings, and suggested that the UTM Institute for the Study of University Pedagogy might be a more natural home for the Education Studies minor and its faculty members.	7	“Close the suspended programs: Specialist in French & Italian; Major in French Language and French Linguistics; Minor in Francophone Studies. These have been inaccessible to students for some time, and we see no reason to bring them back.”	The Major in French Language and French Linguistics has not been active for some time. We will assess the potential the closure of the Specialist in French & Italian as well as the Minor in Francophone Studies more closely.	As noted above, the Vice-Dean, Academic Programs and the Programs and Curriculum Unit (PCU) are available to guide the program through curriculum changes and assessing potential closures or other modifications to their programs.	Immediate term (6 months): The closure of these programs will be discussed by the Departmental Curriculum Committee in Fall 2024. If accepted, the closure requests will be submitted during the Fall 2025 curriculum renewal round. (Dept Chair, Vice-Dean, Academic Programs)
	8	“Close the Specialist programs in French Studies and Italian. There are very few students enrolled in these programs so few students will be impacted. We also feel that for students who are seeking preparation for entry to graduate school, the Major program will be sufficient. Students applying for graduate school will not be likely to be adversely affected as peer-institutions do not typically have programs called ‘Specialist’ though many have ‘Honours’ programs.”	Given that offering these Specialist programs has absolutely no resource implications for the department, we do not wish to reduce student program options unnecessarily. Such a move would go against a general trend in North American universities to offer students more options (e.g. customized degrees). Students who complete the Specialist are competitive candidates for graduate programs in Italian/French, Education, Comparative Literature, etc. They graduate with a detailed and diversified portfolio that offers them more theoretical and practical experience than other program options can afford.		
	9	“We would encourage the department to consider some streamlining of these [Language Learning and Teaching] programs. Perhaps the LTL could become a program with diverse streams in it related to different languages (Chinese, Italian, Arabic,	This is precisely the plan that has been in the works for the Department, a new LTL Major which intends to bridge multiple languages. The Department has been in communication with the Dean’s Office about this LTL	The OVPAD issues an annual call for potential academic change proposals, including new programs and major modifications, through an annual Expression of Interest (EOI) process. We encourage the	Immediate (6 to 12 months): Finalize revisions to LTL Major Proposal in the Departmental Curriculum Committee and submit to the UTM Curriculum Committee in 2024-25. (Dept Chair)

		etc.) ... It is possible that an LTL Minor could serve the needs of Spanish, Chinese, and Functional French as well, to further streamline offerings.”	Major for two years. The original proposal has undergone several rounds of revisions. Its submission to the UTM Curriculum Committee was postponed while the External Review was underway. With the Review process nearly complete and the recommendation from the reviewers, we intend to follow through with this Major proposal in the 24-25 academic year. The extension of this idea to an LTL Minor is an issue that requires further examination and discussion.	Department to submit this potential proposal in 2025.	Medium to long term (3 to 4 years): Explore the idea of extending this structure to the LTL Minor. This will depend on the decisions made with respect to the identity/structure of the department in the 24-25 faculty retreat. (Dept Chair)
10		“The department could consider whether the English Language Linguistics minor could be morphed into an LTL (English) minor to further harmonize the terminology.”	A current priority for the Linguistics section is to reconsider the broad focus and program outcomes for the ELL minor program. Based on the outcome of this discussion, and in consultation with other relevant sections such as LTL, we will consider where it best fits into the department structure.	The OVPAD supports the Department’s plans to assess the ELL curriculum.	Medium to long term (2 to 4 years): Depending on the decisions made with respect to the identity/structure of the department in the 24-25 faculty retreat, it will be decided where ELL best fits in the department structure. (Dept Chair)
11		“Move Education Studies (EDS) to the Institute for the Study of University Pedagogy (ISUP). ISUP seemed like a natural home for the faculty members in EDS. It would also provide a cohort of scholars for the two EDS professors to interact with.”	This is a suggestion that requires a very careful study on the impact of such a move for EDS and its faculty, DLS and also for ISUP. We immediately formed a committee called “The Future of EDS” when we received the external report. The committee has already had a few meetings and will continue to meet during the 24-25 academic year to prepare a report for the 24-25 faculty retreat. The committee will	The OVPAD will support conversations about the future of the Minor program in EDS. OVPAD supports the Department’s plans to consider all aspects of this potential change, including Department structure, faculty and student impacts, and best fit for the curriculum.	Immediate (6 to 12 months): The Chair has formed a Future of EDS committee. which has a mandate to explore the implications of such a move for EDS, DLS and ISUP. The committee is also mandated to study ways of better integrating the EDS program in the departmental structure, should the decision be made for EDS to remain within DLS. (Dept Chair)
12		“... we feel that [moving the Education Studies minor] to ISUP would be positive in that it could allow the program to grow, allow the faculty members to be more supported, and to			

		continue to allow the experiential learning support to happen in DLS.”	provide reports to the faculty throughout the year. The goal is to make a decision about such a move at the faculty retreat. If the decision is for EDS to stay in DLS, we will devise plans to better integrate the program in the department structure. The committee chair, EDS Program Coordinator and the Department Chair met with then Vice-Dean Teaching, Tracey Bowen, in June to share some initial thoughts/questions. In the coming months, the department will also engage the new ISUP Director in discussions.	ISUP was recently established in 2020 and will have its first external review in 2027-2028. This will be a good opportunity to think about potential directions and curriculum for ISUP.	<p>Immediate to medium term (6 months to 2 years): The committee will report to the faculty throughout the year and will present its final report at the 24-25 faculty retreat. At the faculty retreat, the Department will decide in this regard based on collaboratively developed criteria that will examine content implications, financial implications, FCE implications, faculty complement and student experience implications. (Dept Chair)</p> <p>Medium to long term (2 to 4 years): If the decision is to move EDS to ISUP, we will need to first engage other relevant parties to implement the plan. If the decision is to keep EDS with DLS, we will implement the plans to better integrate it into DLS. This will likely require curricular changes over the following 2-3 years and is closely tied to item 22 (“departmental identity”). (Dept Chair)</p>
The reviewers recommended that the department expand student exchange and experiential learning opportunities in Francophone Canada, particularly in Québec.	13	“Expand student exchange and experiential learning in Francophone Canada, particularly Québec.”	The Department strongly supports all experiential learning initiatives and the French faculty have previously discussed the interest of having study elsewhere programs in Quebec, not only because of lower costs to students, but also because students need immersion in	There are existing partnerships with Study Abroad for students to enroll in credit courses and internship opportunities at universities in Quebec.	Immediate (6 to 12 months): OVPAD has connected the Department with the Centre for International Experience to continue the discussion about options. (Dept Chair/Program Director)
	14	“Given the educational richness of [exchange opportunities] ... their value to the French curriculum, and their low cost to students relative to study overseas, we urge that this restriction be revisited.”			

