



**FOR INFORMATION**

**PUBLIC**

**OPEN SESSION**

**TO:** Academic Board

**SPONSOR:** Trevor Young, Vice-President and Provost  
**CONTACT INFO:** [provost@utoronto.ca](mailto:provost@utoronto.ca)

**PRESENTER:** See above.  
**CONTACT INFO:**

**DATE:** May 13 for May 29, 2025

**AGENDA ITEM:** 4

**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] (April 10, 2025)
2. Agenda Committee of the Academic Board [for information] (April 15, 2025)
- 3. Academic Board [for information] (May 29, 2025)**
4. Executive Committee of the Governing Council [for information] (June 12, 2025)
5. Governing Council [for information] (June 24, 2025)

## 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 October 22, 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 twelve external reviews of units and/or academic programs are being submitted to AP&P for information and discussion. Of these, one was commissioned by the Vice-President & Provost; and eleven 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 and feedback

**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**

**April 10, 2025**

# Reviews of Academic Programs and Units

## Report to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

April 10, 2025

### Provostial Reviews

#### Faculty of Arts and Science

- No programs, not a UTQAP review

### Decanal Reviews

#### Faculty of Arts & Science

- Department of Art History and its programs
  - *Undergraduate*: Art History (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor
  - *Graduate*: Art History: MA, PhD
- Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies and its program
  - *Undergraduate*: Diaspora & Transnational Studies (HBA): Major, Minor
- Department of East Asian Studies and its programs
  - *Undergraduate*: East Asian Studies (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor
  - *Graduate*: East Asian Studies: MA, PhD
- Department of History and its programs
  - *Undergraduate*: History (HBA): Specialist, Major (Specialist/Major Foci: Law and History), Minor
  - *Graduate*: History: MA, PhD
- Literature & Critical Theory undergraduate program and the Centre for Comparative Literature and its graduate programs
  - *Undergraduate*: Literature & Critical Theory (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor
  - *Graduate*: Comparative Literature, MA, PhD
- Department of Political Science and its programs
  - *Undergraduate*: Political Science (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor
  - *Graduate*: Political Science: MA, PhD

#### Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering

- Department of Civil & Mineral Engineering and its programs
  - *Undergraduate*: Civil Engineering: BASc; Lassonde Mineral Engineering: BASc
  - *Graduate*: Civil Engineering: MASc, MEng, PhD; Cities Engineering & Management: MEngCEM

- Division of Engineering Science and its programs
  - ▶ *Undergraduate*: Engineering Science: BASc (with majors in Aerospace Engineering; Biomedical Systems Engineering; Electrical & Computer Engineering; Energy Systems Engineering; Engineering Mathematics, Statistics and Finance; Engineering Physics; Machine Intelligence; Robotics Engineering)

### **Temerty Faculty of Medicine**

- Institute of Medical Science and its programs
  - ▶ *Graduate*: Graduate Diploma in Health Research (GDipHR); Medical Science: MSc, PhD (Fields: Bioethics; Biomedical Science; Clinical Science; Health Professions Education; Population Health/Health Sciences; Radiation Oncology)

### **University of Toronto Scarborough**

- Department of Health and Society and its programs
  - ▶ *Undergraduate*: Health Studies – Health Policy (HBA): Major, Major Co-op; Health Studies – Population Health (HBSc): Major, Major Co-op; Health Humanities Minor; Health Studies Minor (suspended)
- Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences and its programs
  - ▶ *Undergraduate*: Applied Climatology Minor; Astronomy and Astrophysics Minor; Biochemistry (HBSc): Major, Major Co-op; Biological Chemistry (HBSc): Specialist, Specialist Co-op, Major, Major Co-op; Chemistry (HBSc): Specialist, Specialist Co-op, Major, Major Co-op; Environmental Chemistry (HBSc): Specialist, Specialist Co-op, Major, Major Co-op; Environmental Geoscience (HBSc): Specialist, Specialist Co-op; Environmental Physics (HBSc): Specialist, Specialist Co-op; Environmental Science (HBSc): Major, Major Co-op, Minor; Environmental Studies (HBA): Major; Global Environmental Change (formerly Environmental Biology) (HBSc): Specialist, Specialist Co-op; Natural Sciences and Environmental Management Minor; Physics and Astrophysics (HBSc): Specialist, Major; Physical and Mathematical Sciences (HBSc): Specialist; Physical Sciences (HBSc): Major; Certificate in Sustainability (Category 2); Combined Degree Programs with FASE Master of Engineering; Combined Degree Programs with Master of Environmental Science; Combined Degree Programs with OISE Master of Teaching
  - ▶ *Graduate*: Environmental Science: MEnvSc, MSc (approved to begin in May 2023), PhD

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

## 1 Review Summary

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<b>Program(s) Reviewed:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Division/Unit Reviewed OR Division/Unit Offering Program(s):</b>	Faculty of Arts & Science (FAS) – Academic Portfolio
<b>Commissioning Officer:</b>	Vice-President & Provost
<b>Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meigan Aronson, Professor and Former Dean, Faculty of Science, University of British Columbia</li> <li>• Gail McElroy, Professor and Former Dean, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Trinity College Dublin</li> <li>• Venetria Patton, Harry E. Preble Dean of the College of Liberal Arts &amp; Sciences, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign</li> </ul>
<b>Date of Review Visit:</b>	October 23-25, 2023
<b>Date Reported to AP&amp;P:</b>	April 10, 2025

## Previous UTQAP Review

**Date:** October 29 – 31, 2018 (Provostial, non-UTQAP review)

## Summary of Findings and Recommendations

### Teaching and Research

**The reviewers observed the following strengths:**

- World class faculty and students; academic programs are delivered at the highest level
- Research enterprise continues to make remarkable contributions to both fundamental and applied knowledge

**The reviewers made the following recommendations:**

- Bold approach is warranted to tackle lengthy graduate time to completion (TTC), including creating an overall doctoral TTC reduction plan, articulating the mission of graduate programs in each unit, and considering requirements in relation to that mission
- Consider creation a Bachelor of Arts and Sciences degree, to diversify STEM fields, encourage a more human-centered approach to STEM fields and topics, and reduce the self-segregation of students by ethnicity and gender into certain programs
- Distribute new and ongoing data sciences efforts broadly
- Expand international and area studies
- Undertake a major humanities initiative in understanding science as a humanistic endeavour
- Consider opportunities to "reinvent and retool" the social sciences by adding strengths in areas such as criminal justice and globalization and its impact on human cultures
- Integrate basic research and translational enterprise to benefit the public good
- Think expansively about interdisciplinary academic offerings in future plans, including in plans for new spaces

### Organizational Structure & Resources

**The reviewers observed the following strengths:**

- Pride in the institution and a commitment to students and education; praise for leadership's handling of the challenges noted in the previous review
- FAS is able to engage in new initiatives while maintaining existing areas of strength
- Decentralization has "taken on positive, value-added status"

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

- FAS is a very horizontal organization with decision rights distributed "perhaps too broadly" across multiple constituencies
- Managing layers of interdisciplinary programs and interdivisional teaching arrangements is complex



**The reviewers made the following recommendations:**

- Consider ways to create more nimble structures and modes of operating for prioritizing, incubating and scaling new initiatives and “dismantling” others
- Opportunities exist for faculty governance to play a larger role in diversity issues on campus, (e.g. by establishing a standing committee on equity, inclusion, and diversity)
- Review and clarify Vice Dean roles and responsibilities to streamline decision-making
- Regularization of mechanisms of consultation among constituencies may help establish and benchmark priorities in research, instruction and student support
- Build a more responsive IT infrastructure to ensure that operations remain agile and flexible in order to meet new challenges
- Consider University priorities when complement planning in several areas

**Internal & External Relationships****The reviewers observed the following strengths:**

- Significant contributor to the University’s international leadership position
- Remarkable diversity of the student body
- Colleges can be very effective promoters of inclusion and respect amongst students (e.g. in providing students with communities that cut across disciplines)

**The reviewers made the following recommendations:**

- Enhance internal relationships to help accelerate strategic ambitions
- Consider how FAS relationships with the Colleges could be leveraged for greater impact and benefit on the student experience and academic life
- Consider an alternative College admissions processes that align better with FAS's commitment to equity and diversity; an Indigenous College would have significant symbolic and practical value
- Opportunities exist for FAS to deepen research and teaching collaborations with other basic research units and professional schools, especially in biomedical sciences, engineering, environment and planning, business, and in public and global affairs

## Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

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### 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 Arts & Science
- Vice-Dean, Academic Operations
- Chief Administrative Officer
- Executive Director, Faculty Budget, Planning & Finance
- Associate Dean, Unit-Level Reviews
- Vice-Dean, Academic Planning
- Associate Dean, Unit-Level Reviews
- Undergraduate Students
- Acting Vice-Dean, Undergraduate
- Associate Dean, Student Affairs
- Associate Dean, Teaching & Learning
- Faculty Registrar and Director, Academic Services
- Executive Director, Experiential Learning & Professional Development
- Principal, Woodsworth College
- Principal, Victoria College
- Interim Principal, New College
- Principal, Innis College
- Dean of Arts & Vice-Provost, Trinity College
- Vice-Dean, Faculty & Academic Life
- Director, Academic HR
- Director of High Risk, Faculty Support & Mental Health
- Chair, Department of Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations
- Chair, Department of Classics
- Director, Centre for Medieval Studies
- Chair, Department of French
- Director, Cinema Studies Institute
- Director, Centre for Drama, Theatre & Performance Studies
- Director, Centre for Indigenous Studies
- Acting Director, Centre for Comparative Literature
- Chair, Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures
- Chair, Department of English
- Chair, Department of Linguistics
- Chair, Department of Spanish & Portuguese
- Interim Chair, Department of Art History
- Chair, Department of Philosophy
- Chair, Department of East Asian Studies
- Associate Chair, Undergraduate, Department for the Study of Religion
- Director, Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies
- Chair, Department of History

- Chair, Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures
- Chair, Department of Italian Studies
- Acting Director, Institute for the History & Philosophy of Science & Technology
- FAS faculty representatives
- Dean, Joseph L. Rotman School of Management
- Vice-Dean, Undergraduate Studies, Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering
- Acting Dean, Dalla Lana School of Public Health
- Dean and Vice Principal, Academic, University of Toronto Scarborough
- Acting Dean, John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape & Design
- Acting Dean, Faculty of Music
- Dean, Faculty of Information
- Dean and Vice Principal, Academic, University of Toronto Mississauga
- Vice-Dean, Clinical & Faculty Affairs, Temerty Faculty of Medicine
- Director, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
- Vice Provost, Graduate Research and Education, and Dean, School of Graduate Studies
- Director, Information & Instructional Technology
- Executive Director, Faculty Communications & Public Affairs
- Executive Director, Advancement & Assistant Vice-President, Advancement College Relations
- Director, Academic Planning & Program Initiatives
- Director, Administrative Human Resource Services
- Vice-Dean, Graduate Education & Co-Chair, Committee on Indigenous Research, Teaching & Learning
- Director, Centre for Indigenous Studies & Co-Chair, Committee on Indigenous Research, Teaching & Learning
- Graduate Students
- Chair, David A. Dunlap Department of Astronomy & Astrophysics
- Interim Chair, Department of Statistical Sciences
- Director, School of the Environment
- Chair, Department of Earth Sciences
- Chair, Department of Mathematics
- Director, Canadian Institute for Theoretical Astrophysics
- Chair, Department of Computer Science
- Director, Human Biology Program
- Interim Chair, Department of Psychology
- Chair, Department of Cell & Systems Biology
- Interim Director, Dunlap Institute for Astronomy & Astrophysics
- Chair, Department of Physics
- Associate Chair, Graduate, Department of Chemistry
- Interim Chair, Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
- Vice-Dean, College Relations
- Chair, Department of Political Science
- Director, Rotman Commerce Program
- Chair, Department of Sociology

- Director, School of Cities
- Chair, Department of Economics
- Director, Professional Master's Programs, Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy
- Director, Centre for Industrial Relations & Human Resources
- Director, Centre for Caribbean Studies
- Interim Director, Centre for Criminology & Sociolegal Studies
- Director, African Studies Centre
- Director, Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies
- Director, Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies
- Director, Women and Gender Studies Institute
- Chair, Department of Anthropology
- Chair, Department of Geography & Planning
- Vice-Dean, Research & Infrastructure
- Director, Office of Research Services
- Director, Infrastructure Planning

## Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- FAS is an exceptional unit, excelling in both teaching and research with impressive ambitions for its future and a strong commitment to the well-being of its staff and student body
- FAS delivers a world class educational and personally transformative experience to students, and has adapted reasonably well to enrolment increases
- Strong commitment to excellence in teaching and research, with impressive advances since last Provostial review
- FAS is clearly making progress on priorities from 2020-2025 Academic Plan related to research excellence, academic programming, and student experience
- Faculty provides top-class, extraordinarily diverse undergraduate education
- FAS attracts top students, particularly international students, through faculty excellence, research, and breadth of academic and experiential opportunities it offers, including co-curricular activities and diversity of the urban environment, with high student satisfaction reflecting its strong performance in these areas
- FAS students receive considerable support that is aimed at optimizing their success, with College system as a key aspect providing a social and intellectual home; College leadership is clearly devoted to the students and to their welfare
- Significant resources have been invested to house a holistic advising service in the Colleges

- FAS offers students an individualized experience and an extraordinary number of program combinations
- Abundance of small classes fosters valuable student-faculty interaction, enhancing the learning experience across discipline and degree stages
- Undergraduate experiential learning modules and internships have proven highly successful
- Increasing focus on connecting students to their professional lives post-graduation, evidenced by the array of Career Oriented Programs, enthusiasm about the Arts & Science Internship program, and the overall focus on experiential learning in many forms
- Significant efforts made to enhance the undergraduate and graduate student experience; Dean has rallied FAS behind the core mission of putting the student experience first
- FAS recruits excellent graduate students despite external funding constraints, and provides a world class graduate education
- Research achievements are particularly noteworthy; Overall, FAS competes in research with the very best, often much better funded, international institutions
- Internal Faculty initiatives enhance research competitiveness
- Institutional strategic initiatives (ISIs) have been hugely important in promoting research excellence, particularly interdisciplinary research
- Internal funding schemes have proved very successful in generating external grant funding
- Faculty excellence is the key factor responsible for the strong international reputations of FAS and U of T, reflected in the quality of research, standing among students, and foundational role in a complex, interdisciplinary educational mission serving a growing student body
- Faculty deliver exceptionally well on the imperatives of the university and its broader constituencies in Ontario and Canada despite being relatively small compared to peer institutions, a challenge mitigated by extensive staff support from departments and especially the Dean's Office, which helps free faculty time for their core missions of scholarship and teaching
- Sessional and other non-faculty instructors are critical to sustaining the FAS teaching mission, especially as undergraduate enrolment increases.
- Continued progress in setting up IDT arrangements that harness new groups of teaching expertise leverages FAS faculty expertise and effort, as evidenced by general student satisfaction and the near absence of concerns around faculty workload and distraction
- "Impressive" number of students pursuing multiple programs reflects the flexibility of the undergraduate curriculum and the widespread adoption of interdisciplinarity, a strength made possible by FAS's comprehensive structure, where humanities, sciences, and social sciences coexist with "increasingly blurred" disciplinary distinctions
- Institutional focus on the first-year experience an important measure in welcoming students to FAS and aligning them with the curriculum's learning objectives and established student experiences
- Student enrolment growth has been accommodated relatively well