			Canadian French language & culture.		
	15	“Experiential learning opportunity. For students in French or Spanish programs, course credits for experiential learning (internships, research) and advanced language study can be obtained through participation in the Institute for Field Education (IFE) a non-profit European organization that sets students up in suitable positions in Paris, Strasbourg, Brussels and Asturias... Costs for IFE participation might be offset by partial or full scholarships for outstanding students (typically majors).”	We are grateful to the external reviewers for bringing this opportunity to our attention. This particular experiential learning experience is of great interest given that, unlike current university-based exchanges in France and Spain that are academic in nature, IFE focuses rather on internships and research experience outside the university.		Immediate to medium term (6 months to 3 years): The Associate Chair as well as French and Language Program coordinators met with representatives from IFE in June 2024. Both the UTM and IFE representatives agreed to continue discussions in Fall 2024. We hope to be able to take advantage of these opportunities in the next 2-3 years onward. (Dept Chair)
The reviewers observed that student proficiency outcomes are not systematically or objectively assessed for any DLS language programs, and recommended this for consideration by the department.	16	“Language proficiency assessment. It appears that student proficiency outcomes are not systematically or objectively assessed for any of the programs in the Department of Language Studies. As an idea for how to go about this, the Department might explore an adaptive computer-based assessment product (Avant STAMP) that scores students in 4 skills with reference to proficiency standards set out in both the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR) and ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines.”	The Department would indeed benefit from developing shared proficiency assessment practices across the languages taught. We would like to explore external assessment tests such as Avant STAMP. We would also like to do a feasibility study of developing our own assessment tools. We do have the expertise in the department and, in principle, this could turn into a revenue generator for us.	The OVPAD supports the Department’s approach.	Immediate to medium term (6 months to 3 years): In 2024-25, Program Coordinators and language instructors will meet to discuss the best ways to increase shared assessment practices, including the possibility of using external tests. We will also explore the possibility of developing our own assessment tests. The outcome of this feasibility study will be presented at the faculty retreat. (Dept Chair) Medium to long term (2 to 6 years): If the decision is to develop department-internal assessment tests, the relevant university offices will be approached for further discussion and possible implementation. The implementation may take 3-5 years. (Dept Chair)

The reviewers noted urgent concerns regarding course teaching loads for teaching-stream faculty members and program coordinators across all programs; they strongly recommended that course loads be reduced “to allow time for professional development and innovation in experiential learning methodologies and partnerships.”	17	“Reducing course loads for teaching-stream faculty and program coordinators will be essential to allow time for professional development and innovation in experiential learning methodologies and partnerships. Failure to attend to this urgent matter will adversely affect departmental climate and erode the overall excellence of its programs.”	We are in full agreement with the external reviewers. We submitted a request to reduce the teaching load of our teaching-stream faculty from 3.5 to 3.0 in 2023. The response to this request was postponed to July 2024. In the meantime, we presented a supplemental document with new rationale in June 2024. On July 17, 2024, we received a response to this request from the Dean’s office. According to this response, our request was not approved, but the issue can be revisited after an impact analysis is conducted by the OVPAD. This issue is a top priority for the department for the very reasons laid out by the external reviewers.	The OVPAD is undertaking an impact analysis of the proposed teaching reduction in the Department of Language Studies (as well as in other departments with high numbers of teaching stream faculty who requested a reduction in teaching workload). The Vice-Dean, Faculty portfolio plans to complete the impact analysis during the 2024/25 academic year. Workload policies must be reviewed at least every 3 years, which means that the department could submit another request for workload reduction once the impact assessment is complete, in advance of the 3-year window. The OVPAD will meet with the Department to discuss the impact analysis process and any information OVPAD might require as part of the analysis.	Immediate to medium term (6 months to 2 years): The Department will submit a new request following the completion of the impact analysis. (Dept Chair, Vice-Dean, Faculty)
	18	“A proposal to review the teaching-stream workload is currently with the Dean’s Office... We urge the Dean’s Office to take this request under serious consideration. This will not only improve the department’s climate in terms of equitable workload (we can confirm that the workload is heavier than that at peer-institutions) but also allow teaching faculty to invest in program building and innovation”			
	19	“The external reviewers agree... that the duties of Program Coordinators are excessive and should be reduced or redistributed, and that the teaching load of Teaching Stream faculty should be reduced from 3.5 [FCE] to 3.0 [FCE].”	We agree with the external reviewers that the duties of the Program Coordinators are excessive, necessitating reduction of their teaching load. At this time, following directives from the Dean’s Office, the teaching reduction for our Associate Chair is set at 0.5 FCE and our PCs at 0.25 FCE. We think the reduction for the Associate Chair should be set at 1.0 and the Program Coordinators at 0.5.	The OVPAD is undertaking an analysis of non-AAA department administrative roles and compensation packages across the campus to ensure equity (i.e., compensation appropriately reflects workload). Once the analysis is completed, the OVPAD may make adjustments to various compensation packages (e.g., teaching reduction) on a case-by-case basis.	Immediate to medium term (6 months to 2 years): Department will continue discussions with the Dean’s Office to increase the course reduction of PCs to 0.5 FCE. (Vice-Dean, Faculty)
	20	“We recommend sustaining the department’s (and University’s) global	<i>Same as 17-18</i>	<i>Same as 17-18</i>	<i>Same as 17-18</i>

		leadership in the experiential learning arena... to maintain this leadership, the Department of Language Studies needs to provide the time for faculty to build new opportunities and stay abreast of the swift evolution of global job markets... Reducing this teaching load will come with a cost but will be a critical investment that will ensure the University's leadership in this important space in the long run."			
The reviewers commented that junior teaching-stream faculty members generally felt supported and validated among their colleagues, but noted some concerns expressed regarding access to the departmental Self-Study as well as confusion around their roles, identity, and goals within the department.	21	"Junior Teaching Stream Faculty members were generally pleased with the absence of stratification within DLS, and they felt supported and validated. However, they noted that they had not seen the Self Study until a week prior to the External Review. This group also pointed to issues of confusion around roles, identity, and goals. Some Junior Teaching Stream faculty felt the need for better mentoring."	We are happy to know that our junior teaching stream faculty feel supported and validated. We certainly see no division among faculty based on employment status or seniority. Since taking office in January 2024, the new Chair has tried to bring even more transparency to departmental practices and to have a more inclusive decision-making process. Mentoring is key to the success of our junior faculty. We will review our mentoring practices to ensure they meet the needs of our faculty.	The OVPAD oversees the mentoring program and holds a workshop for both mentors and mentees. The OVPAD also holds coffee-hours for junior faculty to better understand needs and challenges of the faculty experience. The OVPAD supports the Department's plans to engage and mentor junior faculty.	Immediate to medium term (6 months to 3 years): Department will reach out to junior faculty to ensure their voices are being heard, and will review our mentoring practices to ensure effectiveness. (Dept Chair)
The reviewers praised the department as a "cohesive academic operation," but recommended that time and resources be dedicated to craft a unified vision or image that would help define DLS as a coherent academic unit to an outside audience.	22	"The department should dedicate some time (perhaps at a retreat) to crafting a unified vision or image for the department. In terms of collaboration, collegiality, and common purpose, DLS is decidedly a cohesive academic operation. What remains is to define DLS as a coherent academic unit to an outside audience: What is the story to tell about DLS that other units and administrators and students will be able to read and understand?"	We take great pride in the collaborative and collegial spirit of our department. Meanwhile, we take the reviewers' recommendation with respect to "crafting a unified vision as a coherent academic unit" very seriously. We immediately formed a committee called Departmental Identity and Possible Restructuring when we received the external report. The	The OVPAD supports the Departments efforts and looks forward to the outcomes of the upcoming faculty retreat.	Immediate (6 to 12 months): The Departmental Identity and Possible Restructuring has already been formed. The committee will gather information from different programs, discuss possible ways of defining a coherent identity for the department, study possible restructuring of the department. (Dept Chair)

			<p>committee has already had a few meetings and will continue to meet during the 24-25 academic year to prepare a report for the 24-25 faculty retreat. The committee will also provide reports to the faculty throughout the year. In an attempt to define the departmental identity, we are also considering possible restructuring of the department. This issue will be discussed at length in the 24-25 faculty retreat, as suggested by the reviewers.</p>		<p>Immediate to medium term (12 months to 2 years): The committee will report to the faculty throughout the year and will present its final report at the 24-25 faculty retreat. At the faculty retreat, the Department will make a decision in this regard. (Dept Chair)</p> <p>Medium to long term (3 to 5 years): If the decision is to restructure the department, we will engage other relevant parties to implement the plan. This will be a very involved process with various curricular changes requiring approval at different levels.</p>
Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response	23	<p>“The review committee was pleased to see that an additional staff person was going to be appointed shortly to help with the administrative burden of the Certificate [in Global Perspectives] (and the new Minor in Global Leadership). That being said, it seems clear that the certificate in global perspectives is not a central mission of DLS. As the department seeks to craft a unified vision and mission across disciplines, we would expect that this program would remain an outlier to the narrative and would hope that the Dean’s Office would not expect them to try to incorporate it on an equal footing. The department is providing a valuable service to the university by hosting this program.”</p>	<p>The new staff member joined our department on July 29, 2024. We are optimistic that their addition will play a key role in developing the Global Leadership minor into a sustainable program that attracts strong student interest. While the program is currently not central to the mission of the department, we will consider ways of integrating the program better into the departmental structure.</p>	<p>The OVPAD supports the Department’s approach.</p>	<p>Immediate to medium term (12 months to 2 years): As we work to define our departmental identity, we will explore the role of the Global Leadership program within our vision and consider strategies for better integrating it into our departmental structure. This topic will be taken up at the 24-25 faculty retreat. (Dept Chair)</p>

	24	<p>“...perhaps it would be useful to explore a standardized and transparent "hotel" module [to address space concerns], where instructors have access to office space on specific times, in selected days of the week.”</p>	<p>Space constraints are a challenge across the University of Toronto, and our department is no exception. This problem is particularly pronounced due to the high number of sessional instructors in our department. We are currently reviewing our space allocations to optimize usage. Our long-standing system of bookable spaces for sessional instructors will remain in place, as it is especially valuable for one-on-one meetings with students requiring private space.</p>	<p>The Department may submit a request through the MCAPS process.</p>	<p>Immediate to medium term (12 months to 2 years): Department to review space allocations to optimize usage (Dept Chair)</p>
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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's program offerings in Linguistics, French, and Italian, noting them as top-tier offerings comparable to the best in North America. They were impressed by the sophisticated experiential learning structure “that prioritizes creating nimble pipelines between universities and evolving job markets,” and noted key program strengths in extra and co-curricular initiatives, internships, study abroad opportunities, and unique service and community-based learning options. They commended the “extraordinary levels of faculty accomplishment, engagement, creativity, collegiality, and collaboration,” and noted comments from teaching stream faculty regarding the “absence of stratification” within the department. Finally, the reviewers praised the department as fully committed to the University’s mission and goals, and highlighted the harmonious relationships, collaborative spirit, and professional commitment demonstrated by students, faculty, and staff alike.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: consider expanding curricular coverage and faculty expertise to include French-speaking peoples and cultures of Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, and the Maghreb/Mashriq; engaging in a data-driven, long-term assessment of student interest in the department’s programs in Italian to determine future directions for curriculum and faculty complement planning; consider streamlining some of the department’s program offerings, suggesting the UTM Institute for the Study of University Pedagogy might be a more natural home for the Education Studies minor and its faculty; expand student exchange and experiential learning opportunities in Francophone Canada, particularly in Québec; consider systematically or objectively assessing proficiency outcomes for DLS language programs; reduce course loads for teaching-stream faculty members and program coordinators “to allow time for professional development and innovation in experiential learning methodologies and partnerships”; dedicate time and resources to craft a unified vision or image to help define DLS as a coherent academic unit to an outside audience.

The Dean’s Administrative Response describes the division and unit’s responses to the reviewers’ recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5 Monitoring and Date of Next Review

Progress checks and monitoring of the implementation plan will occur through the Chair’s Annual Report to the Dean. The next external review of the Department of Language Studies will be commissioned in 2029-2030 to take place in 2030-2031.

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than Winter 2028 on the status of the implementation plans.

6 Distribution

On July 15th 2025, 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, University of Toronto Mississauga, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to unit leadership.

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

1 Review Summary

Program(s) Reviewed:	Art History (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor Art & Art History (HBA): Specialist, Major (joint program with Sheridan College) Cinema Studies (HBA): Major, Minor Visual Culture & Communication (HBA): Specialist Visual Culture (HBA): Minor Certificate in Curatorial Studies
Unit Reviewed:	Department of Visual Studies
Commissioning Officer:	Vice-Principal, Academic & Dean, University of Toronto Mississauga
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Matthew C. Hunter, Chair, Department of Art History & Communication Studies, McGill University • Professor Amy Villarejo, Chair, Department of Film, Television, and Digital Media, University of California, Los Angeles
Date of Review Visit:	November 27-28, 2023
Review Report Received by VPAP:	March 14, 2024
Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:	September 16, 2024
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 22, 2024

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: February 25 – 26, 2016

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- Supportive, collegial department atmosphere
- Strong scholarly accomplishments of the faculty, with a high rate of success with SSHRC grants
- Well-documented and clearly communicated program learning outcomes, which include a good balance of tradition and innovation
- Art & Art History program with Sheridan has a unique balance of art history and studio art courses; expands from a traditional focus to incorporate a broader global vision
- Popular Visual Culture and Cinema Studies minors offer exciting possibilities with a strong emphasis on theoretical approaches
- Wide range of field trips, visiting speakers, and study abroad programs
- Blackwood Gallery represents an enormous advantage for the department
- Compares favourably to similar programs in the United States and the UK

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Addressing communication between Sheridan and the Department of Visual Studies to integrate the two experiences in students' programs of study
- Improving resources to support English language learners
- Improving classroom lighting, given the visual nature of the disciplines taught
- Expanding program offerings, including adding major options to the popular Cinema Studies and Visual Culture minors and creating a certificate in Curatorial Studies, and addressing the waning interest in the Visual Culture & Communication specialist
- Expanding the faculty complement plan to include cinema studies and Islamic art and architecture
- Addressing concerns about participation in the tri-campus graduate program
- Providing better support for the Blackwood Gallery, noting its potential for providing connections to the local community and beyond
- Strengthening the relationship with advancement to support the department's goal of creating an endowed chair

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Terms of Reference; Self-Study; Previous review documents (including External Reviewers Report, Summary Report, Decanal Administrative Response, and Final Assessment Report/Implementation Plan); UTM Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (UUDLEs); UofT Facts & Figures (2021); UTM Vision Statement (2017); UTM Academic Plan (2017); UTM Viewbook (2023-24); U of T's "Framework for a New Structure of Academic Administration for the Three Campuses" (aka Tri-Campus Framework); Access to all Visual Studies course descriptions; Access to the curricula vitae of faculty.