- Significant effort is dedicated to many small-enrolment classes, which provide valuable benefits, particularly in the first year and late stages of undergraduate studies
- FAS has a strong tradition of continuous improvement in pedagogy and learning, driven by a broad group of faculty and staff, supported by extensive faculty resources, the Teaching Community of Practice, and the Pedagogical Innovation and Experimentation Fund
- Adoption of Salesforce to facilitate information sharing among advising groups strengthens student support by ensuring all students are well served and enabling early identification and assistance for those who may be struggling
- Quality of graduate education is “commendable”, with FAS successfully competing for students against top US universities
- Enhanced departmental funding packages and individualized acceptance letters have strengthened recruitment efforts
- Most disciplines in FAS are ranked first in Canada, with many achieving high international rankings
- Level of external grant funding is “extremely impressive”
- Impact of initiatives such as the pre-award support scheme for faculty is evident in the improved success rates with Tri-Agency Funding
- Initiative introduced by current senior administration to support mid-career faculty seed money and bridging funds has strengthened research continuity contributing to a 180% increase since 2019 and resulting in increased grant submissions and grant successes
- Effective use of bridging grants for second submissions has positively impacted research funding, with relatively small investments generating significant higher research income, typically around \$30K
- Increase in administrative staffing levels in FAS has facilitated research output, both directly through pre- and post-award research support and indirectly by reducing administrative burdens on academic staff, with these investments in research supports yielding huge dividends
- Faculty’s very high rate of tenure success reflects the excellence of its junior faculty, and the absence of tenure and promotion concerns during meetings suggests that academic staff are generally content with the progression opportunities offered by U of T
- Institutional Strategic Initiatives (ISIs) are a “very welcome development”
- Faculty’s investment in internal research supports over the past five years, both in staffing and funding schemes, has paid off handsomely; FAS is “punching well above its weight”, a testament to the leadership of the Dean and senior leadership
- FAS benefits from a highly diverse student body, reflecting the GTA and a significant international student presence, with strong support from student and FAS-sponsored groups that foster identity and interests
- FAS is recognized as a leader in important initiatives such as anti-racism and gender equity
- FAS has made commendable progress in hiring of racialized faculty since 2018
- FAS has demonstrated a strong commitment to Indigenous Research, Teaching, and Learning (IRTL) through the Dean’s advisory committee on IRTL, advancing key priorities from the 2020 Academic Plan, including support for the Centre for Indigenous Studies

(CIS), progress toward an Indigenous hub or college, initiatives for Indigenous-related research and experiential learning, and a multi-year strategy for hiring Indigenous faculty and staff and recruiting Indigenous students

- FAS's successful transition of the CIS to EDU:A status enhances its ability to hire 100% faculty appointments, significantly raises the program's profile, and supports the hiring of Indigenous faculty and recruitment of students

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

- FAS has high student-staff ratios relative to Canadian and international peer institutions
- Large size of both FAS and the U of T may be alienating for first year students
- Scaling up of undergraduate experiential learning modules and internships may prove challenging, given the very high enrolments
- Uncertainty regarding continued sustainability and viability of ISIs beyond the current funding period
- ISIs are, for the most part, largely science-focused
- Expansion of teaching delivered by sessional instructors and other non-appointed faculty has led to challenges retaining faculty leadership in the teaching program, with potential for negative impacts on teaching effectiveness and innovation as well as student satisfaction and learning in the future
- Stagnation of tri-agency funding at the individual grant level and impacts of inflation on research expenditures, especially graduate student support, makes it increasingly difficult for faculty PIs to pursue individual scholarship
- Increased student interest has taxed the capacity of the science and quantitative social science departments
- Self-study data indicates gradual decline in student interest in humanities programs, reflecting international trends
- Large number of classes with relatively small enrolments, while beneficial for students, presents a considerable opportunity cost for FAS
- Reviewers observe that faculty's pedagogical innovations and experiences are mostly shared on an informal person to person level
- Some students commented that that the wide array of course selection options can be "overwhelming and even impenetrable" despite considerable advising assistance available
- Reviewers note that costs of living in the GTA are considerable and that graduate student stipends are less generous than in private US institutions
- Academic staff expressed considerable frustration at the provincial cap on international doctoral students; the small proportion of international doctoral students is unusual for a high-caliber research institution and does not reflect the huge demand to study at the U of T
- Admittance rates for international doctoral students are exceptionally low compared with domestic students
- Graduate student experience appears inconsistent across FAS units; doctoral students in the humanities noted concerns regarding a lack of personal contact with supervisors and / or dedicated study space during their thesis years

- Students becoming “lost in dissertation” appears to be an issue in some Humanities subjects
- Doctoral students did not have a strong sense of the Faculty as a community
- Graduate students raised concerns regarding the focus on traditional skills and preparation for academic jobs in their programs; programs that assist with greater adoption of transferable skills are offered but were not perceived to be highly valued or promoted by academics within the Faculty
- Doctoral time to completion rates vary but are “lengthy by international standards”
- High cost of living in the GTA and inadequate infrastructure for research in the Sciences has resulted in challenges retaining excellent academic and research staff, and recruiting excellent international junior faculty
- Unit-level admissions may be too decentralized to achieve ambitious goals related to Indigenous student recruitment
- Many EDI-related activities appear to be stalled at the information gathering stage, and self-reported data indicates generally low levels of diversity among faculty and staff

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Continue advancing the third overarching priority in the domain of research and teaching: Indigenous Research, Teaching, and Learning
- Give attention to completion rates and completion times at doctoral level
- Place more focused attention on the recruitment of Indigenous students, particularly at graduate level
- Broaden the current ISIs, which have a STEM focus even further, in the next iteration/call
- Conduct a thoughtful review and streamline current course offerings to reduce duplication and allow for the introduction of new courses and new materials
- Establish a Dean’s level center to enable the systematic dissemination of [pedagogical] best practices, the commissioning of new research projects, and the empowerment of teaching stream faculty to innovate
- Ensure thoughtful consideration of an overarching vision for FAS that responds to the gradual shift in student enrolments from humanities to science and social sciences while preserving both the breadth of the curriculum and its interdisciplinary character
- Examine the extent to which the proliferation of multiple programs may create obstacles to graduation, including possible difficulties in timely enrolment in required courses
- Examine student supports by improving contact with faculty and ensuring better access to information and services across FAS and university offices, including those related to student complaints (Ombudsperson), accessibility, and academic concessions
- Assess and address the apparent decline in student satisfaction with their experience in FAS relative to the U-15 values, particularly in relation to student-faculty relations and student support
- Explore ways to enhance personal contact and dedicated study space for humanities doctoral students



- Elevate and encourage greater adoption of transferable skills for graduate students, given current realities in the academic job market
- Examine the data on doctoral student outcomes for the past decade, with each unit considering how many PhDs complete and how many end up in academia versus the private/public sector
- Make greater use of the excellent existing data on doctoral completion rates and time to completion, particularly at the unit level
- Evaluate the realistic time to completion for doctoral programs, with each program considering curricular demands and assessing whether all program requirements are strictly necessary, ensuring that new requirements are introduced with corresponding review or removal of existing ones
- Assess the role and purpose of research master's programs in light of international trends in education, including whether they should continue to be funded and what function they serve
- Potential to expand professional master's programs to support growth and revenue generation, given the constraints on student number growth at both the undergraduate and doctoral levels
- Expanding the offerings of non-credit micro credentials and continuing professional development programs at the graduate level may be worth considering
- Consider developing alternative methods of effectively communicating with graduate students in the Faculty, as email newsletters may not be the most engaging or widely read format
- More consistent monitoring of individual student-supervisor relationships
- Improve data collection on Indigenous graduate student numbers and strengthen efforts to recruit them into graduate education, while assessing whether the decentralization of admissions at the unit level supports the "very ambitious" goals in this area
- Consider the space needs of PhD students in the dissertation writing stage, recognizing downtown campus constraints, as dedicated space may help reduce the isolation of this phase
- "Consider simplifying the process of funding PhDs, the current model is a little confusing and may be deterring excellent students, as they are often being offered more than at first appears (base versus actual)"
- Large-scale collaborative projects (ISIs) could perhaps be more inclusive of arts and humanities subjects
- Refocus the FAS curriculum by reducing courses with overlapping content and sunseting courses that no longer meet current student needs
- Strengthen FAS's leadership in initiatives such as anti-racism and gender equity by setting clear targets based on the local population to better measure success
- Proceed with gathering EDI Data while establishing action plans for recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty, staff, and student body
- Set recruitment goals based on the demographic representation of PhDs in various disciplines for faculty, national demographics for staff, and state demographics for students to add urgency to action plans and demonstrate actionable commitment to EDI

- Disaggregate racialized faculty data by specific racial groups and departments to help Faculty identify areas of progress and where more attention is needed
  - Prioritize recruitment and retention of diverse faculty, staff, and students by addressing mental health concerns, additional service burdens on racialized faculty and staff, equitable access to professional development and promotion pathways, and the utilization of mentoring programs and faculty development resources
  - Consider conducting an accessibility self-study to identify potential barriers that may deter persons with disabilities from applying for faculty and staff positions, while also assessing institutional responsiveness to invisible disabilities beyond student learning needs
  - Initiate planning for a graduate program in Indigenous Studies or a “shared” program with 1-3 departments, such as English, History, Political Science, and/or Geography and Planning, to support student interests in social justice, once more faculty are in place [in CIS]
  - Continue and potentially expand language instruction in Anishinaabemowin and Mohawk, exploring revenue-generating opportunities such as summer school classes for graduate students at other institutions
  - Increase awareness of the option of using Indigenous languages to fulfill PhD language requirements
  - Explore opportunities for collaboration with language departments and/or Comparative Literature to expand to additional languages and/or offer literature courses
  - Coordinate a visitation program for admitted Black and Indigenous graduate students to increase recruitment success across departments, helping to foster a “sense of cohort” among students who choose to attend, complementing the recent welcome events for graduate fellowship recipients held with the Indigenous Research Network
- Build on the work of the Indigenous Research Network to create a more focused ISI, such as one related to the environment and sustainability, that centers Indigenous knowledge and positions FAS as a leader in Indigenous science while serving as a powerful recruitment tool for Indigenous scholars

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- FAS is an exceptionally well-run, collegial unit, under the stewardship of an exemplary Dean who is “broadly regarded as a visionary leader”
- Positive, consultative approach taken by Dean has built a great deal of trust within FAS and beyond
- Given the scope of FAS and the scale and complexity of its activities, management and organization are of particular importance; Dean’s Office has good alignment and clear lines of administrative responsibility and an impressive degree of coordination among different parts of the portfolio

- FAS has worked to support faculty by increasing staff support to enhancing research success, faculty wellness, and conflict resolution
- Training, coaching and support for unit leadership will help prepare them for their roles and build resiliency to be effective leaders; such support is likely to play a powerful role in rebuilding collegiality and community in departments, post-COVID
- Recent renovations in some FAS spaces have been impressive and cost-effective
- Reviewers note optimism that new FAS budget model will provide funds to support teaching in units impacted by declining enrolments, and preserve the great diversity of the FAS curriculum offerings
- FAS is in a very positive financial position at this time; reviewers support plans to take steps “to ensure that this healthy situation is sustainable”
- Reviewers appreciate that development of new budget model has focused on improving equity and providing incentives to better align FAS resources with its academic priorities; potential benefits include rationalizing resources needed to support increased teaching and associated activities, clarification of responsibilities between FAS and the units, and balancing enrolments after a period of substantial growth
- Impressive professionalism and judgment of the Dean’s financial team, particularly in ensuring that the budget model is well-understood before beginning implementation

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

- Provincial limits on funding for domestic undergraduate and graduate students paired with limitations on tuition increases has constrained the ways in which FAS can address financial sustainability
- “Although there is no indication that international student admissions are softening, it is impossible not to be concerned about geopolitical impacts on both undergraduate and graduate students”
- Reviewers caution that increasing student enrolments may mean increased faculty responsibilities in teaching and administration of courses
- Increasing enrolments, and the associated additional costs, noted as drivers for developing the new budget model
- Graduate students noted some confusion regarding the decentralized nature of the University and the areas of overlap between FAS and the School of Graduate Studies
- Training provided for Teaching Assistants appeared to vary greatly by unit
- Reviewers note the proliferation of Extra-Departmental Units (EDUs), particularly in the C and D categories
- Organizational structure with a single Vice Dean with responsibility for research and infrastructure is unusual; reviewers acknowledge that the two areas are “clearly” interrelated
- Observing that some FAS buildings are as “very old”; reviewers note significant concerns that building renovation delays can affect new faculty members’ progress towards promotion and tenure, and generally impact advancement of research
- Space upgrades expected to continue to pose challenges given costs of funding major capital projects and a lack of government funding

- Relationships between the Dean's Office and FAS units will be "strongly tested" as new budget model is implemented
- New budget model involving new commitments of FAS funds to departments may leave the Dean with fewer resources to maintain current levels of central support

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Review EDUs, particularly at the C and D level, with consideration of their viability, use of available resources, alignment with original purpose, adaptation to change, and fit within broader FAS Academic Plan
- Consider strengthening units' role in governance and support of EDU:C and Ds, to coalesce faculty support and interest around compelling themes
- Clarify and communicate which graduate student services are provided by FAS and which are provided by the School of Graduate Studies
- When both exist in a unit, clearly delineate the portfolios of undergraduate department chairs and Tri Campus graduate chairs
- Develop consistent policies for TA training across units
- Clear and transparent communication between Dean's office and FAS units will be absolutely critical as new budget model is implemented, especially in the early phases as the need for adjustments arises due to unforeseen circumstances
- Reliance on multi-year modelling of financial and academic plans will be critical for the successful rollout of the new budget model

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Enthusiastic spirit of continuous improvement, particularly with the Dean's Office team and the Colleges
- Professional and academic staff are clearly dedicated to continual improvement and innovation
- FAS is widely respected and seen as an important campus leader
- FAS Dean is seen as a collaborative leader who has worked to improve the student experience and foster effective cross-divisional partnerships
- Commendable contributions to cross-divisional, interdisciplinary research via the Institutional Strategic Initiatives program
- FAS has made key contributions toward establishing an institutional framework for funding inter-divisional teaching (IDT), which will support creation of interesting interdisciplinary joint programs
- FAS contributes to societal impact at the local, national, and international levels primarily through faculty research and a variety of events which are open to the public

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

- FAS does not appear to have a Faculty-level presence related to its societal impact, relying instead on individual faculty efforts

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Continue to develop interdivisional collaborations (e.g., Rotman Commerce joint program; collaborative service teaching with Temerty Faculty of Medicine) in ways that provide valuable curricular opportunities for students and while being judicious with faculty resources
- Consider ways to highlight FAS's societal impact, e.g., through creating distinguished community engagement events or a grants program to support faculty engagement projects that can be highlighted online as supported by FAS



## 2 Administrative Response & Implementation Plan <sup>6</sup>

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

February 28, 2025

Professor Nicholas Rule  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
University of Toronto

### **RE: Provostial Review of the Faculty of Arts & Science**

Dear Professor Rule,

I write in response to your letter of September 12, 2024, regarding the October 23-25, 2023, Provostial review of the Faculty of Arts & Science and requesting our Administrative Response.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science community, we would first like to thank the reviewers Professor Meigan Aronson, University of British Columbia, Professor Gail McElroy, Trinity College, Dublin, and Professor Venetria Patton, University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign, for their very comprehensive review of the Faculty. We would also like to thank the senior leadership team, particularly the Vice-Dean Academic Planning and team, faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study. We also wish to thank the College Principals, Deans of other Divisions, and the many faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided thoughtful feedback. The review process is an invaluable exercise that affords us the opportunity to take stock, to recognize progress and achievements, and identify areas for improvement. We are extremely pleased with the reviewers' positive assessment of the strength of the Faculty of Arts & Science and its outstanding, productive faculty.