Consultation Process

As determined by the Commissioning Officer, the reviewers met with Vice-Dean, Teaching & Learning and Associate Dean, Academic Programs; Department Chair; Department Staff; Blackwood Gallery Staff; Undergraduate Students; Cinema Studies and Visual Culture Faculty; Sessional Instructors; Art History Faculty; Teaching Assistants; Sheridan College Administration, Faculty and Staff; and Art and Art History Faculty.

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
 - ▶ Department's self-study document noted as "truly exemplary"
 - ▶ DVS enrolments have generally trended upwards; the department is healthy and thriving
 - ▶ Programs are coherent and well-administered
- Objectives
 - ▶ Program objectives are clear, aligned with U of T standards, and consistent with the best global English-language education
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Admission standards are appropriate
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Undergraduate programs "constitute a robust curriculum for addressing historical and emergent issues in visual culture"
 - ▶ The programs' sequences of required and elective courses are impressive and lucid, offering disciplinary specificity as well as opportunities for interdisciplinary exchange

- ▶ Teaching supports are provided by TAs who are primarily graduate students in art history, and in cinema and media studies
- Innovation
 - ▶ Robust initiatives have been undertaken to enhance student learning
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Modes of assessing learning outcomes are appropriate
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Student surveys show remarkable satisfaction with courses offered at both UTM and Sheridan College
 - ▶ Undergraduate students, particularly those in the studio-based curriculum at Sheridan, show astonishing investment in the Art and Art History program, and play a significant role in peer education
 - ▶ Undergraduate student teaching assistants at Sheridan perform core pedagogical work in studio courses and offer counselling to peers, and express pleasure in both teaching and learning activities

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

- Overall quality
 - ▶ DVS's largest program, Art and Art History, which is offered jointly with Sheridan College and awards students a BA from UTM and an advanced diploma from Sheridan college "faces existential threat"
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Complement of instructors at Sheridan contributing to the joint Art and Art History program has "atrophied"; what was once a complement of seven full-time faculty is now down to three
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ "By far the most pressing issue [for DVS] is the changing nature of the undergraduate student body toward international students"
 - ▶ International enrolment in DVS has doubled since the previous review, and the unit has noted some concerns about declining English-language abilities among its student population

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ The reviewers note that "a more comprehensive reckoning with UTM's changing student demographic" is a potential key long range planning opportunity for the unit
 - ▶ Opportunities are highlighted for DVS to play a lead role in campus and university-wide conversations regarding innovative teaching and learning involving ELL (English Language Learner) students; reviewers urge DVS faculty to work together "to formulate techniques and best practices for thinking/sensing/being beyond text"
 - ▶ Engagement of Sheridan instructors with ELL students noted as exemplary, and DVS faculty are encouraged to engage with Sheridan colleagues around matters of

pedagogical practice; reviewers also suggest that DVS might look to relevant precedents at other institutions, with Harvard noted as a key example

2. Graduate Program(s) – n/a

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Faculty demonstrate consistent success in winning SSHRC grants and other external supports, and enjoy strong publication and exhibition records
 - ▶ “[T]his faculty represents the best of early twenty-first century arts and moving image educators”
 - ▶ Faculty are navigating tri-campus constraints, and savouring the challenges of new cohorts of students and colleagues in exemplary fashion
 - ▶ Faculty members have pioneered innovative teaching
- Research
 - ▶ Faculty members contribute to tri-campus graduate programs in Art History, Cinema Studies, Comparative Literature, Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations and the Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design
 - ▶ Faculty access to SSHRC funding represents an “extraordinary source of research support that places them on par with colleagues in the UK and Europe”
 - ▶ DVS faculty have been successful in receiving SSHRC support for major collaborative projects
 - ▶ Faculty “clearly meet the highest expectations for research excellence in terms of their records of scholarly publication”
 - ▶ Faculty books have been published by top university presses, as well as in innovative trade, experimental and independent presses; faculty have authored well-respected and widely used textbooks; and faculty edit and contribute to top-ranked international journals
 - ▶ DVS faculty also include scholar-practitioners who combine publishing with curatorial work and exhibitions at the highest level
 - ▶ Faculty members integrate undergraduate and graduate student research into their own projects
- Faculty
 - ▶ Hiring of a third FTE faculty member in CIN noted as a wise investment (though reviewers note this will require a concomitant university investment in curricular delivery)
 - ▶ DVS has made extremely strong hires in Indigenous art and performance, Islamic art, and East Asian cinema and media since their previous review
 - ▶ Faculty members generally appear to have a reasonable teaching load, and intra-institutional mechanisms render service requirements transparent

- ▶ U of T salaries remain among the highest in Canadian public universities; the pension plan ensures long-term benefits; and the PTR plan ensures faculty salary adjustments; “[these] factors contribute to a high quality of life for many members of the faculty”

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

- Faculty
 - ▶ The costs of living and real estate in the GTA have risen sharply in recent years, “making recruitment of junior faculty a significant barrier to excellence”
 - ▶ Reviewers note challenges related to faculty human resource allocations and observe that the amount of work currently being done by faculty is “staggering”, and appears unsustainable
 - ▶ “[F]aculty in the department are aging and not being replaced. Four of DVS’s six full professors are nearing retirement age; no tenure-stream hire has been made since 2019.”
 - ▶ Reviewers note that UTM’s current regulations on tenure and promotion and the evaluation of creative work appear to date back to the late 1970s/early 1980s

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ Reviewers emphasize the institutional need to pay continued attention to providing sufficient faculty housing and benefits, to provide DVS with the capacity to continue to thrive through anticipated faculty turnover
 - ▶ Reviewers endorse proposed hiring of a research specialist in Black Visual Culture, provided that the role “is decoupled from administrative leadership of the Visual Culture and Communication program”
 - ▶ Noting that some exceptional junior DVS faculty are approaching tenure evaluation, reviewers recommend exploring whether changes to the UTM tenure and promotion process might be needed, to ensure that “creative professional activity”, in particular the collaborative, community-facing intellectual work exemplified by the Blackwood Gallery are appropriately considered and captured

4. Administration

Note: Issues that are addressed through specific University processes and therefore considered out of scope for UTQAP reviews (e.g., individual Human Resources issues, specific health and safety concerns) are routed to proper University offices to be addressed, and are therefore not included in the Review Summary component of the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Remarkably capable chair provides sound leadership
 - ▶ “[As an] interdisciplinary department, DVS operates through a complex sequence of intra/extramural partnerships and relationships”
 - ▶ “[T]he reviewers found much to admire in the scope and nature of DVS’s relationships”
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ The Blackwood team “has done much within and beyond its modest bricks-and-mortar footprint” including an ambitious publication scheme, implementing a Curatorial Studies certificate, and making use of lightboxes to display photographic works outdoors
 - ▶ Reviewers were “heartened” to see the potential for the Blackwood Gallery Director position to hold a tenure-stream appointment in DVS, noting that such integration could strengthen both the gallery and the unit
 - ▶ Reviewers found DVS spaces, infrastructure and facilities “in much better condition than we had inferred from reading the self-study”
 - ▶ “In general, the organizational and financial structures of DVS appear to be consistent with those employed generally at UTM; we have no recommendations for the redeployment of existing resources”
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ DVS is an exceptional department, with faculty members whose research and creative work place them amongst the best in North America and beyond
- International comparators

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

- Relationships
 - ▶ COVID-19 has had “devastating” effects on norms of academic life and student well-being
 - ▶ Due to workload, recent cuts to the department’s autonomous funds, residual effects of COVID and other stressors, DVS “morale is lower than it has been in the past”
 - ▶ DVS faculty service in tri-campus graduate programs is highlighted as “fraught” in the unit’s self-study; and reviewers note that they were not invited to meet with faculty from cognate graduate units housed on the St. George campus

- ▶ Contributing TAs exhibit a somewhat low degree of autonomy and confidence as teachers
- ▶ “The relationship in most need of attention is that with Sheridan College”
- ▶ Although the joint A&AH program generates revenue and prestige for Sheridan, the COVID pandemic has been devastating for the College, which is now facing dire financial difficulties
- ▶ “The memorandum of agreement (MOA) between UTM and Sheridan is currently up for renewal. Neighboring UTM departments have already begun separating from Sheridan, with direct consequent for DVS. Messages are mixed about prospects for the MOA’s renewal; no clear lines of communication at the executive levels needed to secure agreement appear active. The stakes of this impasse register clearly to DVS: were A&AH programs ‘to fail due to Sheridan’s lack of investment in faculty to run them, DVS would be in serious trouble’”
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Concerns noted around infrastructure, in particular the role of the Blackwood Gallery and screening spaces in delivering DVS’s core educational mission; the instability of the Blackwood “clearly is affecting faculty and student morale”
 - ▶ “Problems at the Blackwood are structural and complex”; inadequate exhibition spaces cannot accommodate the needs of a working gallery; curatorial team offices do not adjoin the galleries; and the lack of standard storage facilities renders the Blackwood ineligible for many exhibitions and funding sources
 - ▶ The Blackwood’s standing challenges have been exacerbated by the collapse of a plan to create space for the Blackwood in the new ACT Building, and “[t]he distrust and anger [this] has generated are...real and palpable”
 - ▶ Need identified for a designated screening facility to support education in Cinema and Media Studies
 - ▶ Self-study highlights the absence of gathering spaces to encourage community building

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Reviewers urgently recommend direct, high-level conversations between UTM and Sheridan senior leadership regarding the future of the partnership between the two institutions, “to generate swift, decisive action”
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Reviewers supportive of faculty requests for reliable DVD players connected to extant projectors in lecture rooms, and suggest that once these are in place leadership might work on a more sustainable future solution for projection and exhibition needs, noting that cinema and media studies represents a growth area for the unit and institution
 - ▶ UTM leadership urged “to work concertedly to advance the Blackwood’s needs;” “the gallery needs to be housed in a space appropriate to its ambitious goals”
 - ▶ Reviewers recommend that the approved hiring line for an Associate Director of the Blackwood Gallery be opened as quickly as possible

- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ “We advise the administration to recognize this department less as a jewel in the crown in the arts or humanities than as an engine of excellence at UTM that might fuel and define broader institutional growth and aspiration”
 - ▶ To address concerns related to faculty workload, reviewers recommend considering closure of the Specialist track in Visual Culture and Communication, which charges deregulated tuition and is not supported by tenure stream faculty



September 16, 2024

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

RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Visual Studies and its programs

Dear Professor McCahan,

Thank you for your letter of May 22, 2024 requesting the decanal administrative response to the November 27-28, 2023 review of the Department of Visual Studies and its undergraduate programs: Art History, HBA (Specialist, Major, Minor); Art & Art History, HBA (Specialist, Major; joint program with Sheridan College); Cinema Studies, HBA (Major, Minor); Visual Culture & Communication, HBA (Specialist); Visual Culture, HBA (Minor); Certificate in Curatorial Studies.

On behalf of the University of Toronto Mississauga, we would first like to thank the reviewers, Matthew C. Hunter, McGill University, and Amy Villarejo, UCLA, for their very comprehensive review of the Department of Visual Studies and its programs. We would also like to thank the former Chair, Prof. Jill Caskey, and faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study. We also want to thank the many staff, students, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided thoughtful feedback.

Overall, the reviewers commended the exceptional research profile of the faculty of the Department, the steady and growing enrolments in the Department's programs, and the well-developed curricula of the programs. In their recommendations, reviewers stressed the importance of strengthening the relationship with Sheridan College, recommended new hires in fields such as Black Visual Culture and Latin American Art when opportunities permit, and discussed the potential for the growth of important features such as the Blackwood Gallery.

The reviewers' recommendations have been addressed in the enclosed Review Recommendations Table that outlines the Department's response, the Decanal response, and the Implementation Plan identifying action items and timelines for each recommendation (immediate, medium, or long term). This response was developed in consultation with the Department through a Town Hall held on June 5, 2024, and from a Chair's administrative response submitted by the Chair of the Department of Visual Studies, Brian Price.

Progress checks and monitoring of the implementation plan will occur through the Chair's Annual Report to the Dean. We also acknowledge your office will request a brief Interim Monitoring Report midway between the November 2023 review and the next cyclical review, which is scheduled to take place in the **2030-31** academic year.

Sincerely,



Vice-Principal, Academic & Dean

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nicholas Rule".