Overall, the reviewers had a very positive view of the Faculty, stating that "FAS is a tribute to publicly funded higher education." They noted that the Faculty's investment in internal research supports in the past five years has paid off. They identify FAS as "an exceptional unit, excelling in both teaching and research with impressive ambitions for its future and a strong commitment to the well-being of its staff and student body." They noted that "impressive advances" have been made since the last Provostial review. The Faculty is an exceptionally well-run and collegial unit under the stewardship of an exemplary Dean, the reviewers observed, and the single biggest factor responsible for the strong international reputations of FAS and the University of Toronto is the excellence of its faculty.

They offered valuable guidance and recommendations such as developing an overarching vision for the Faculty that preserves both curriculum breadth and interdisciplinary strengths; streamlining current course offerings to reduce duplication; expanding the Faculty's Indigenous Studies offerings; giving strategic consideration to the Faculty's master's-level programs, and strengthening graduate student supports, including professional development support; and developing detailed plans to strengthen the recruitment and retention of diverse students, faculty and staff, as well as focussing attention and efforts to Recruitment of Indigenous undergraduate and graduate students.

#### OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Sidney Smith Hall, 100 St. George Street, Suite 2005, Toronto, ON M5S 3G3 Canada

Tel: +1 416-978-3383 • Fax: +1 416-978-3887 • [officeofthedean@artsci.utoronto.ca](mailto:officeofthedean@artsci.utoronto.ca) • [www.artsci.utoronto.ca](http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca)

My office made the review report to U of T faculty, staff, and students on the Arts & Science website on September 30, 2024 (<https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/about/strategic-overview/academic-planning-process-timeline/external-review>), and the report's posting was subsequently boosted by A&S Communications. Following this, my office undertook extensive consultation with stakeholders throughout fall 2024 and early 2025. We brought forward the review report, highlighted key points, and discussed relevant recommendations with the Faculty's Chairs, Principals and Academic Directors (CPAD) group on September 27, 2024 and twice with CPAD Sectorals (October 11 and November 29, 2024); with Cognate Deans (October 21, 2024); Deans and Principals (November 22, 2024); Graduate Leadership Forum (November 25, 2024); Faculty Administrators & Business Group (November 26, 2024); Tri-Campus Deans (November 28, 2024); and the Arts & Science Student Union (January 10, 2025). We consulted with our Faculty Leadership Team periodically throughout this period (September 4, 2024; January 15, 2025). The Administrative Response and Implementation Plan found in the Review Recommendations Table is the outcome of these consultations and the thoughtful and engaged feedback and input from all these groups.

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. The Administrative Response and Implementation Plan was developed in consultation with the senior leadership team 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. 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.

Thank you very much for the extensive guidance and support your office provided to us in organizing such a successful review and site visit. The review process, including conducting the self-study, the review report, and this Administrative Response and Implementation Plan, will be instrumental as we begin the next A&S Five-Year Academic Planning process.

Sincerely,



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

cc.

Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Erin Macnab, Director, Academic Operations & Strategic Initiatives, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Caitlin Burton, Senior Manager, Curriculum, 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 Provostial non-UTQAP Review of the Faculty of Arts and Science - 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>	Dean's Response
Highlighting shifting enrolment trends in recent years from the humanities towards the sciences and social sciences, the reviewers urged FAS to give thoughtful consideration to the development of an overarching vision for the Faculty that preserves both curriculum breadth and interdisciplinary strengths.	1	"As is the case many places, there is a gradual shift of student enrolments from humanities to science and social sciences. This must lead to thoughtful consideration of an overarching vision of FAS that preserves both the breadth of the curriculum and its interdisciplinary character, a defining feature of FAS."	Medium-term: The Dean and senior leadership will undertake the 5-year Academic Planning process, which will involve extensive consultation across the division with multiple stakeholders. The 5-year Academic Plan will celebrate the wide diversity of programs that fall within a Faculty of Arts <i>and</i> Science and feature the Dean's Strategic Priorities for 2025-30.
Observing considerable efforts and resources allocated to undergraduate classes with smaller enrolments, the reviewers noted opportunities to assess and streamline current course offerings, with an eye to reducing duplication and facilitating the introduction of new course offerings and topics. They further encouraged the Faculty to consider how the proliferation of undergraduate program offerings might potentially present an obstacle to student progress.	2	"Acknowledging that small classes are especially beneficial in first year, and again in the late stages of the undergraduate degree, their sheer number presents a considerable opportunity cost for FAS. A thoughtful review and the related streamlining of current course offerings would reduce duplication and allow the introduction of new courses and new materials."	Medium-long-term: As part of the 5-year planning process, the Dean's office will investigate initiating a review of the first year and College Ones courses to determine if streamlining offerings or identifying gaps in uptake can be considered without compromising the important small-class experience for first year students.
	3	"It might be beneficial to ask to what extent the proliferation of multiple programs could represent the presence of obstacles in progression to graduation, including possible difficulties in timely enrolment in needed courses."	Immediate term: The Dean's Office appreciates the reviewers' recommendation and will engage with Units regarding program and course proliferation as part of the UTQAP review process.  Medium-long-term: To support data-informed planning and review of the programmatic landscape, the Dean's Office plans to develop dashboards for the Faculty and Units that provide information on obstacles to progress, such as waitlists and time to completion. More effective advising can also reduce obstacles. To that end, the College Registrars have initiated a communications process that will (Medium term) facilitate greater coordination with advisors within



			<p>academic units to facilitate more efficient advising and wayfinding for students.</p> <p>Medium term: As well, a new system for maintaining oversight of advising and tracking student requests is to be installed. It will create an electronic record of student advising and information / resources delivered that is accessible to all advisors. This system will enhance advising and improve student experience, including progression through their programs of study.</p> <p>Immediate term: Finally, the Decanal Advisory Committee on Academic Change (DACAC), which reviews new program ideas at an early stage, has implemented a more robust review process to ensure holistic and rigorous oversight over the development of any new programs.</p>
In light of international education trends, the reviewers recommended strategic consideration of the Faculty's master's-level programs. They noted some potential for growth and revenue generation through the expansion of professional master's degrees; and highlighted the need to carefully assess the role and future of FAS research master's offerings.	4	"Given international trends in education a question needs to be asked about research masters, should these continue to be funded? What function does the research masters serve? There is potential for growth and revenue generation through the expansion of professional masters, given the constraints on student number growth at both the UG and Doctoral level. Additionally, expansion of the offerings of 'not for credit', micro credentials and CPDs at the graduate level may be worth considering."	<p>Immediate term: The decision to fund the research master's degree remains with each unit within the greater context of graduate education in that unit. The Dean's Office will work closely with Units to ensure that they are well informed and empowered to make decisions that are most appropriate for their discipline. Extensive consultation within the A&amp;S sectors on this recommendation indicates that the value of the funded research master's degree varies across the Faculty.</p> <p>Medium term: The Dean's Office will also ensure that Units are well-informed about the potential for revenue generation from new professional masters programs and not-for-credit (NFC) offerings. To better support Unit aspirations in the NFC space, A&amp;S has expanded its Experiential Learning &amp; Professional Development Office and offers streamlined support for NFC development.</p>
The reviewers made a number of recommendations related to strengthening graduate student supports, including enhancing communications about available services; bolstering professional development support for both academic and non-academic careers; addressing relatively long times to completion for PhD students; and exploring approaches to build a stronger sense of community among PhD students.	5	"While graduate education is, necessarily, unit-based there appears to be an inconsistency of experience across the Faculty. Humanities doctoral students lamented a lack of personal contact and/or dedicated study space in the thesis years. Some means of monitoring this contact with supervisors might be considered."	<p>Immediate-Medium term: While oversight of graduate supervision largely rests within SGS, the Vice-Dean Graduate will make data on time-to-completion (TTC) per supervisor available to chairs in ways that are more legible, to support unit-specific decision-making in this area. Data on TTC by supervisor allows chairs to observe completion rates more closely. This is currently under development. This initiative follows recommendations of a recent working group on doctoral student success surfaced in a recent internal report on this subject. and our office continues to implement the recommendations of doctoral student success.</p>

			<p>Consultation with graduate leadership in all A&amp;S sectors produced several suggestions and initiatives to facilitate stronger oversight of supervisory practices that can be implemented at the unit level, in a manner that best fits the conventional practices of that unit.</p> <p>Graduate student study space remains a unit-specific issue.</p>
	6	<p>“Some alternative means of effectively communicating with graduate students in the Faculty, beyond email newsletters (which appear not to be read), is worth considering. Overall, doctoral students did not have a strong sense of the Faculty as a community. A clearer delineation of what services are provided by SGS and which by FAS at the graduate level might also be in order and/or the communication of this to doctoral students.”</p>	<p>Immediate-Medium term: The Dean’s office agrees with the reviewers’ observation. There are current plans to update the student-facing A&amp;S graduate website, with a complete refreshing of information. This initiative may be informed by an internal-facing version of the same information. Such a webpage will align with SGS without duplicating those efforts.</p>
	7	<p>“The focus on traditional skills and the preparation for an academic job market was an issue raised by graduate students. Given most will not attain a tenure track job there may be some need to elevate and encourage greater adoption of transferable skills. While such programs are offered, the perception is that these are not highly valued or promoted by academics within the Faculty. Each unit should examine the data on doctoral student outcomes for the past decade and consider how many PhDs complete and how many end up in academia versus the private/public sector.”</p>	<p>Immediate term: The Dean’s office, in 2023, introduced a new Office of Graduate Professional Development &amp; Student Success (GPDSS). The office offers regular graduate professionalization workshops, as well as a dedicated 8-session cohort-based program for PhD students that facilitates students’ preparation for strong career prospects both inside and outside the academy.</p> <p>The GPDSS office also works closely with graduate units to offer tailored support for unit-level programming and initiatives with respect to academic and non-academic careers. This unit-level work on graduate professionalization is informed by unit and sector level data on doctoral employment outcomes (and indeed, master’s employment outcomes) in academic and non-academic careers (tracked and provided by the School of Graduate Studies).</p> <p>The Office of Experiential Learning &amp; Outreach Support also offers support for graduate units interested in embedding experiential learning opportunities within their graduate curriculum.</p>
	8	<p>“Completion rates and time to completion for doctoral students need some attention. More use of the excellent data that exists on both these trends, particularly, at the unit level is in order. Each program should consider what the realistic time to completion for their program should be and whether this is feasible, given curricular demands. Are all doctoral program requirements strictly necessary? When new requirements are added are existing requirements reviewed and/or removed?”</p>	<p>Immediate-Medium term: As noted above (response #5), A&amp;S will provide enhanced and granular information on time-to-completion to Units. Other initiatives the Dean’s office will consider (Medium term) include enhanced supports around progress updates, more frequent progress reports and follow-through on expectations and milestones, better communication around organized writing groups through A&amp;S, CTSI and other peers, and a re-thinking of the post-coursework-to-dissertation phase.</p>

			<p>Immediate term: A&amp;S and its Units regularly review graduate curriculum during cyclical review, when program requirements and other milestones and curricular matters are assessed. Implementation Plans can lead to major modifications and other streamlining initiatives regarding graduate requirements to ensure that all requirements, assessments, and milestones support rigorous graduate education.</p>
<p>The reviewers observed that while many supports are available to FAS faculty, innovations and experiences often appear to be shared among colleagues on a fairly informal basis. They suggested that it might be timely and beneficial to consider strategies to provide more systematic and consistent dissemination of best practices to support and empower faculty, particularly those in the teaching stream.</p>	9	<p>“It is our impression that innovations and experiences of the faculty are mostly shared on an informal person to person level. While there are many supports available to the faculty, it might be timely to consider a Dean’s level center that would permit a more systematic dissemination of best practices and even the commissioning of new research projects that could lead to new educational advances and empower the teaching stream faculty to innovate.”</p>	<p>Immediate-medium term: The ASDO has launched two programs that more systematically and consistently disseminate best practices to support and empower tenure and teaching stream faculty. One such initiative is the New Faculty Program, which encompasses Lunch&amp;Learn sessions, social gatherings, and dissemination of support materials. The other is the new Mentorship Program, which follows a new, collaborative, and empowering model of mentorship that gives agency to pre-tenured and pre-continuing status faculty members in our institutional response to their needs. We have finalized our new guidelines for Indigenous research, teaching, and service PTR reporting and assessment, in which a series of workshops for unit leaders and relevant faculty colleagues will follow. The outcome of this process is also the revised AAR form for Teaching Stream faculty. It clarifies the reporting and evaluating criteria of their multifaceted work. We plan to offer workshops regarding this process in the early fall.</p> <p>Medium term: The reviewers’ comments highlight that programming and supports offered through the Arts &amp; Science Dean’s Office would benefit from the greater visibility and promotion a formal centre would lend, especially given the scale and increasing demand for the ASDO’s Teaching &amp; Learning team’s services. Consideration will be taken to clarify supports that A&amp;S can offer that build on best practices in teaching, curriculum, resources, and educational research. We will identify additional pathways to reach our faculty and ensure there is awareness of the services offered across the division. To support Arts &amp; Science in enriching and expanding our capacity for teaching excellence, the Dean’s Office will strive to maintain our current level of programming, increase our capacity for digital pedagogies and multimedia projects in the Studio, and continue to grow our pedagogical and educational technology resources by introducing new initiatives such as a Teaching &amp; Learning Certificate.</p>
<p>The reviewers highlighted that the creation of Institutional Strategic Initiatives has been extremely important across the University in</p>	10	<p>“The continued viability of each [ISI], beyond the current funding period, is a little uncertain. Also, the current ISIs have a STEM focus</p>	<p>Medium term: A&amp;S agrees with expanding the scope of the ISIs and will work with colleagues on potential initiatives. Since the A&amp;S review, the Institutional Strategic Initiatives (ISI) program has <a href="#">launched a new</a></p>

the promotion of research excellence, but noted concerns that the continued viability of ISIs beyond the current funding period appears somewhat uncertain. They additionally recommended exploring the possibility of broadening the focus of ISIs to include disciplines beyond STEM fields and including arts and humanities subjects.		and we would recommend broadening them, even further, in the next iteration/call.”	<a href="#">competitive two-stage funding program</a> designed to foster the development of new large-scale interdisciplinary strategic research networks with potential for transformational impact on issues of great societal importance. Stage I, Initiative Development, offers up to one year of funding support to develop a new initiative that will compete for Stage II funding.
	11	“The institutional strategic initiatives (ISIs) are a very welcome development but, perhaps inevitably, there is a science heavy focus (exceptions such as the Critical Digital Humanities initiative aside). These large-scale collaborative projects could perhaps be more inclusive of arts and humanities subjects.”	Medium term: A&S agrees with expanding the scope of the ISIs and will work with colleagues on potential initiatives. See above #10.
The reviewers stressed the urgent and critical importance of collecting data to support the Faculty’s Equity, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives, and of developing detailed plans to strengthen both the recruitment and retention of diverse students, faculty and staff. They also emphasized the importance of recognizing and taking into account the additional service burdens that are often imposed on racialized faculty and staff.	12	“...current self-reported data indicates that the number of racialized faculty is very small as well as the number of racialized employees, which includes faculty and staff. Other demographics such as women, persons with a disability, and 2SLGBTQ+ are also very modest in relation to the total population of faculty and employees. This suggests the urgency to proceed with gathering data while also establishing action plans for recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty, staff, and student body. We would also encourage the setting of goals for recruitment based on the demographic representation of PhDs in various disciplines for faculty, national demographics for staff, and state demographics for students.”	<p>Immediate-medium term: Strides have been made in data gathering and sharing since the review: in addition to the University’s institutional dashboard, information is now being collated and shared at the divisional level. These reveal that the trajectory for diversity in faculty complement is positive, with gains most notable in the Assistant and Associate Professor ranks thus far.</p> <p>Immediate term: The New Faculty program (see #9 above) supports new faculty in understanding the university and resources that are available.</p> <p>Immediate-medium term: The ASDO new mentorship program overseen by the Vice-Dean Faculty &amp; Academic Life is working on faculty inclusion and retention, in coordination with ASDO Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. They, in coordination with the Director of Academic HR, will be reaching out to unit chairs and directors in 2025-26 to discuss unit-level demographic data and approaches for diversifying their faculty complements.</p>
	13	“We would encourage racialized faculty data to be broken down by specific racial groups and by departments to assist the Faculty in determining where progress is being made and where more attention is warranted. “	Immediate-medium term: See above #12.
	14	“We also encourage FAS to think specifically about retaining diverse faculty, staff, and students and not only about recruitment. The attention to mental health concerns is an important component of retention efforts, but FAS should also take into account the additional	Immediate-long term: The new Faculty of Arts & Science mentorship initiatives support the flourishing of faculty in their early academic careers, encourage faculty to develop personally meaningful mentorship networks, enhance new colleagues’ understanding of institutional

		<p>service burdens that racialized faculty and staff typically take on whether it's diversifying committees, mentoring diverse students, or other activities that tap into their racialized experience."</p>	<p>policies, procedures, and unit-level practices, promote engagement, and foster a sense of community and belonging. It responds to the needs of a diverse faculty complement and provides four evidence-based recommendations that reflect the current academic landscape and feedback from the A&amp;S community.</p> <p>The first recommendation is to decouple mentorship from onboarding to focus the mentorship relationship on the sustentative aspects that contribute to the new faculty member's career success. The second is to co-create a mentorship approach in a dialogic partnership which values and supports diversity. It represents a shift from assigning a mentor to a new faculty member based primarily on research similarities to a collaborative process of identifying a network of relationships responsive to the faculty member's goals and preferences. The third is to provide role clarity, establish checkpoints and shared expectations, and the final to broaden the network of mentoring relationships to multiple one-on-one, one-to-many, peer, and identity-based mentorship relationships. The program offers various support groups and resources.</p> <p>Another initiative identified the need to update the annual activity report (AAR) that all faculty members are required to complete, and to create the <i>Annual Activity Report Companion Document for Indigenous Scholarship</i> (AAR Companion) as an aid for faculty members and PTR committees to provide guidance surrounding Indigenous teaching, scholarship and service in the PTR evaluation process. The AAR Companion gives specific attention to the ways in which Indigenous scholars have culturally relevant methods of engagement that they might employ in their scholarship. It was developed to provide faculty members who engage in Indigenous scholarship with a guide to reporting on the types and descriptions of activities undertaken; and to assist the Unit head and PTR committee assessing the AARs, in evaluating the significance, value and impact of this work and the varied approaches taken in the context of teaching, research or pedagogical/professional development including scholarship, and service in diverse Indigenous spaces, as appropriate.</p>
	15	<p>"It may be beneficial to engage specifically in an accessibility self-study to see if there are pain points that may deter persons with disabilities from applying for faculty and staff positions as the demographic data suggests that there is room for improvement here."</p>	<p>Immediate-long term: Several new U of T central initiatives have just been <a href="#">announced</a> that address these challenges at the institutional level. U of T is developing an updated <a href="#">Multi-Year Accessibility Plan</a>, which will serve as a five-year roadmap as we work to create accessible and inclusive environments where all members of the community can</p>

			<p>participate fully. The newly created <a href="#">AODA Commitments</a> website outlines institutional progress related to the AODA standards, Finally, the U of T is launching the <a href="#">Employees with Disabilities Community Network</a>, a tri-campus affinity group where employees with disabilities, or who identify as disabled, can foster a sense of belonging and connection. This group aims to provide a community of support and opportunities for mentorship and professional development, while contributing to building a culture of belonging across the campuses. Arts &amp; Science will work closely with central administration and actively leverage these new resources and initiatives.</p> <p>Note new U of T/central initiative:  <a href="https://people.utoronto.ca/news/new-initiatives-to-enhance-accessibility-and-belonging/">https://people.utoronto.ca/news/new-initiatives-to-enhance-accessibility-and-belonging/</a></p> <p>Immediate term: The Administrative HR, Academic HR and EDI offices have struck a working group that will assess current A&amp;S recruitment and hiring practices to address any systemic barriers and make enhancements to our practices.</p>
	16	<p>“We encourage FAS to coordinate a visitation program for admitted Black and Indigenous graduate students as this should increase the recruitment success of individual departments by providing larger numbers of students and helping to create a sense of a cohort among the students who choose to attend.”</p>	<p>Medium-long term: The ASDO will explore a partnership with the Black Research Network (BRN) in a recruitment event. As well, ASDO will explore other currently existing events with which A&amp;S could potentially partner as part of a larger, interdivisional effort to attract and recruit Black students.</p> <p>A&amp;S is already working with BRN on securing collaborative research space on campus for such activities and events.</p> <p>The Vice Dean Graduate initiated discussions on an Indigenous Graduate Recruitment Strategy for A&amp;S in 2023-24. Discussion on the strategy will be revisited in February 2025 at a meeting of the Indigenous Research Teaching and Learning Committee.</p> <p>IRTL has completed a report that outlines a strategy to improve our capacity to recruit and retain Indigenous graduate students.</p>
The reviewers noted that the recruitment of Indigenous undergraduate and graduate students may require more focused attention and efforts; they also highlighted opportunities to expand the Faculty’s Indigenous Studies offerings.	17	<p>“The recruitment of Indigenous students, at both undergraduate and, especially, graduate level may require more focused attention.”</p>	<p>Immediate term: As of October 2023, Arts &amp; Science participates in a central initiative regarding tuition for Indigenous Students. The University of Toronto covers the cost of tuition for students from nine First Nations, under the U of T Indigenous Tuition Grant, as part of its efforts to make the university more accessible and inclusive for Indigenous students – and strengthen relationships with Indigenous</p>

			communities. The grant covers the cost of tuition for current and future Indigenous students enrolled in most undergraduate, graduate and professional credit-based programs across the three campuses – part of a suite of programs available to Indigenous students as part of U of T’s commitment to increasing access and support services. With the support of the Colleges, the Deans of Students, and U of T Housing Services, A&S will implement an upper-year Indigenous undergraduate student college residence guarantee by September 2025. The Guarantee will enable Indigenous students to live on campus for the duration of their studies and will codify an existing practice of some Colleges. The guarantee will serve as an additional recruitment tool, and may help assuage the concerns of Indigenous students and families about safety and housing security while pursuing their undergraduate studies at U of T.
	18	“Once more faculty are in place, CIS should begin planning for a graduate program in Indigenous Studies or a shared program with 1-3 departments such as English, History, Political Science, and/or Geography and Planning that would allow students to tap into interests in social justice.”	Immediate-long term: The Dean’s office has been engaged in consultations with the Centre for Indigenous Studies throughout 2024 to discuss developing graduate programming in Indigenous Studies. The DACAC approved the development of a more formal proposal in spring 2024 and those discussions are ongoing. CIS is investigating graduate curricula across North America and has begun the preliminary work with the Curriculum Development Specialist in the Vice-Provost’s office of identifying and articulating graduate program objectives and program learning outcomes. It is expected that a draft proposal will be ready for preliminary review and feedback in Summer 2025.
	19	“CIS currently offers language instruction in Anishinaabemowin and Mohawk, which should be continued and potentially expanded as potential revenue generating opportunities such as summer school classes for graduate students at other institutions. The option of using Indigenous languages for PhD language requirements should also be more broadly communicated. There may also be opportunities for collaboration with language departments and/or Comparative Literature to expand to additional languages and/or to provide literature courses.”	<p>Immediate term: An Indigenous Language Revitalization Coordinator position has been funded by the Dean’s office to support Indigenous language faculty and their scholarship. This will be a 3-year term.</p> <p>CIS is open to opportunities for collaboration across A&amp;S. For example, CIS is in discussion with Linguistics regarding the joint development of a Certificate in Indigenous language learning. DACAC reviewed a preliminary proposal and provided positive feedback in Oct 2023.</p> <p>Long term: With regard to developing a revenue-generating model of language-learning in Indigenous languages, CIS will consider this interesting opportunity in the future.</p> <p>Immediate term: For graduate students, the option for using Indigenous languages in PhD work is available. The Centre for Indigenous Studies hired one new faculty member July 1, 2024, to teach in this area, with an anticipated second hire beginning July 1, 2025, which allows for</p>

			expanded course offerings. The Office of the Vice-Dean, Graduate, is working on developing communications that units can share with graduate students to make students aware of introductory and advanced courses available in CIS, specifically in conversational Anishinaabemowin.
	20	<p>“The 2020-25 Academic Plan calls to respect Indigenous ways of knowing and we encourage FAS to truly take this to heart by building on the work of the Indigenous Research Network which centers Indigenous ways of knowing. The IRN appears to be an incubator to support Indigenous research projects, improve the securing of grants, and provide training in Indigenous research practices; however, a more focused ISI could make FAS the place to study Indigenous science. For example, an ISI related to the environment and sustainability would be enriched by centering Indigenous thought while also serving as a powerful recruitment tool for Indigenous scholars.”</p>	<p>ISIs are a University-wide initiative and competitively awarded, hence as noted above (see #10 and #11), A&amp;S will work with colleagues on potential ISI applications and agrees that a broader scope would be advantageous. Immediate-medium term:</p> <p>Immediate-medium term: CIS is currently searching for a scholar in Indigenous Health and Indigenous Ecology with a focus on Indigenous Science. Such a scholar may be well-placed to participate in an ISI application in Indigenous science or a related area of research.</p> <p>Immediate-medium term: Like ISIs, the IRN serves the broader U of T community. A&amp;S’s advancement of Indigenous ways of knowing leverages and is aligned with the work of the IR. As noted above, A&amp;S is working to establish programs and implement processes that respect Indigenous ways of knowing. For example, PTR processes in A&amp;S have already been revised so that Indigenous faculty can better represent their work. See #14, above.</p> <p>Program changes that respect Indigenous ways of knowing would include respectful reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities. For example, A&amp;S recently established a research fund for Indigenous Research Excellence (FIRE) intended to enhance the support of Indigenous research and scholarship and advance research that is ethical, respects Indigenous ways of knowing and engages Indigenous communities.</p>
The reviewers broadly observed that the Faculty’s proliferation of EDUs may warrant some attention. They recommended that FAS leadership conduct a review of existing EDU:Cs and EDU:Ds with a focus on assessing their continued relevance and sustainability; and consider appropriate future directions for these units, including the possibility of some closures.	21	<p>“The proliferation of EDUs may need some attention. While it was not within our remit to consider each in detail, it would be worth considering whether some of these units (particularly at the C and D level) have reached the end of their lifespan or whether they overlap too closely with academic departments. These EDUs are quite variable in nature, some are fully fledged research institutes, whilst others are little more than Summer schools. We would recommend a review of EDUs (C&amp;D) in terms of their viability, their fit with their original stated purpose and their adaption to a changing world and their fit with the Faculty’s Academic Plan.”</p>	<p>Immediate term: Currently, EDUs C &amp; D are reviewed cyclically, in alignment with the Director’s term, which facilitates the ASDO’s assessment of each unit’s mandate and feasibility.</p> <p>Medium term: A review of EDU Cs and Ds would be productive, and a Working Group will be struck in the upcoming academic planning cycle to make recommendations on their future sustainability.</p>



	22	<p>“We have mentioned elsewhere the need to refocus the FAS curriculum, in part by reducing courses with overlapping content, and sunseting courses that do not meet current student needs.</p> <p>A similar process is recommended for the research EDUs C and D. The point is not to reduce the overall support provided by the Faculty for research and intellectual collaboration, but rather to free up funding for new efforts and new groups of faculty – not the least to serve the interests of the many new junior faculty who have been added in the past few years. It seems prudent as well to strengthen the role of the departments in the governance and support of the EDU C,D units, as a way of coalescing faculty support and interest around the most compelling themes.”</p>	<p>Medium term: See #21 above. Aligning EDU Cs and Ds with cognate Units will better ensure that their ongoing viability reflects faculty support and interest.</p>
The reviewers noted concerns that internal relationships in the Faculty of Arts and Science may be tested by the planned shift to a new budget model. They stressed the critical importance of continued clear and transparent communications to stakeholders regarding these changes.	23	<p>“We learned relatively little about the relationship between the Dean’s Office and the administrative structures in the departments and the degree to which decision making and resource reallocation resources will be shared. However, we do note that these relationships will be strongly tested as the new budget model is rolled out, and that the clear and transparent communication that FAS currently enjoys will be absolutely critical, especially in the early phases where adjustments may naturally be needed due to unforeseen circumstances.”</p>	<p>Immediate term: The ASDO is currently engaged in a communications plan around the implementation of the new budget model, which will be effective for all units as of May 2025. The budget model process was designed and ultimately finalized in consultation with a group of 6 chairs and their units’ lead administrators who gave feedback on key pieces of the model as part of the Faculty’s Budget Committee (FBC), a group that included the Dean and her leadership team. FBC meetings informed regular updates with the entire department/academic unit leadership at CPAD.</p> <p>Medium-long term: The rollout of the budget model and the communications surrounding this rollout are focused on a multi-tiered approach that included updates to every CPAD meeting during 2024/25; updates and presentations to the academic unit administrators at the FAB-G meetings; individual meetings with every unit Chair/Director by the co-chairs of the implementation working group; individual meetings with every graduate unit chair and their administrators for graduate program implementation; the creation of a SharePoint site dedicated to the budget process, and all relevant materials, timelines and an FAQ as we transition to the new model.</p> <p>Immediate term: The finance office is engaging individually with each unit to address specific implementation questions and are developing visualizations of key elements of the model to facilitate planning once the new model is in place.</p>