Nicholas Rule
Vice-Principal, Academic & Dean

Encl.: 2023-24 UTQAP Review of the UTM Department of Visual Studies – Review
Recommendations (table)

CC: Brian Price, Chair, Department of Visual Studies, University of Toronto Mississauga
Bryan Stewart, Vice-Dean, Academic Programs, University of Toronto Mississauga
Ferzeen Sammy, Manager, Academic Programs, Reviews & Quality Assurance, University
of Toronto Mississauga
Tatevik Nersisyan, Research Analyst, Academic Programs & Reviews, University of Toronto
Mississauga

2023-24 UTQAP Review of the UTM Department of Visual Studies - Review Recommendations

Please do the following for each recommendation in the table:

- If you **intend** to act on a recommendation, please provide an **Implementation Plan** identifying actions to be taken, the time frame (immediate, medium, long term) for each, and who will take the lead in each area. If appropriate, please identify any necessary changes in organization, policy or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.
- If you **do not** intend to act on a recommendation, please briefly explain why the actions recommended have not been prioritized.
- In accordance with the UTQAP and Ontario's Quality Assurance Framework, "it is important to note that, while the external reviewers' report may include **commentary** on issues such as faculty complement and/or space requirements when related to the quality of the program under review, **recommendations** on these or any other elements that are within the purview of the university's internal budgetary decision-making processes must be tied directly to issues of program quality or sustainability" (emphasis added)
- You may wish to refer to the [sample table](#) provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Unit Response	Dean's Response	Implementation Plan <i>Timeline: immediate (six months to 1 year), medium (1 to 3 years) and long (4 to 7 years) terms.</i> <i>Lead (e.g. Program Director, Dean)</i>
The reviewers echoed the department's concerns regarding the sustainability of the Specialist track in Visual Culture and Communication. They recommend that DVS carefully consider appropriate future directions for the program, including exploring the possibility of closure.	1	"Rather than additions of work proposed in the self-study, we recommend some subtractions. These include the Specialist track in Visual Culture and Communication (VCC)...Although growth in the program is noted, the enrollment numbers remain tiny. We agree with the self-study's assessment that 'charging deregulated tuition, relying on Sessional Instructors to teach up to 78% of the courses and up to 86% of the students (in 2021-22) is as risky as it is problematic.' In league with the 2016 reviewers, we recommend that this program be closed."	We have struck a Curriculum Committee to examine this issue and plan to decide about the program in 2024–25. While the Specialist is indeed tiny, Visual Culture is a strong and popular stream in DVS and closing the Specialist could negatively impact many students and the department. For these reasons, in departmental meetings and in the recent Town Hall consultation, we discussed the possibility of shifting the Specialist to a Major and redefining the Major to foreground DVS faculty priorities and expertise. Implementation of any substantive changes, including a potential closure, would begin in 2025–26.	The OVPAD supports the Department's consideration of options for the Visual Culture and Communication Stream. The Vice-Dean, Academic Programs and the Program and Curriculum Unit (PCU) are available support the unit with a potential program closure or curriculum modification.	Medium-term (1-2 years) Unit anticipates possibly shifting the Specialist to a Major and redefining the Major to foreground DVS faculty priorities and expertise. To be Implemented by the Unit by 2025-26. (Dept Chair)
The reviewers observed that international enrolment	2	"By far the most pressing issue is the changing nature of the	We have worked seriously and consistently on the pedagogical challenges posed by	The Department added ISP100H5 Writing for University and Beyond	Immediate (6-12 months):

<p>in DVS programs has doubled since the previous review, and noted that “a comprehensive reckoning with UTM’s changing student demographic” could present a key long-range planning opportunity for the department. They highlighted the engagement of Sheridan instructors with English Language Learner (ELL) students as exemplary, and encouraged DVS faculty to engage with Sheridan to inform their own approaches to formulating techniques, best practices, and potentially providing leadership on issues related to ELL students across UTM.</p>		<p>undergraduate student body toward international students. These changes affect DVS – affect the university faculty, students, and staff – in multiple ways, as we reiterate in our final section (5) in what follows, as we urge DVS to take university-wide leadership in innovative teaching and research involving international students.”</p>	<p>current student demographics, and indeed have had meetings with our Sheridan colleagues about them. For several years, we hired through the Work-Study program English Language Learner Peer Advisors, who offered mentoring on both campuses. While initially successful, students stopped taking advantage of this opportunity during and after the pandemic; we continued to run it as partly in-person and partly online for two more years, but so few students sought out the Advisors that the program ended in 2023.</p> <p>We also offered additional, voluntary ELL Tutorials in many of our first- and second-year courses. These tutorials gave students additional discipline-specific language practice and training while offering consistent participants extra credit points. This program was difficult to run, however, since the TAs who taught the tutorials are not trained in ELL pedagogy. Coordinating with the asynchronous PELS program helped in one of the first-year courses, but overall, it was not clear that the additional tutorials were leading to real learning outcomes. They have been phased out for pedagogical and budgetary reasons.</p> <p>Our disciplines in DVS are historical, theoretical, and critical at their core, and we would be remiss if we did not help students develop their skills in reading, writing, and oral communication in complement with visual expression and creativity. Tellingly, at the Annual Dinner with DVS Alumni in the Arts this spring, every speaker—a practicing artist, curator, fashion designer, graphic designer, museum educator, and studio art professor—said that DVS’s greatest contribution to their success was our emphasis on writing. As a Humanities</p>	<p>as a completion requirement for Specialists and Majors in 2021-22; however, as of 2024-25 the Department has made this course a program entry requirement. This will benefit all students in the programs by ensuring they have foundational skills needed to progress in the program.</p> <p>The Office of the Vice-Principal, Academic and Dean (OVPAD) is currently engaged in consultations with partners at Sheridan College to renew and update the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Joint Programs offered with UTM and Sheridan. The revised MOU will be developed in 2024-25 and include provisions for regular meetings of UTM and Sheridan proponents, to review curriculum and issues raised for Joint Programs. We will review potential directions for language instruction in these consultations and support DVS in their continued relationship with Sheridan partners.</p> <p>Using dashboards and available data, the institutional data team can support the Department with detailed enrolment data. Vice-Dean, Undergraduate can facilitate conversations with the Department to understand their enrolment and better support student success.</p> <p>The Vice-Dean Undergraduate is available to consult with the</p>	<p>The Department of Visual Studies plans to develop a schedule of more regular meetings with Sheridan colleagues in 2024-25 to discuss key issues undermining student success. (Dept Chair)</p> <p>Medium-term (3-4 years): The Vice-Dean, Undergraduate will consult with the Department Chair on the implementation of ISP100H5. (Dept Chair and Vice-Dean, Undergraduate)</p>
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			department, this remains an important aspect of the curriculum.	Department on the impact of this program change and supporting students with writing.	
3	<p>“We urge a more capacious, generous approach. In part, this recommendation is based upon the attitude and tactics we witnessed among studio instructors at Sheridan. Asked to speak to concerns voiced at UTM around the challenges of working with ELL students, the Sheridan group offered a number of thoughtful suggestions. They expressed willingness to meet the students where they are. Better, they were open to revising their own preconceptions about how education should go and what it needs to do so as to draw on the strengths of their diverse, increasingly international student population.”</p>	<p>Creative and conceptual assignments are offered in many courses, particularly at the 100 and 200 levels; examples of these include making copies of paintings studied in class and designing contemporary versions of medieval political iconography. We regret that the External Examiners did not have the opportunity to view the full range of assessments that DVS instructors have developed, assessments which we feel seek to “meet students where they are.”</p> <p>In the past, we have discussed whether to include more of these kinds of assessments in more courses. DVS’s programs have aimed to balance the creative or visual and the written or critical. However, it is also important to give students opportunities to develop their writing and oral communication skills; they need to be able to write research papers, particularly if they are interested in graduate studies. More frequent and focused discussions with our Sheridan colleagues about the key issues undermining student success (e.g., literacy skills, mental health, academic integrity) would be beneficial to faculty and students. In 2024–25, we will develop a schedule of more regular meetings with our Sheridan colleagues.</p>			
4	<p>“Countering the gravitation of its intellectual life toward the St. George campus, we recommend that DVS work together to formulate techniques and best practices for critical thinking/sensing/being beyond text. An integrative, long-range endeavor, this project would marshal the department’s conspicuous strengths and</p>	<p>After discussing this recommendation in departmental meetings and the Town Hall consultation, the department has concluded that a new introductory course would not work in our institutional and departmental context. Such a course would require a museum or collection to serve as the focus, and this is not available on campus. DVS did offer for several years a similar course, VST101H5 (Introduction to Visual Studies). It was last offered in 2014 and was eventually</p>			

		<p>expertise to provide leadership on issues clearly being felt all across UTM and beyond. Despite the heavy workload sketched above, we feel that energy should be devoted to developing a framework course aimed at introductory students that would reconsider—better, challenge—the remedial treatment of ELL students currently on offer.”</p>	<p>retired in 2021 because the logistical challenges far outweighed its pedagogical benefits. In its wake we emphasized three discipline-specific survey courses: FAH101H5 (Intro to Art History), CIN101H5 (Intro to Cinema Studies), and VCC101H5 (Intro to Visual Culture and Communication). These have provided well-scaffolded, productive gateways to our program areas.</p> <p>To meet the needs of introductory writing instruction, all Specialists and Majors in DVS are required to take ISP100H5 (Writing for University and Beyond). We were one of the first departments to adopt the requirement. While we do not administer this course, it complements the above disciplinary introductory courses in first year.</p>		
<p>Noting potential upcoming faculty retirements, as well as challenges related to the recruitment of junior faculty due to the high cost of living in the GTA, the reviewers emphasized the importance of strategic complement planning, and the need to ensure sufficient faculty supports and benefits across UTM and U of T. They endorsed the unit’s desire to prioritize hiring in the research area of Black Visual Culture when opportunities permit.</p>	5	<p>“Nonetheless, costs of living and real estate in Toronto have risen sharply recently, making recruitment of junior faculty a significant barrier to excellence; here, we would simply note the need to continue to attend to providing sufficient faculty housing and benefits systemwide to provide DVS with the opportunity to continue to thrive through anticipated faculty turnover due to retirements (discussed below).”</p>	<p>The spate of faculty retirements on the (near) horizon will most affect the Art History and Art & Art History programs. Because these are our largest programs, we have begun strategizing about bolstering faculty complement in this area. Our complement request in 2023–2024 included a proposal for a position in Latin American art and architecture, a field which is dynamic, poorly represented in Canada, and often requested by students.</p> <p>Unfortunately, DVS cannot mitigate the high cost of living/housing in the GTHA. The university’s recent efforts to do so is an important step in the right direction. When we receive the go-ahead for our next search, we will ensure that candidates know about the supports available to them on both campuses.</p>	<p>The Department may proceed through the faculty complement planning process to request new faculty positions. In this process, the Department’s request will be considered alongside all other units’ requests for new positions and are assessed based on criteria set by the OVPAD complement planning committee and available campus budget allocation for new faculty searches. The Department may submit a request for consideration through this process.</p> <p>The OVPAD received requests for over 40 faculty positions and only 10 were approved. We encourage the Department to consider resubmitting as part of the next complement planning cycle in Winter 2025.</p>	<p>Implemented: The Department of Visual Studies submitted a faculty complement request in the 2023-24 complement planning cycle for a position in Latin American art and architecture.</p> <p>Implemented: As of 2024, the University of Toronto has partnered with the Bank of Montreal (BMO) to create a New Housing Loan Assistance Program for full-time U of T faculty and librarians. This custom home financing program aims to help faculty members and librarians achieve homeownership of a principal residence.</p>

	6	<p>“Doing so would open the field for the proposed hire of an assistant professor in Black Visual Culture, a move we endorse heartily. The rationale for it is clear. As the self-study puts it: ‘No faculty member specializes in the arts, cinema, or visual cultures of Africa or the African diaspora, huge and multi-faceted areas of study that tend to be neglected across the University of Toronto.’ Unburdened by the expectation that this new colleague would need to take on the administrative task of stabilizing the VCC program, the projected hire should be encouraged to teach wherever their expertise fits best within DVS and neighboring departments.”</p>	<p>We have requested a position in Black Visual Culture in the complement planning cycle of 2023–24. At the time of writing, UTM complement planning decisions have not been shared with departments. We will continue to request this position every year until it is filled.</p> <p>We agree that a newly hired Assistant Professor should not be given the task of stabilizing or re-envisioning the VCC program, and that someone hired in Black Visual Culture should be able to teach in their area(s) of expertise. We do think that a new hire in this or another area should have a voice in shaping DVS’s programs.</p>		<p>Ongoing: The Department of Visual Studies submitted a faculty complement request in the 2023-24 complement planning cycle for a position in Black Visual Culture and plans to continue requesting this position until it is filled. (Dept Chair)</p>
<p>Observing that some DVS faculty are approaching tenure evaluation, the reviewers stressed the importance of working with divisional and central administration to ensure that members’ creative professional activities, and “values of collaborative, community-facing work” are appropriately considered during the evaluation process, to support their success (in developing your response you are encouraged to consult with the Office of the Vice-Provost, Faculty and Academic Life).</p>	7	<p>“We recommend that DVS leads on serious revision to the ‘creative professional activity’ document, and that the values of collaborative, community-facing work exemplified in the department feature prominently in it.”</p>	<p>We are willing and eager to contribute to discussions and consultations about these issues and policy documents related to it.</p>	<p>The OVPAD Academic HR unit will continue to provide workshops for Chairs/Directors and faculty on the tenure process. The Vice-Dean, Faculty will support the Department in its efforts to incorporate assessment and consideration of professional creative activities.</p>	<p>Ongoing. (Vice-Dean, Faculty)</p>