Other reviewer recommendations:	24	<p>“Collaborations such as the Rotman Commerce joint program and the collaborative service teaching with Temerty Faculty of Medicine should continue to be developed in ways that provide students with valuable curricular opportunities while being judicious with faculty resources.”</p>	<p>Long term: A&amp;S greatly values our inter-divisional teaching relationships and the educational opportunities they provide our students. Robust collaborative structures, with steering and curricular planning committees ensure the health of these relationships.</p> <p>The Vice-Decanal Steering Committee stewards the Rotman Commerce program, a joint program with Rotman School of Management. This arrangement has proven to be robust and successful at managing the issues that jointly affect both divisions.</p> <p>Regarding managing the IDT relationships with the Temerty Faculty of Medicine, the Life Science Executive Committee and the Life Science Planning Committee both provide stewardship of these interdivisional partnerships to ensure adherence to principles of the IDT model, including putting the most qualified instructors in front of students, and being judicious with resources, which provide predictability over time.</p> <p>Other formal committee structures support IDT with other divisions including Applied Sciences and Engineering and the Dalla Lana School of Public Health while other smaller relationships are managed through annual meetings chaired by the VPAP.</p>
	25	<p>“FAS might consider creating a distinguished community engagement event such as a town hall lecture series and/or create a grants program to support faculty engagement projects which can then be highlighted online as supported by FAS. A move in this direction would help to show the societal impact of FAS, especially at a time when the value of universities is questioned by the public.”</p>	<p>Immediate-long term: This recommendation was received with enthusiasm by the A&amp;S community, with suggestions including partnering more directly with the Colleges on speaking events, public lectures, alumni events, town halls, and other events that showcase A&amp;S scholarship.</p>
	26	<p>“Graduate level issues that arose and are worthy of some reflection:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clearer delineation of the portfolios of chairs of undergraduate departments and Tri Campus graduate chairs, where both exist within a unit.</li> <li>2. Better data on Indigenous graduate student numbers is required and very concerted efforts to recruit them into graduate education at U of T. Admissions may be too decentralized to unit level to achieve the very ambitious goals in this area.</li> <li>3. Some more consideration should be given to the space needs of students who have moved to the dissertation writing stage of their PhDs, while recognizing the constraints of a</li> </ol>	<p>Several of these recommendations have been addressed above, as indicated.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The two relevant portfolios are the Budgetary chairs (not Undergraduate chairs) and the Graduate chairs, where these are separate. FAS and SGS are currently examining key documents to consider whether a revision of the existing nomenclature and description of roles is appropriate required.</li> <li>2. As above; please see #17, #20.</li> <li>3. As above; please see #5.</li> <li>4. As above; please see #5.</li> <li>5. As above; please see #6.</li> <li>6. TA training is available through the CTSI.</li> </ol>

		<p>downtown campus. Having dedicated space on campus may make the dissertation phase less isolating.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. More consistent monitoring of individual student- supervisor relationships.</li><li>5. Alternative ways to communicate with graduate students in the Faculty, beyond the weekly newsletter, which seems to not be meeting the mark.</li><li>6. More unified policies on TA training, which seemed to vary greatly by unit.</li><li>7. Consider simplifying the process of funding PhDs, the current model is a little confusing and may be deterring excellent students, as they are often being offered more than at first appears (base versus actual).</li><li>8. 'Lost in dissertation' students seem to a particular problem for some Humanities subjects."</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>7. The University recently <a href="#">announced</a> a new minimum funding for graduate students, increasing the base funding amount to \$40,000.</li><li>8. As above; please see #5.</li></ol>
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### 3 Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

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*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

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The reviewers praised the Faculty's extraordinarily diverse undergraduate program offerings; and highlighted that FAS offers individualized student experience despite its large size, and the undergraduate experiential learning initiatives and internships have been highly successful. The quality of the division's graduate education is commendable; and FAS competes with the very best US universities for graduate students, despite funding constraints and the high cost of living in Toronto. The excellence of FAS faculty is "the single biggest factor responsible for the strong international reputations of FAS and the University of Toronto"; and notable progress has been made on the hiring of racialized faculty since the Faculty's previous review. FAS research is competitive with the very best international institutions; recent investments in internal research supports have paid off handsomely; and Institutional Strategic Initiatives (ISIs) have had an enormous impact on the promotion of research excellence and the strengthening of interdisciplinary research across the University. The extensive availability of staff support frees faculty time for the core missions of research and teaching; new supports for unit leadership help to prepare them for their roles and build resiliency; and the Dean is widely regarded as a visionary, collaborative leader. Concerns noted in the previous review regarding overly complex and/or bureaucratic relationships between the Dean's office and units appear to have been largely resolved, and the new IDT framework will make it much easier to support interdivisional teaching. Finally, the reviewers commended the Faculty on the Centre for Indigenous Studies' shift to EDU:A status, noting that this change will significantly raise the profile of its program, and play a crucial role in the hiring of Indigenous faculty and recruitment of Indigenous students.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: giving thoughtful consideration to the development of an overarching vision for the Faculty that preserves both curriculum breadth and interdisciplinary strengths; exploring opportunities to assess and streamline current course offerings with an eye to reducing duplication and facilitating the introduction of new topics; considering how the proliferation of undergraduate program offerings might potentially present an obstacle to student progress; strategic consideration of the Faculty's master's-level programs, including the potential for growth and revenue generation through the expansion of professional master's degrees and a careful assessment of the role and future of FAS research master's offerings; strengthening graduate student supports, including enhancing communications, bolstering professional development support for both academic and non-academic careers, addressing relatively long times to completion for PhD students, and exploring approaches to build a stronger sense of community among PhD students; considering strategies to provide more systematic and consistent dissemination of

best practices to support and empower faculty, particularly those in the teaching stream; addressing concerns regarding continued viability of Institutional Strategic Initiatives beyond the current funding period and exploring the possibility of broadening the focus of ISIs to include disciplines beyond STEM fields and including arts and humanities subjects; collecting data to support the Faculty's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives, and developing detailed plans to strengthen both the recruitment and retention of diverse students, faculty and staff; recognizing and taking into account the additional service burdens that are often imposed on racialized faculty and staff; giving focused attention to the recruitment of Indigenous undergraduate and graduate students and expanding the Faculty's Indigenous Studies offerings; conducting a review of existing EDU:Cs and EDU:Ds with a focus on assessing their continued relevance and sustainability and considering appropriate future directions for these units; and continuing to communicate clearly and transparently with stakeholders regarding changes to the Faculty budget model.

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

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*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

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On July 15<sup>th</sup> 2025, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was provided by email to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science and the Secretaries to AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council.

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

## 1 Review Summary

<b>Program(s) Reviewed:</b>	Art History, HBA (Specialist, Major, Minor) Art History: MA, PhD
<b>Unit Reviewed:</b>	Department of Art History
<b>Commissioning Officer:</b>	Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
<b>Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tim Barringer, Paul Mellon Professor in the History of Art, Department of the History of Art, Yale University</li> <li>• Iftikhar Dadi, John H. Burris Professor of History of Art, Chair, Department of History of Art, Cornell University</li> <li>• Christine Mehring, Mary L. Block Professor, Department of Art History and the College, Associate Faculty, Department of Visual Arts, University of Chicago</li> </ul>
<b>Date of Review Visit:</b>	February 28-29, 2024
<b>Review Report Received by VPAP:</b>	September 13, 2024
<b>Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:</b>	March 6, 2025
<b>Date Reported to AP&amp;P:</b>	April 10, 2025

## Previous UTQAP Review

Date: October 20-21, 2015

### Summary of Findings and Recommendations

#### Significant Program Strengths

- Highly selective Ph.D. program, considered the best in Canada
- Exceptional time-to-completion of five years for Ph.D. students
- Unique undergraduate conference organized by students each year
- Broad, encyclopaedic coverage of artistic fields and epochs in courses offered
- First-rate, very productive, internationally-recognized faculty

#### Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Developing experiential learning, international, and research opportunities for both graduate and undergraduate students
- Addressing the quality, structure, and delivery of the M.A. program
- Better coordinating advising and support for undergraduate students between the colleges and the department
- Fostering more of a sense of community and increasing communication with graduate students
- Revisiting the funding structure for Ph.D. students to better reflect students' trajectories through the program
- Improving facilities to better support program delivery

## Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

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### 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, Interim Associate Dean, Unit-Level Reviews, Faculty of Arts & Science; undergraduate and graduate chairs; undergraduate and graduate associate chairs; faculty; tri-campus graduate faculty; undergraduate and graduate students, administrative staff; and senior program administrators as well as members of relevant cognate units (East Asian Studies; Classics; Cinema Studies Institute; Department for the Study of Religion).

# Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

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## 1. Undergraduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ The undergraduate program is thriving, and notable for significant increases in course and program enrolments
  - ▶ Undergraduate program is one the largest of its kind in North America
  - ▶ Undergraduate program offers a range of courses, and occupies a distinguished national and international position
  - ▶ Undergraduate program distinguishes itself in a landscape of strong North American art history programs through its “unique combination of quantity and quality”
  - ▶ Specialists receive a good art historical education, as well as related professional training
- Objectives
  - ▶ Reviewers commend the ways in which institutional priorities “weave through the curricular and extracurricular fabric of the Undergraduate Program”
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Department has a significant number of undergraduate courses focused on experiential learning
- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▶ Reviewers note “admirable” economic diversity among undergraduate art history students
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Students enthusiastically endorse the undergraduate program

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ “We are puzzled by the apparent absence of substantive discussions about the curriculum, both in the UTSG Undergraduate Program and in the Graduate Program”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Need identified for departmental committees to explore the noted absence of substantive discussions about curriculum
  - ▶ Undergraduate curriculum committee should be chaired by the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and work to ensure that every term offers a balanced set of course offerings



- ▶ Department encouraged to pursue its plans to further increase the quality of the undergraduate curriculum
- ▶ Consider a required methods course, more clearly articulated capstones, and more faculty advising to position specialist students to be more competitive in their pursuit of graduate studies and/or museum careers
- ▶ A potential capstone offering should be “flexible but substantive”
- ▶ Planned enhancements to the undergraduate curriculum would involve increased workload; reviewers note this could be offset by sharing advising between staff and the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and by exploring increased involvement of graduate students and teaching stream faculty
- ▶ The unit should ensure that its many courses with an experiential learning focus are meaningfully different from one another, of the highest intellectual quality, and art historical in nature
- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▶ Given the size and relative affordability of the undergraduate program, reviewers note an important opportunity to provide pathways for diversifying the discipline
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Internship offerings should be “pedagogically and art historically substantial and students should not receive course credit for doing a (paid) internship”
  - ▶ “[We] do not think it is advisable to mix (course) credit and (research assistant) work (though we would encourage more than the current six faculty to hire work-study research assistants)”

## 2. Graduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ The graduate program is notable for attracting high quality students whose innovative work is widely admired on campus and beyond
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ PhD program admits 6-7 students per year
  - ▶ PhD has recently seen a large number of international applications
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ A recent overhaul of the PhD Methods course has addressed concerns that it was entirely Western in content
  - ▶ “Works-in-Progress” seminar allows faculty and graduate students to come together and discuss their research across subfield specializations, which is helpful for building community among students, and intellectual exchange among faculty
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Graduate student association helps to organize campus events related to research and professional development
  - ▶ PhD students appreciate linkages with the Royal Ontario Museum, including internship opportunities, and courses taught by ROM curators

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

- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Due to lack of available funding for international students, many outstanding applicants cannot be admitted
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ “We are puzzled by the apparent absence of substantive discussions about the curriculum, both in the UTSG Undergraduate Program and in the Graduate Program”
  - ▶ There is no option in the master’s program for a track that incorporates an MA thesis
  - ▶ PhD course requirements are much lower than at peer US institutions
  - ▶ PhD students studying ancient art appear to have their own Methods seminar, which could lead to fragmentation among the PhD cohort
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Differences among faculty hinder the formation of doctoral committees, negatively impacting PhD students
  - ▶ TA assignments are not incorporated into the offer letter that PhD students receive upon admission
- Student funding
  - ▶ Despite large number of international PhD applications, very few are eligible for funding
  - ▶ PhD students note concerns, stress and negative impacts on their progress related to the lack of available funding in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> years and the high cost of living in Toronto

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Need identified for departmental committees to explore the noted absence of substantive discussions about curriculum
  - ▶ A graduate curriculum committee should be constituted under the tri-campus Graduate Chair with membership of faculty from all three campuses, and would ensure that every term offers a balanced set of course offerings
  - ▶ Consider an MA option that includes a thesis, to position students more advantageously should they wish to pursue doctoral studies
  - ▶ Consider a mandatory methods course for the MA
  - ▶ Consider whether the number of course requirements in the PhD might be adjusted
  - ▶ Graduate faculty urged to participate in and build on the collaborative “Works-in-Progress” seminar format
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Graduate students voice desire for greater coverage of non-Western areas of art history
  - ▶ With greater support from all three campuses, the graduate student association could become more active in organizing events such as a speaker series

- ▶ Graduate students might consider collaborating with faculty mentors to organize an EDI lecture series
- ▶ The negative impacts of differences among the faculty that hinder the formation of doctoral committees and faculty climate issues on PhD students is “a very serious issue and needs to be addressed”
- ▶ Faculty are urged to support new research areas and methodologies that are of interest to students, ensuring that they are pursued in a rigorous, scholarly manner
- ▶ Consider the feasibility of adjusting PhD offer letters to include funding details and specific TA assignments and responsibilities
- Student funding
  - ▶ University leadership is urged to explore funding possibilities to increase the number of packages allocated for international PhD students
  - ▶ University administration urged to review PhD packages while remaining mindful that “an art history PhD in North America may require 6 years of guaranteed funding”, and that “University of Toronto funding needs to be at a level that is adequate given the cost of living in contemporary Toronto”

### 3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ In terms of research and teaching, the faculty across all three campuses is of stellar quality
- Faculty
  - ▶ Excellent, impressive faculty hires have been made in the past 10-15 years, which reflect a timely response to ongoing changes in the field and in humanities more broadly
  - ▶ Department to be commended for recent hires in the areas of Islamic art, Indigenous art and Black Diaspora art

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

- Faculty
  - ▶ Concerns noted regarding tenure and promotion decisions, which are managed separately at the three campuses; particularly that faculty on other campuses are not routinely consulted during these processes, even if they have relevant disciplinary expertise
  - ▶ Many otherwise mid-career and senior faculty are still at the associate professor level; “Unlike most Tier-1 institutions in the US, the University of Toronto evidently provides no incentive (such as a meaningful salary increase) for attaining the level of ‘full professor.’”
  - ▶ Junior faculty report not feeling adequately supported institutionally, and note a lack of clarity regarding tenure requirements
  - ▶ Despite recent hires and U of T’s emphasis on global engagement, departmental faculty expertise remains heavily weighted towards Western art

- ▶ Gaps noted in coverage of African and Latin American art

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
  - ▶ Explore the feasibility of introducing or strengthening financial and other incentives for faculty to pursue promotion to Full Professor
  - ▶ Reviewers strongly recommend increasing supports for junior faculty, via approaches such as mentorship programs, guidance and resources for monograph development, and clear guidelines around tenure requirements
  - ▶ Unit is strongly encouraged to pursue significant moves towards embracing the opportunities and challenges of global art history in its complement planning
  - ▶ Reviewers recommend the development of a 5-10 year strategic complement plan to broaden geographic and cultural faculty expertise
  - ▶ Opportunities noted to develop strengths in Southeast Asian, South Asian, Japanese, African, and Latin American art, as well as “newer aspects of the discipline” such as new media, ecology, disability studies, decoloniality, materiality, queer and feminist approaches; reviewers note that such directions are especially important given the diversity and multiculturalism of Toronto and Canada
  - ▶ Department encouraged to provide teaching and research leadership in settler-colonial Canadian art, in addition to its important offerings in Indigenous Art
  - ▶ The St. George campus is urged to include faculty from UTM and UTSC in its search committees; UTM and UTSC are urged to reciprocate accordingly for art history hires
  - ▶ Unit urged to engage in a principled discussion to define when and why it pursues hires in the teaching stream; reviewers note that teaching stream hires should be pursued primarily to enhance undergraduate student learning, and “never at the expense of hiring ‘tenure stream’ faculty”

## 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
  - ▶ Unit has been successful in preparing undergraduate and graduate students for the job market, with a range of internships and productive collaborations, most notably with the Royal Ontario Museum
  - ▶ Departmental staff are competent, knowledgeable and professional; greatly respected and appreciated by faculty and students; and crucial for maintaining departmental processes and a sense of community

- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ The UTSG Department of Art History constitutes a singular and legible administrative unit
  - ▶ The Chair currently delegates all graduate funds and restricted accounts to the Graduate Chair, which appears to be a reasonable arrangement
  - ▶ Department to be commended for its enterprising spirit and success in obtaining internal and external gifts and grants beyond individual research funding; the University of Toronto - France Art History Partnership or 'France gift' and the 'Canada Constructed grant' effectively align with all three Presidential priorities
  - ▶ The 'Canada Constructed grant' has supported a number of students, provided a range of research and professional experiences, and built institutional relationships; reviewers heartened to see that its continuity appears assured
  - ▶ The 'France Gift' noted as a welcome addition to the Department's budget to support PhD students, travel, and speaker series
  - ▶ Departmental spaces have been effectively renovated, and should be maintained
  - ▶ The integration of the art library into the unit's space is noted as "special," providing a study space, sense of belonging and shared identity centred on research and teaching in the midst of a very large community of students
  - ▶ Faculty with undergraduate appointments at UTM and UTSC have a shared office to meet with graduate students, which is reasonable given current space constraints
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Reviewers found much to admire at both the undergraduate and graduate levels
  - ▶ Some significant moves have been made to diversify the curriculum

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

- Relationships
  - ▶ Reviewers highlight very significant departmental climate concerns, noting tensions among department members that were "apparent in every area: structural, budgetary, intellectual and interpersonal"; these issues significantly impede the department from achieving its full potential
  - ▶ "The fundamental problem facing the Graduate Program is that the functioning of such a collaborative enterprise relies on collegiality and good will; these in turn rely on a sense of equity and mutual respect across the entire faculty that (it was reported) is currently lacking"
  - ▶ Graduate Faculty meetings are noted to be "rare, inhospitable, and not well attended", with some faculty reporting decorum issues at both
  - ▶ Reviewers note "unresolved organizational issues", observing that there seems to be disagreement among faculty about the name and status of the tri-campus graduate program and unit
  - ▶ Reviewers note an apparent lack of coordination between relevant Deans, related to the tri-campus graduate program
  - ▶ The University of Toronto Art Museum is "notably absent in the life, teaching and research of the Department" unlike at many North American peers, where university

- art museums play a critical role in supporting the teaching of art history, and providing experiential learning opportunities
- ▶ Reviewers highlight the “strangely absent” relationship between the unit and the Master of Visual Studies in Curatorial Studies offered by the Daniels Faculty, noting that curators are typically trained as art historians
  - Organizational and financial structure
    - ▶ “The complex structure, with separate undergraduate programs organized around adjacent but different disciplinary emphases, but a shared graduate program across three campuses, raises significant problems of leadership and governance”
    - ▶ Difficulties noted related to the collaborative operation of the graduate program; some faculty members, particularly those located at UTM and UTSC expressed concerns that the graduate faculty is not constituted effectively as a single entity
    - ▶ Issues noted related to the definition of the role and powers of the Graduate Chair position; historically the Chair of the UTSG Department of Art History has also served as the Graduate Chair, and this can cause resentment among UTM and UTSC faculty
    - ▶ “[T]he nomenclature of the ‘Graduate Chair’ suggests parallel roles when, in fact, the role of the Graduate Chair appears to carry significantly less authority than that of the Department Chair”
    - ▶ Reviewers observe that the ‘Separate Chair’ model results in a lack of clarity and guidance for staff, and this “has created an awkward work environment”
    - ▶ A Memorandum of Agreement related to the tri-campus graduate program was planned in conjunction with the introduction of the ‘Separate Chair’ model, but the document has not yet been finalized
    - ▶ Reviewers note concern that they were not provided with budgetary information to assist in their understanding of departmental resources, particularly since the use of endowment and grant funds are a “major source of friction, disagreements, and mistrust” in the tri-campus graduate program
    - ▶ Lack of clarity noted around whether the established process of delegating operational control of graduate funds to the Graduate Chair, as described in the self-study, is being followed; “severe discontent” noted regarding access to funding for the graduate program
    - ▶ Apparent “misgivings” noted among some faculty in relation to the ‘France Gift’
    - ▶ Staff job descriptions have not been updated in a timely manner, and do not appear to be accurate to the work being performed and skill sets required
    - ▶ Significant physical separation between UTSG, UTM and UTSC exacerbates challenges of creating a shared intellectual culture and graduate program
  - Long-range planning and overall assessment
    - ▶ Reviewers observe that review data compiled for the undergraduate and graduate programs were “spotty”
    - ▶ Reviewers note some apparent lack of clarity regarding the scope of the review in relation to the tri-campus graduate department
    - ▶ Reviewers highlight concerns that while some faculty acknowledge the need for curricular change and other initiatives to “decolonize the discipline,” there was

deep-seated resistance to changes that were considered by some to raise “fundamental questions of academic freedom”

- ▶ Some faculty report “consistent elision of queer and trans issues” in discussions of curricula, and in the intellectual life of the graduate program
- ▶ Some faculty report that Indigenous arts and identities are marginalized in departmental discourse and curricula
- ▶ Equity, Diversity and Inclusion engagement overall appears to be a source of significant departmental friction and division, and several faculty members reported “‘racialized’ ‘toxic’ and ‘abusive’ language in faculty meetings, particularly those devoted to discussing the tri-campus graduate program MoA.”
- ▶ “We found that the Department’s problems are too complex and deep-seated to be addressed comprehensively on the basis of a two-day campus visit”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ Significant tensions and climate concerns among departmental community need to be urgently addressed at the decanal as well as departmental levels
  - ▶ Deans must be cognizant of climate concerns within the department, particularly those related to EDI, and offer support, advice and best practices
  - ▶ “The mission of the graduate ‘program’ or ‘department’ must be identified and agreed upon, and we urge the Dean’s office to play a proactive role in this process, by holding retreats and workshops facilitated by mediators in order for the faculty of all three campuses to be fully and clearly invested in supporting graduate study within a shared intellectual and organizational framework.”
  - ▶ “We urge mutual respect among all faculty, and the need to recognize that art history as a discipline is not static but continues to evolve in terms of its methodology and its subject matter”
  - ▶ Department is urged to adopt a confidential voting process in faculty meetings, “in order to protect dissenting votes, especially of the junior faculty”
  - ▶ Opportunities noted to improve communications between the Department Chair and Graduate Chair
  - ▶ Continue to strengthen linkages with institutions such as the ROM, assuring that these relationships further scholarly objectives
  - ▶ “We urge conversations and long-term planning to expand the Art Museum’s role on campus beyond the curatorial studies curriculum at the Daniels School and to consider the museum’s relationship to the undergraduate and graduate programs in art history”
  - ▶ Absence of a relationship with the Master of Visual Studies in Curatorial Studies warrants some assessment and attention
  - ▶ Departmental website requires substantial enhancements to offer more information about the department, and become “a central means to attract even better graduate students, allow undergraduate students to identify and connect effectively with faculty in their areas of interest, and appeal to potential funders and collaborators.”

- ▶ Consider more regular updates to online faculty profiles; and more comprehensive, consolidated and current information about departmental events and activities
- ▶ Prioritize support for departmental lecture series
- ▶ Consider posting information about student outcomes and careers on website and social media; reviewers note that strengthening communications and engagement with alumni could help with experiential learning opportunities and fundraising
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ “Deans should work with faculty to resolve the question of nomenclature for ‘Graduate Chair’ and the name and status of the Graduate Program/department”
  - ▶ “When faculty assume leadership roles, their jobs and authorities should be negotiated as appropriate, and described in writing with clarity and transparency”
  - ▶ The review team “supports the concept that the leadership of the Graduate Program should be drawn from across the entire University of Toronto Tri-Campus faculty” (though note that this model does not yet appear to have yielded a successful outcome)
  - ▶ “Leading up to the beginning of a new fiscal year, the Department Chair and relevant staff should establish, then follow, annual budgets with clear budget lines, with appropriate delegation to the Graduate Chair for dedicated graduate funds”
  - ▶ Given noted discontent related to funding for the graduate program, the Chair and Graduate chair might consider establishing separate committees related to funding; these might include a graduate affairs committee, and a dedicated program or events committee, both of which should have an appropriate range of representatives
  - ▶ Reviewers suggest earmarking dedicated funds for lecture and events programming, noting that all three departments participating in the graduate program should make contributions proportionate to their sizes and resources
  - ▶ Department and deans are encouraged to work together to identify and track measures of success related to new initiatives, and potentially develop plans to make such initiatives sustainable beyond spend-down gifts and grants
  - ▶ Substantial gifts should be communicated to the entire community in a manner that is positive and transparent, and explain specifically what the funding will and will not support
  - ▶ Department and deans are urged to work with the donor of the ‘France Gift’ to conceive of it more broadly, “including working on collections of art in France that may be from Africa, Polynesia, Southeast Asia, and North Africa, diaspora practices, and on the art of the Francophone world that encompasses areas of Africa, the Caribbean, and other regions across the world”
  - ▶ Departmental colleagues encouraged to identify and pursue funding opportunities that might benefit the unit in areas beyond France; reviewers note that the ‘France Gift’ does not appear to prevent obtaining funding in other research and teaching areas
  - ▶ Explore making budgetary information available for next external review of the department



- ▶ Leadership encouraged to create a university committee to assess the role of and opportunities related to the University of Toronto Art Museum
- ▶ Institutional and divisional leadership encouraged to consider a review of the University of Toronto Art Museum and its relationships with the Department of Art History, as well as other cognate units and offerings; in the meantime, consider smaller steps to encourage greater collaboration between the museum and department
- ▶ “In order to lift morale and retain its excellent staff”, departmental and divisional leadership are encouraged to evaluate staff job descriptions and salary brackets, and consider updates as appropriate
- ▶ Staff workload would benefit from the addition of a general office assistant position
- ▶ Some lecture halls would benefit from larger screens to effectively teach visual material to the significant number of students that the undergraduate program attracts
- ▶ Department and division are urged to prioritize maintaining the current Art History Library location when addressing any issues arising from structural capacity limits
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ The discipline of art history is noted as uniquely positioned to help University leadership advance its vision; Deans are urged to continue to support the unit’s related initiatives such as travelling seminars, study abroad opportunities, undergraduate internships and courses taught by local curators and/or in local museums; some of these initiatives might benefit from central assistance in establishing formal MOUs
  - ▶ “Department and Deans might work together to comprehensively and systematically...track relevant data, including time to degree, attrition, external awards for graduate students and faculty, job placement, alumni, course enrollments, majors and minors, faculty advising, field distribution”, particularly for the PhD program; reviewers note that this is standard practice in North American programs and could aid with student and faculty recruitment, and fundraising
  - ▶ Undergraduate and graduate curriculum committees should advise relevant Chairs at all three campuses “regarding arriving at a judicious balance between undergraduate and graduate courses, geographic and methodological breadth, and premodern and modern offerings”
  - ▶ UTSG Department might benefit from a retreat; agenda items could include developing a mission statement, and identifying unique strengths and opportunities
  - ▶ Tri-campus graduate program would also benefit from a retreat; agenda items might include developing a mission statement; identifying strengths and opportunities; new directions in the discipline; discussions of “how to achieve equity and excellence”; development of an MoA that “forms an agreement of shared intellectual and organizational frameworks”
  - ▶ Departmental EDI committee should be reinstated or maintained, with membership drawn from faculty and students, and ensuring that service burdens do not fall primarily on BIPOC community members

- ▶ Reviewers strongly assert that the Dean's office must play a much more active role in facilitating progress in the unit; many structural challenges faced by the graduate program require intervention and resolution at the decanal level; where applicable, ensure consultation and coordination between the Deans of FAS, UTM and UTSC
- ▶ "We recommend that the Department should be reviewed again in 5 years, with more time, a more carefully defined charge and mandate, and ideally including the three campuses and museum."
- ▶ Consider potential opportunities to better align review practices for the Department and cognate units across the three campuses going forward



## 2 Administrative Response & Implementation Plan

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

March 5, 2025

Professor Nick Rule  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
University of Toronto

### **RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Art History**

Dear Professor Rule,

I write in response to your letter of December 19, 2024 regarding the February 28-29, 2024, UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Art History and requesting our Administrative Responses. The programs reviewed were: Art History, HBA (Specialist, Major, Minor) Art History: MA, PhD.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers: Professor Tim Barringer, Yale University, Iftikhar Dadi, Cornell University, and Professor Christine Mehring, University of Chicago for their very comprehensive review of the Department of Art History. We would also like to thank the chairs, 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 August 27, 2024, after which the chairs shared it widely with faculty, staff, and students in the Department of Art History. We are extremely pleased with the reviewers' positive assessment of the overall strength of the Department of Art History and its outstanding, productive faculty. The review report noted the undergraduate program is "thriving" and is distinguished amongst its peers through its "unique combination of quantity and quality." They noted that the graduate program is "notable for attracting high quality students whose innovative work is widely admired." The review report also raised several issues and challenges and identified areas for enhancement, including providing pathways for diversifying the discipline in the undergraduate program, noting that departmental faculty expertise remains heavily weighted towards Western art, and highlighting significant departmental climate concerns.

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 chairs and with the Associate-Dean, Unit-Level Reviews, and senior leadership within my office. The Implementation Plan provided identifies timeframes of immediate- (six months), medium- (one to two years), and

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Sidney Smith Hall, 100 St. George Street, Suite 2005, Toronto, ON M5S 3G3 Canada

Tel: +1 416-978-3383 • Fax: +1 416-978-3887 • [officeofthedean@artsci.utoronto.ca](mailto:officeofthedean@artsci.utoronto.ca) • [www.artsci.utoronto.ca](http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca)

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 Department of Art History will take place no later than the **2031-32** review cycle. My office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with chairs and through the unit'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 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 Art History and its undergraduate and graduate programs.

Sincerely,



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

cc.

Joseph Clarke, Chair, Department of Art History, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Kajri Jain, TriCampus Graduate Chair, Department of Art History, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Caitlin Burton, Senior Manager, Curriculum, 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

- 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 were “puzzled by the apparent absence of substantive discussions about the curriculum, both in the UTSG Undergraduate Program and in the Graduate Program”. They recommended developing mechanisms such as departmental committees to engage in more fulsome curriculum discussions and planning.	1.	“We are puzzled by the apparent absence of substantive discussions about the curriculum, both in the UTSG Undergraduate Program and in the Graduate Program. There is a need for department committees to explore this, both at the undergraduate and the graduate levels. The undergraduate curriculum committee should be chaired by the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and the graduate curriculum committee needs to be constituted under the tri-Campus Graduate Chair, with membership of faculty from all three campuses. These committees would provide guidance to faculty to ensure that every term offers a balanced set of course offerings at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. These committees can advise Chairs of all three campuses regarding arriving at a judicious balance between undergraduate and graduate courses, geographic and methodological breadth, and premodern and modern offerings.”	<p><b>Undergraduate:</b> The UTSG undergraduate program committee (see <a href="https://arthistory.utoronto.ca/about-us/department-art-history-st-george/departamental-committees">https://arthistory.utoronto.ca/about-us/department-art-history-st-george/departamental-committees</a>) meets regularly to discuss curricular issues. In 2019, UTSG held a retreat which included a comprehensive discussion of undergraduate curriculum (Self-Study, p. 72). Since then, our ongoing discussion of curriculum has yielded several updates, including adding new faculty lines (pp. 125–26) and renumbering an undergraduate course on Black art to remove barriers for Black students (pp. 40–41). The committee is currently exploring issues around the methods course and capstone offerings (see responses #3–6).</p> <p><b>Graduate:</b> The substantive discussions recommended by the reviewers cannot be left to a committee in the first instance but require broad consultation with the department to develop a curriculum that</p>	Immediate term: The Dean's office is pleased to offer funding (up to \$5000 every 3 years) to support the unit's plans for faculty retreats.

			<p>fulfils our mission statement. However, that statement has yet to be formulated (see 22, 32, and 42 below). To agree on a shared vision, we first need to create a climate for conversation (see 33 below). We therefore propose the following steps.</p> <p>A. (short-term): Full-day faculty workshop addressing interpersonal and/or intercampus issues, to enable constructive conversation towards a shared mission statement and program objectives.</p> <p>B. (medium-term): 1–2-day faculty retreat, with graduate student representation, to finalize a mission statement and program objectives and discuss the graduate curriculum in that light. We will pay particular attention to recommendations 2, 8, 9, 10, 31, and 42, as well as 18-20 (these pertain to hiring, which are budgetary unit matters, but also need to consider graduate needs and priorities). This will also provide an opportunity to rethink aspects of the program in response to the new FAS budget model.</p> <p>Faculty have requested that any workshops and retreats be held on or near campus and during working hours. The graduate department will require additional funds to implement these recommendations; there is no scope for this within the graduate budget.</p>	
	2.	“Formation of Curriculum Committees for the Undergraduate Program and for the Graduate Program; the graduate version	<b>Undergraduate:</b> See #1.	See above, #1.

		could be folded into the graduate affairs committee concerned with funding allocations noted below.”	<b>Graduate:</b> Currently, graduate curriculum matters are overseen by a graduate committee that also handles admissions. Whether a separate Graduate Curriculum Committee is needed, and its remit vis-à-vis student funding, particularly in light of the new FAS budget model, will be discussed at the faculty curriculum retreat outlined in 1B above.	
The reviewers suggested several enhancements to the undergraduate programs, including assessing program requirements and enhancing student advising to better position learners for graduate studies or museum careers; and examining experiential learning offerings to ensure that they are varied and of high-quality.	3.	“Create a methods course required for specialists.”	<p>Short term (1–2 years): We are currently piloting a new undergraduate methods course. An experimental version is being taught in Winter 2025 as a Special Topics course to explore student needs and interests. If it is successful, we will add it to the curriculum formally in the next two years.</p> <p>Medium term (3–4 years): We will consult with the UTSG Undergraduate Committee and UTSG faculty about making this course a requirement for specialists or relating it to capstones (see #4).</p>	Immediate-medium term: The ASDO supports the unit’s plans for a new undergraduate methods course, and should it become a requirement for the specialist program, can support this major modification to program requirements.
	4.	“Develop more coherent and more clearly articulated forms of capstones.”	<p>While we currently offer multiple capstones courses/experiences, including internships, independent study courses, and Summer Abroad courses, we agree these could be better articulated.</p> <p>Short term (1–2 years): We will formulate program language to be approved through governance identifying current offerings as capstone experiences. Our working model for revising program language is that used by</p>	Immediate-long term: The ASDO is available to support the unit as it clarifies program offerings.

			<p>UCLA, which similarly offers multiple types of capstone experience.</p> <p>Medium term (3–4 years): We will consult with students and faculty to assess whether a BA thesis option should be added to department capstone offerings. If our consultations indicate interest in a BA thesis option, we will implement this option, with a coherent relationship to the methods course (see #3).</p>	
	5.	<p>“To position the specialist students to pursue graduate studies and/or museum careers in the most competitive ways, there should indeed be a required methods course, more coherent and more clearly articulated forms of capstones, and more faculty advising—matching the high bar set by the required 2.0 credits of language study”</p>	<p>See #3 and #4.</p> <p>We currently have a robust ecology of student advising that combines many types of undergraduate student advising as found in our publicly-funded peer institutions. These include college advisors, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and peer mentoring through our undergraduate student association.</p> <p>Short term (1–2 years): The DUS and Undergraduate Committee will explore avenues for faculty advising that enhance student experience.</p> <p>Medium term (3–4 years): To the extent possible within workload policy, we will implement strategies for enhancing faculty advising of specialist students, perhaps through the methods and capstone courses.</p>	<p>Immediate term: The ASDO supports the unit’s plans to strengthen internal advising of its students.</p>
	6.	<p>“Assess substance and relationships of internship and other experiential learning courses.”</p>	<p>Medium term (3–4 years): The FAS Office of Experiential Learning and Outreach Support (ELOS) has agreed to help us develop a system for evaluating students’ internships and related experiential learning experiences.</p>	<p>Immediate-long term: The ASDO’s ELOS office is already working with the unit on strengthening experiential learning opportunities.</p>



			With the help of these data, the DUS, the Undergraduate Committee, and other relevant faculty members will annually assess internships and experiential learning offerings and outcomes across the curriculum.	
	7.	“Explore creating graduate student or teaching faculty positions to support [undergraduate program recommendations] above.”	<p>Shortly after the external review site visit, the Department hired a new teaching stream faculty member who is responsible for coordinating our undergraduate internship program and other experiential learning offerings.</p> <p>Medium term (3–4 years): We expect to propose two new faculty positions within this timeframe, building on our complement planning strategy (see #18). As part of the consultation process, we will explore whether teaching stream positions could be useful to support the recommendations raised here.</p>	<p>Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased to note that the unit has already implemented this recommendation.</p> <p>Long term: Regarding future hires, the unit may submit a proposal to the Faculty Appointments Committee. All requests for new positions across the Faculty are submitted to the Faculty Appointments Committee (FAC), which includes representation across its sectors (Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences) and from the Colleges. 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 than available positions.</p> <p>Medium-long term: Longer-term complement planning is included as part of the A&amp;S Unit-Level planning (ULP) exercise. Following a UTQAP review, each unit is asked to create a 5-year plan that includes goals for research, curriculum, faculty support, administrative staff support, and complement planning. As part of this process, the unit will be asked to outline their complement needs over the next five years. This plan, which will be commissioned in fall 2025 and is expected to</p>

				<p>be completed in winter 2026, will be reviewed by the Dean and Vice-Deans in line with the A&amp;S ULP process. The ULP will inform the unit's requests to the FAC.</p> <p>The Unit-Level Academic Planning process will include faculty complement planning as a key feature and will facilitate clear articulation of the Department's complement plan over the five years of the plan.</p>
<p>The reviewers observed that PhD course requirements appear much lower than at peer US institutions, and that MA students might benefit from additional methods offerings; they recommended assessing requirements in both programs, and pursuing adjustments as appropriate. They also recommended exploring the development of an MA offering that could position students more advantageously for potential doctoral studies.</p>	8.	<p>"At present there is only a 4-seminar requirement for the PhD students (of which 2 can be from outside the Department), partly because the typical time to degree is 5 to 6 years. This course requirement is much lower than at peer institutions in the United States, and we wonder if this might be reconsidered."</p>	<p>Unlike peer institutions in the US, our current PhD admission requirements stipulate that incoming students already hold an MA, so the assumption is that they have already taken some graduate seminars. Nonetheless, we will revisit the 4-seminar requirement at the curriculum retreat in the light of our mission statement and program objectives (see #1B).</p>	<p>Immediate term: The ASDO supports the unit's plan to consider this recommendation.</p>
	9.	<p>"At present, a methods course is not mandatory for the MA degree, and we recommend that this be reconsidered."</p>	<p>We will discuss this at the curriculum retreat in the light of our mission statement and program objectives (see #1B).</p>	<p>Immediate term: The ASDO supports the unit's plan to consider this recommendation.</p>
	10.	<p>"At present there is no option for a track that incorporates an MA thesis. An option (such as an Honors MA) might be introduced that includes a thesis written over the summer and that would position these students more advantageously should they seek to continue on for a PhD."</p>	<p>This has been discussed many times over the years to no avail, but we will reconsider this at the curriculum retreat in the light of our mission statement, program objectives, and new FAS budget model (see #1B).</p>	<p>Immediate term: The ASDO supports the unit's plan to consider this recommendation.</p>
<p>The reviewers made several recommendations related to strengthening resources for and encouraging community-building among the Department's graduate student population.</p>	11.	<p>"A graduate affairs committee with appropriate representatives—meaning a range of subfields, methods, and campus homes—should deliberate and recommend decisions about individual graduate student funding."</p>	<p>The composition of the current Graduate Committee is already designed to reflect the range outlined by the reviewers. It has not been responsible for individual graduate student funding, which has so far been effectively, efficiently, and equitably allocated by the Graduate Chair in collaboration with the Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Assistant with the</p>	<p>Immediate term: The ASDO supports the unit's plan to consider the merits of this recommendation.</p>

			speed required to make competitive admissions offers. At present we see no reason to change this practice, but can reconsider along with the discussion of other graduate committees (see #2).	
	12.	“The graduate student association helps organize events on campus relating to research and professional development. We believe that with greater support the group could become more active. For example, the graduate student association might elect a committee to hold a speaker series of their own, and for which funding could be made available by all three departments/campuses. This series can be among the ensemble of talks and lectures offered by the Department and can be listed and advertised together. Graduate students, along with a faculty mentor, might also take the lead in organizing an EDI lecture series.”	The Art History graduate student association (GUSTa) is now closely involved in research and professional development activities funded by the FAS Milestones and Pathways program through regular consultations with the Graduate Office. The tricampus EDI committee, in consultation with GUSTa, is currently exploring possibilities for an EDI speaker series, including format and funding.	Immediate term: The ASDO supports the unit’s plan to carefully consider this recommendation.
	13.	“There is also a “Works-in-Progress” seminar where faculty and graduate students come together to discuss their research across subfield specializations,” which is helpful in building a cohort among the graduate students and intellectual exchange among the faculty. We urge the Department graduate faculty to participate and continue to build on this format.”	The Works in Progress seminar is currently inadequately attended by faculty, despite repeated encouragement. Some faculty have expressed that better refreshments would help increase attendance. However, this would require additional funds that the graduate department does not have.	Immediate term: Under the new budget model (NBM), Unit budgets will be determined primarily by their activity - the net revenue from their graduate enrolments, undergraduate teaching activity, and research overhead revenues. Unit budgets will be stable in transition – they will receive the same budget they would have received under the old methodology (and this will persist), so that their budgets will change under the NBM incrementally. Going forward, Units will have both the changes in revenues and responsibility for changes in costs. They will have greater budgetary clarity and agency as they will be well informed and able to pursue their own academic priorities and goals, such as funding better refreshments for seminar series.

	14.	“Review PhD offer letter to include funding details and specific TA assignments and responsibilities.”	The PhD offer letter already contains funding details. Starting with the current cohort, we have also introduced a comprehensive funding session in the PhD orientation program. Unlike in many US schools, specific TA assignments cannot be provided in the offer letter due to the complexities of tricampus scheduling and union stipulations.	Immediate term: The ASDO supports the unit’s response to this recommendation.
	15.	“The University administration should review PhD packages keeping in mind that an art history PhD in North America may require 6 years of guaranteed funding (a mixture of fellowships and TAs), and that University of Toronto funding needs to be at a level that is adequate given the cost of living in contemporary Toronto.”	The University is keenly aware of this issue. From this year, the base level of PhD funding has been raised to keep pace with rising costs of living in Toronto. The university and its departments are currently addressing the challenge of meeting this commitment for 5 years of guaranteed funding. At present, therefore, while we appreciate that our time to completion often exceeds that period, there is no plan to extend it to 6 years. However, we are doing our best to direct our limited resources towards supporting students in their 6 <sup>th</sup> year.	Medium-long term: Starting in 2025-26, incoming PhD students across A&S, and the University, will now receive a guaranteed funding package of \$40,000, a substantive increase over the current guarantee of \$28,000.
The reviewers noted opportunities to increase supports for faculty, particularly more junior members of the Department. They recommended strengthening faculty mentorship; enhancing clarity, communications, and coordination related to promotion and tenure processes; and bolstering resources to support faculty research and publication.	16.	“The faculty is generally of very high caliber, however many otherwise mid-career and senior faculty members are still at the “associate professor” level. Unlike most Tier-1 institutions in the US, the University of Toronto evidently provides no incentive (such as a meaningful salary increase) for attaining the level of ‘full professor.’ We recommend that such a reward be put in place, ideally a meaningful salary increase, or if that is not possible, a substantial one-time bonus.”	We acknowledge this concern. In accordance with University policy, we use the annual PTR process to recognize scholarly achievement. We encourage faculty to apply for promotion to professor at the appropriate time in their careers.	<p>Immediate-long term: The ASDO can support faculty development through the office of the Vice-Dean Faculty &amp; Academic Life, which offers mentorship and other supports to faculty.</p> <p>The Faculty of Arts &amp; Science is governed by University-wide policies regarding compensation as determined by the Provost and subject to negotiation with the Faculty Association. As per University policies, annual salary increases are determined by the PTR process which recognizes scholarly achievement in the year, but which does not recognize promotion as such as an element in</p>

				the assessment. One-time-bonuses for promotion are also not contemplated in the University's compensation system as the underlying academic achievements have already received recognition through the annual PTR process.
	17.	“We strongly recommend a mentorship program for all junior faculty, provision of funds towards a book manuscript workshop, availability of subvention funds towards the production of their first monograph, and clear guidelines towards tenure.”	<p>While each of our four hires since our last UTQAP review has received tens of thousands of dollars in startup funds and each has been assigned a faculty mentor, we welcome the reviewers’ suggestion that this mentorship can be enhanced.</p> <p>Short term (1–2 years): We will develop a unit-level mentorship plan aligned with the new Faculty of Arts &amp; Science Mentorship Guidelines. We will make sure junior faculty are aware that startup funds may be used for book workshops and subventions.</p>	<p>Immediate-long term: The ASDO will be pleased to support the unit in mentorship, in alignment with the FAS Mentorship guidelines, and can offer support through the office of the Vice-Dean Faculty &amp; Academic Life.</p> <p>The new Faculty of Arts &amp; Science mentorship initiatives support the flourishing of faculty in their early academic careers, encourage faculty to develop personally meaningful mentorship networks, enhance new colleagues’ understanding of institutional policies, procedures, and unit-level practices, promote engagement, and foster a sense of community and belonging. It responds to the needs of a diverse faculty complement and provides four evidence-based recommendations that reflect the current academic landscape and feedback from the A&amp;S community.</p>
The reviewers observed that, despite strong recent hires in Islamic art, Indigenous art, and Black Diaspora art, departmental faculty expertise remains heavily weighted towards Western art. They urged the unit to engage in strategic complement planning and, when hiring opportunities permit, to consider	18.	“Peer institutions such as the Ivy+ schools in the US have made significant moves to embrace the opportunities and challenges of a global art history, and we urge the Department to strongly prioritize moving in that direction. There are plans in the near future to hire in one Western and one non-western area. However, rather than thinking piecemeal about immediate needs, a strategic 5- to 10-year plan for broadening faculty expertise needs to be developed. This should include broadening the geographic and cultural expertise represented	In Winter 2025, the UTSG budgetary unit initiated a complement planning process, holding an open forum for faculty to propose strategic factors that should inform hiring over the next 5–10 years. Suggested factors include diversity in intellectual perspectives, academic training, and racial background; student interests and enrolment patterns; which subfields currently have a critical mass	It is good practice for the four chairs to discuss complement planning. Following consultation, the budgetary chair can submit requests for new complement to the Faculty Appointments Committee, which receives many more requests than positions. See above, # 7.