<p>The reviewers observed significant tensions related to DVS's contributions to the tri-campus graduate programs, and broadly noted opportunities to calibrate processes, enhance communications, and strengthen relationships in this area.</p>	8	<p>"...beyond the scope of our report though it is, service in U of T's tri-campus graduate programs weighs heavily on DVS; it is described as "fraught" in the self-study. Graduate supervision increases the pressure and stakes of grant-seeking; each of the eleven eligible DVS faculty are currently supervising an average of three doctoral dissertations and serving on roughly four PhD committees, while also contributing one seminar per year to the tri-campus graduate programs."</p>	<p>The major impasse has been with the Graduate Department of Art History. We are optimistic that the new Chair of DVS and new Director of Graduate Studies in Art History can help the Chair of the Graduate Department of Art History ease the tensions and resolve the issues that have been most vexing, which concern equity and representation in departmental decision-making. Implementation: MOA to be signed in 2024-25; structural problems addressed in 2024-25 and 2025-26 (e.g., TA hiring; committee membership).</p>	<p>The Vice-Dean Academic Programs will support the Department through these negotiations.</p>	<p>Immediate (6 months-1 year): MOA with School of Graduate Studies to be signed in 2024-25. (Vice-Dean, Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs)</p> <p>Medium-term (1-2 years): Structural problems like TA hiring and committee membership to be addressed in 2024-25 and 2025-26. (Dept Chair)</p>
<p>The reviewers highlighted critical concerns regarding the relationship between UTM and Sheridan College, observing that the joint program with DVS faces "existential threat", and the contributing faculty complement at Sheridan has "atrophied". They strongly urged UTM leadership to engage in direct, high-level conversation with senior administration at Sheridan regarding the sustainability and future of this partnership.</p>	9	<p>"Messages are mixed about prospects for the MOA's renewal; no clear lines of communication at the executive levels needed to secure agreement appear active. The stakes of this impasse register clearly to DVS: were A&AH programs 'to fail due to Sheridan's lack of investment in faculty to run them, DVS would be in serious trouble,' as the self-study observes. And again: 'It is our view that we are at a moment of crisis that demands the attention of the UTM and Sheridan administrations.' We agree. So much so that, during our site visit, we requested and obtained a meeting with UTM's Vice-Principal Academic & Dean. In that meeting, we underscored the gravity of the situation and stressed the need for direct, high-level talks with Sheridan's recently appointed Dean (the fourth to hold that office in the last two and a half years) to generate swift, decisive action."</p>	<p>The situation at Sheridan has developed since the review. Fortunately, two faculty members who previously taught in Sheridan's ICCIT stream have now moved into Art & Art History. This has strengthened the program. However, it is not yet clear if either will manage the Sheridan side of the program when the current, long-standing director retires. Unfortunately, Provincially-mandated caps on international student enrolment have affected Sheridan's enrolment. The Chair of DVS will work with the OVPAD and the Sheridan Dean on these and related planning matters in 2024-25.</p>	<p>As noted above, the OVPAD will be developing a revised MOU for the Joint Programs with Sheridan in 2024-25. These discussions have been positive and there is a shared good will towards establishing a successful and stable working relationship between the two institutions.</p>	<p>Implemented: Two faculty members who previously taught in Sheridan's ICCIT stream have now moved into Art & Art History program.</p> <p>Immediate (6 months –1 year): The Chair of the Department of Visual Studies will work with the Office of the Vice-Principal, Academic and Dean, and the Sheridan Dean on these and related planning matters in 2024-25. (Dept Chair)</p>

<p>Highlighting concerns that the infrastructural instability of the Blackwood Gallery is negatively impacting DVS faculty and student morale, the reviewers urged UTM leadership to prioritize efforts to assess and advance the Gallery's needs. In their discussion of space, they also noted concerns about the absence of a screening facility to support Cinema and Media Studies education.</p>	10	<p>"Given the extent to which the gallery is now ribboned through the pedagogical offerings and culture of DVS, we urge UTM's leadership to work concertedly to advance the Blackwood's needs. As was astutely recognized by the prior reviewers, the Blackwood at its best acts as fulcrum for DVS, UTM and larger Mississauga communities. To continue growing that important work, the gallery needs to be housed in a space appropriate to its ambitious goals. We also recommend that the approved hiring line for an Associate Director be opened as quickly as possible to ensure continuity of this centripetal force of relationship-building within and far beyond DVS."</p>	<p>We will continue to request the new position of Associate Director of the Blackwood Gallery, a position which was approved and then received OTO funding for 2 years in 2023. This funding had to be redirected unexpectedly to Blackwood programming in 2024. The need for the position has become increasingly urgent. We will request it again in 2024–25.</p> <p>We will continue to lobby for appropriate exhibition and office space for the Blackwood Gallery.</p>	<p>OVPAD recommends the Department submit request through the MCAPS process.</p>	<p>Medium term (1 to 2 years). (Dept Chair)</p>
	11	<p>"A related issue is the need for a designated screening facility to support education in Cinema and Media Studies... We believe that, in the first instance, the requests of the CIN faculty are actually quite modest: reliable DVD players connected to extant projectors in lecture rooms used by many stakeholders. If a coalition of those faculty members, IT specialists, administrative leaders, and student workers could support this – let us call it Phase I of a projection/exhibition plan, faculty leaders in the department could work on a more durable solution with higher ambitions for the future, as cinema and media studies represents a growth area for the department and university."</p>	<p>In 2023–24, we worked closely with the Vice-Dean of Teaching and Learning to plan upgrades to one large classroom. Before the previous review in 2016, the Department Chair had purchased a projector suitable for screening films in that room and invested in lighting as well; the projector is now obsolete, and beyond repair. We have been exploring new projectors for the room and have, for 2024-25, booked all Cinema Studies courses and screenings and all FAH courses of appropriate size in that room. Implementation of the better projector and, presumably, a desktop that has the capacity to maximize the projector's effectiveness, play DVDs, and stream films is targeted for September 2025.</p>		<p>Implemented and ongoing: In 2023-24, the Department of Visual Studies has worked with the Office of the Vice-Principal, Academic and Dean, to repurpose a classroom into a screening room. For 2024-25, all Cinema Studies courses and screenings for Fine Art History courses have been scheduled to take place in this classroom. Implementation of projector and desktop is scheduled to take place in September 2025. (Dept Chair)</p>

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 of Visual Studies (DVS) as “exceptional”, with faculty whose research and creative work place them among the best in North America and beyond. The programs constitute a robust curriculum for addressing historical and emergent issues in visual culture, and the articulation of course sequencing is impressive and lucid. The department is “healthy and thriving” with enrolments generally trending upwards, and students noting remarkable satisfaction with courses at both UTM and at Sheridan College. DVS has made extremely strong hires in Indigenous Art and Performance, Islamic Art, and East Asian Cinema and Media since the previous review, and faculty demonstrate consistent success in winning SSHRC grants and other supports, and in their publication efforts. Overall, the reviewers emphasized that “this faculty represents the best of early twenty-first century arts and moving image educators.”

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: carefully considering appropriate future directions for the Specialist track in Visual Culture and Communication, including the possibility of closure; engaging with Sheridan instructors to inform DVS’s approaches to formulating techniques, best practices, and potentially providing leadership on issues related to English Language Learner students across UTM; engaging in strategic faculty complement planning, ensuring sufficient faculty supports and benefits across UTM and U of T, and prioritizing hiring in the research area of Black Visual Culture when opportunities permit; working with divisional and central administration to ensure that faculty members’ creative professional activities, and “values of collaborative, community-facing work” are appropriately considered during the tenure evaluation process; calibrating processes, enhancing communications, and strengthening relationships across relevant tri-campus graduate programs; having UTM leadership engage in direct, high-level conversation with senior administration at Sheridan regarding the sustainability and future of their partnership; prioritizing efforts to assess and advance the Blackwood Gallery’s needs; and exploring the possibility of a screening facility to support Cinema and Media Studies education.

The Dean’s Administrative Response describes the division and unit’s responses to the reviewers’ recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5 Monitoring and Date of Next Review

Progress checks and monitoring of the implementation plan will occur through the Chair's Annual Report to the Dean. The next external review of the Department of Visual Studies will be commissioned to take place in 2030-2031.

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than Fall 2027 on the status of the implementation plans.

6 Distribution

On June 30th 2025, 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, University of Toronto Mississauga, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to unit leadership.