<p>developing strengths in areas such as Southeast Asian, South Asian, Japanese, African, and Latin American art; as well as new media, ecology, disability studies, decoloniality, materiality, and queer and feminist approaches. The reviewers also noted opportunities to strengthen strategic consultation among cognate tri-campus units related to faculty complement planning, and promotion and tenure processes.</p>		<p>in the Department (for example, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Japan, Africa, precontact and post-contact Latin America) as well as newer aspects of the discipline (for example, new media, ecology, disability studies, decoloniality, materiality, queer and feminist approaches).”</p>	<p>of top-tier scholars; alignment with international partnerships and initiatives; and academic strengths and priorities of the Department, the Faculty of Arts &amp; Science, and the University of Toronto.</p> <p>Medium term (3–4 years): If budgetary conditions permit, we will request 2 new faculty positions informed by the factors we have identified. We will also explore how status-only and adjunct faculty may be deployed strategically to complement the expertise of budgetary faculty lines.</p> <p>Strategic consultation related to faculty complement planning and promotion processes among cognate tri-campus units will be carried out at biannual meetings between the graduate chair and the tricampus budgetary chairs, as proposed in the draft Tricampus Memorandum of Agreement.</p>	
	19.	<p>“Develop a strategic plan to broaden future faculty hiring in relation to geographic and cultural breadth and innovative art-historical methods; include consideration of teaching stream hiring and provide reasons for making such a future hire.”</p>	<p>See #18. We will consider the hiring of teaching stream faculty as part of this plan.</p>	<p>See above, # 7.</p>
	20.	<p>“...we also note the need for the Department to provide teaching and research leadership in settler-colonial Canadian art in addition to the important offerings in Indigenous Art.”</p>	<p>We currently have one tenure stream faculty member who works on Indigenous art and two tenure stream faculty members who work on (settler) Canadian art. Shortly after the external review site visit, the Department hired a new teaching stream colleague in the latter area as well. As part of our complement planning process (see #18), we will consider whether additional positions are needed.</p>	<p>See above, # 7.</p>

	21.	“As a matter of professional inclusion, we urge the St. George campus to include a faculty member from the other campuses in the search committees and urge the other campuses to reciprocate accordingly when hiring in art history. This is because tenure stream faculty members in each campus also serve as faculty members in the Tri-Campus Graduate Program.”	When conducting tenure stream searches, we will invite input from all graduate Art History faculty. The committee composition will depend on the nature and circumstances of each search and may draw on faculty expertise across the three campuses. As a matter of university policy, the tri-campus graduate program is formally represented on tenure stream Art History searches across all three campuses by the graduate chair.	Immediate term: The Dean’s office supports the unit’s response to this recommendation.
The reviewers made several recommendations related to enhancing the Department’s profile and visibility, particularly by strengthening its online presence.	22.	“The Department website needs substantial work. It should be a central means to attract even better graduate students, allow undergraduate students to identify and connect effectively with faculty in their areas of interest, and appeal to potential funders and collaborators. The limitations of the University’s template notwithstanding, the website could offer more information about the Department. Specifically, the overall goals, objectives, mission, and scope of the Department’s undergraduate and Graduate Programs is totally absent.”	Undergraduate: We have begun to streamline our website’s navigational structure and to remove outdated materials, to make this information <a href="https://arthistory.utoronto.ca/undergraduate/about-undergraduate-studies">https://arthistory.utoronto.ca/undergraduate/about-undergraduate-studies</a> easier to find.  Graduate: The “overall goals, objectives, mission, and scope” of the graduate programs are absent from the website because these have yet to be agreed upon. Short- and medium-term plans to accomplish this are outlined in #1.	Immediate term: The Dean’s office notes that the unit has begun responding to this recommendation.
	23.	“Faculty profiles should be updated every year to represent current research interests and ongoing projects in addition to recent publications.”	We will invite faculty annually to submit updates to their online profiles. This has been the department’s longstanding practice, but it lapsed for several years due to staff leaves of absence.	Immediate term: The Dean’s office supports the unit’s response to this recommendation and notes that the Discover Research website is another valuable forum for faculty research profiles. The Research Services Office within the Dean’s Office will connect with the Unit to ensure widespread awareness and support robust adoption of this resource.
	24.	“Separate News from Events on website and update both at least each semester.”	When the reviewers visited, some updates to the website were deferred. Since then, we have brought the site up to date.	Immediate term: The Dean’s office supports the unit’s response to this recommendation.

			Short term (1–2 years): We will further streamline our online news and events listings and ensure they are updated regularly.	
	25.	“Consolidate all lectures in a single list for publicity purposes; events should be downloadable on calendars.”	Short term (1–2 years): We will create a single online list of major lectures each semester and implement a registration system to help us obtain a more accurate headcount for each event. Events are already downloadable on calendars.	Immediate term: The Dean’s office supports the unit’s response to this recommendation.
	26.	“Change description of Instagram page so that it can be found easily in a search.”	We have updated the Instagram description as recommended.	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased to note that the unit has already responded to this recommendation.
	27.	“The Department and Deans might work together to comprehensively and systematically, rather than merely anecdotally or selectively, track relevant data, including time to degree, attrition, external awards for graduate students and faculty, job placement, alumni, course enrollments, majors and minors, faculty advising, field distribution. This should especially be possible for the doctoral program. Posting certain data and measures of success—especially time to degree, outside fellowships won, and job placement for PhD students—has become standard practice in North American programs and will help with student and faculty recruitment as well as fundraising.”	We agree that this is a valuable recommendation. The graduate department is participating in SGS and FAS initiatives to track alumni as well as maintaining its own informal database to track graduates of the doctoral program. However, we would welcome decanal support to make this more systematic. We would also appreciate help with navigating privacy issues around posting data as well as sorting out staff roles and responsibilities for this task (see #40).	Immediate term: The Dean’s office supports the unit’s response to this recommendation. The Director of Administrative Human Resources is available to the unit to discuss the HR components of workflow and responsibilities for staff roles.  The unit has access to information on their external awards, course enrolments, majors and minors, faculty advising and field distribution. The Dean's Office is working on developing a more systematic and consistent set of data around the time to degree that can be used by the unit's graduate program leadership; the office of the Vice-Dean, Graduate Education would be very pleased to work with them to think through how best to enhance the program's online presence and use of these data.



	28.	“Regular communication with alumni could help with experiential learning opportunities and fundraising.”	Short term (1–2 years): This year, we have begun regular communications with alumni, inviting their attendance at art history lectures. We will continue working with FAS to determine the most effective means of regular communication with alumni.	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased to note that the unit has already responded to this recommendation. See also above, #27.
The reviewers highlighted opportunities to strategically strengthen connections and collaborations with the University of Toronto Art Museum, observing that university art museums play a critical role in supporting the teaching of art history and providing experiential learning opportunities at many North American peer institutions. They also noted opportunities to strengthen ties with the Master of Visual Studies in Curatorial Studies, offered by the Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design.	29.	“Create a university committee to assess the role and opportunities of the University Museum.”	This recommendation exceeds the scope of the review. The Art Museum is part of University College and has no administrative relationship with the Department of Art History.	The ASDO agrees that this reviewer recommendation is beyond the scope of the UTQAP cyclical review and a divisional response.
	30.	“Good first decanal steps might be an external review of the museum by a committee of university museum professionals and art history faculty engaged in curatorial teaching and research (common practice at leading university museums), and/or an internal university committee assessing existing relationships (between the museum, the curatorial studies program, and the Department of Art History) and possible new opportunities.”	See #29.  While the Art Museum is outside the scope of this review, the graduate programs would benefit from a holistic, university-level review of relationships between Art History, the Daniels Faculty, and the Art Museum.	Medium term: The ASDO will consider the merits of this type of review, which is beyond the parameters of the UTQAP cyclical review. Such a review would require the cooperation of another divisional Dean’s office and the office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs.
	31.	“...consider the museum’s relationship to the undergraduate and graduate programs in art history. This might include assessing the, to us, strangely absent relationship between the Department of Art History and the ‘Master in Visual Studies in Curatorial Studies,’ since curators are typically trained as art historians. Substantial university resources spent on a university art museum—whether budget lines, art acquisitions, exhibitions, or staff—should benefit the university’s art history department, not least one of UTSG’s overall caliber and excellent emphasis on experiential learning. Aligning the museum with the academic and pedagogical mission of the Department of Art History, not at the expense of but in addition to the curatorial studies program, is critical and ‘low hanging fruit.’”	Undergraduate: The Department of Art History would welcome more opportunities to utilize the University of Toronto’s notable art collection in undergraduate teaching. The current orientation of the Art Museum, which does not prioritize the exhibition of historical art, makes it difficult to realize the possibilities of collaboration fully. We would be happy to recommend ways to align the museum with the Department’s mission if requested.	Immediate-medium term: The ASDO supports the unit’s discussions regarding a potential graduate Collaborative Specialization and the Vice-Dean Graduate Education is available for consultation on this. All new program proposals are required to be submitted to the Dean’s Action Committee on Academic Change, comprised of members across A&S sectors, to discuss the merits of new programmatic initiatives. We encourage the unit to submit a proposal to DACAC at an early stage, after consultation with the VDGE on this initiative.

			<p>Graduate: We agree that it is critical for our graduate programs to have close links to the Daniels Faculty's curatorial and studio art programs and to the University's Art Museum, although we would submit that these links are not entirely absent. Currently, one of our graduate faculty members has a joint appointment with the Art Museum; a faculty representative from Art History and a graduate student from the department serve on its Advisory Board; the Director of the Art Museum serves on graduate student committees; and visits to the museum are routinely integrated into graduate seminars. Graduate students from the Daniels Faculty (including the MVS program) attend our graduate seminars and vice-versa, with some entering our PhD program; faculty members reciprocally serve on committees across our programs.</p> <p>We are presently in discussion with the Director of the PhD program in Architecture, Landscape, and Design to initiate a collaborative specialization in "History of Architecture and Constructed Environments." Further, in response to this recommendation, in the short term, the Graduate Chair has initiated a conversation with the Director of the Art Museum to explore forging closer links. In the medium term, we will explore further initiatives that align with our academic and pedagogical mission at the curriculum retreat (see #1) once these have been outlined.</p>	<p>The Dean's Office noted the reviewers' broader recommendation about the benefits of a closer relationship between the Department and the Art Museum; we urge the Department to consider how this might strengthen both teaching and research in the Department and would be pleased to be a support as the Department builds those connections.</p>
The reviewers repeatedly highlighted very significant faculty	32.	"The mission of the graduate 'program' or 'department; must be identified and agreed upon, and we urge the Dean's office	We wholeheartedly agree with the reviewers that we need to develop a mission and	Immediate term: See above, #1. The ASDO can offer guidance from Academic Human

<p>climate concerns, particularly in relation to the tri-campus graduate program. They emphasized that tensions between Department members were “apparent in every area: structural, budgetary, intellectual and interpersonal,” and considerably impede the department from achieving its full potential. They strongly asserted that the Dean’s office must play a much more active role in addressing challenges and facilitating progress in the unit. They also stressed the importance of resolving issues and increasing clarity regarding the structure and resources of the tri-campus graduate program, and of ensuring consultation and coordination between the Deans of FAS, UTM and UTSC where appropriate (in developing your response, you are encouraged to work with the Office of the Vice-Provost, Faculty and Academic Life).</p>		<p>to play a proactive role in this process, by holding retreats and workshops facilitated by mediators in order for the faculty of all three campuses to be fully and clearly invested in supporting graduate study within a shared intellectual and organizational framework.”</p>	<p>priorities for the graduate programs that fully and equitably encompass faculty from all three campuses. We also agree that due to issues of climate (see 33 below) this will require mediation and decanal support for retreats and workshops as outlined in 1 above.</p>	<p>Resources and the Vice-Dean Faculty &amp; Academic Life, to coordinate mediation on internal matters.</p>
	33.	<p>“Climate is an issue, both in UTSG and Graduate Faculty meetings. The latter, some faculty reported, were rare, inhospitable, and not well attended. Some faculty reported a lack of decorum and a breakdown of trust evident at times in both UTSG and Graduate Faculty meetings. We urge mutual respect among all faculty, and the need to recognize that art history as a discipline is not static but continues to evolve in terms of its methodology and its subject matter. We also urge the Department to adopt a voting process in faculty meetings that is confidential, in order to protect dissenting votes, especially of the junior faculty.</p>	<p>Undergraduate: We will ensure that when the chair puts a question to a vote in a faculty meeting, it may be taken confidentially upon request. We will also ensure faculty are aware of university policies on academic freedom, which cover participation in faculty meetings and other types of academic service.</p> <p>Graduate: We thank the reviewers for identifying this longstanding issue, as a first step towards addressing it. The next step, a mediated retreat for the graduate faculty, is necessary in the short term, with decanal support as outlined in #1. We are hopeful that this will result in a recognition of shared values and priorities as well as strategies to manage differences. Meanwhile, we are committed to adopting a confidential voting process in graduate faculty meetings.</p>	<p>See above, #32.</p>
	34.	<p>“Deans should work with faculty to resolve the question of nomenclature for “Graduate Chair” and the name and status of the Graduate Program/department.”</p>	<p>We are grateful to the reviewers for highlighting the need for decanal resolution of these issues, which go beyond nomenclature.</p>	<p>Immediate term: The Vice-Dean Graduate is currently working with the Dean of Graduate Studies on clearer definition and articulation of Graduate Chair role and responsibilities and will, in turn, work with the unit to facilitate clearer communications and alignment with tri-campus graduate chair structure.</p>

	35.	“Deans need to be aware of concerns about climate in the Department, notably over questions of diversity and inclusion, and to offer advice on best practices.”	<p>On the advice of the Dean’s office, the UTSG chair has notified all tricampus faculty about university policies, guidelines, and processes relevant to these issues, including the Policy with Respect to Workplace Harassment, the Human Resources Guideline on Workplace Harassment and Civil Conduct (“Civility Guideline”), and the University of Toronto Guideline for Employees on Concerns and Complaints Regarding Prohibited Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment. Faculty have also been advised that the Faculty of Arts &amp; Science Office of Equity, Diversity &amp; Inclusion provides support to community members in respect of these matters.</p> <p>The Graduate Chair has reinstated the EDI committee (see #36 below). The chair and the graduate chair jointly held a meeting with graduate students to hear their concerns on this front and others. The Graduate Chair will also ensure that EDI concerns are addressed in the action points on climate and curriculum outlined in #1 above.</p>	Immediate term: The Dean’s office is pleased to note that the unit has already begun to address the recommendation. The ASDO notes that the A&S Director, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion is available to assist the unit, as well as Academic and Administrative HR. The Vice-Dean Faculty & Academic Life can offer guidance in these areas. Such guidance includes assistance in designing and implementing restorative measures to repair a divided community.
	36.	“The EDI committee should be reinstated or maintained (not all faculty members were clear as to whether or not this committee had met), with membership drawn from faculty and students across the Department; this should not be populated primarily by BIPOC faculty and students.”	The EDI committee has been reinstated as of last year, with reporting of its activities at graduate faculty meetings. The composition of this year’s committee conforms to the reviewers’ recommendations.	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased to note that the unit has already acted upon this recommendation.
	37.	“Begin to or continue to delegate authority over all dedicated graduate funds to the faculty member overseeing the Graduate Program (not all faculty members were clear if this was currently the case).”	The chair is accountable to FAS for the entire department budget. The chair currently delegates signing authority over graduate funds to the graduate chair.	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased to note that this recommendation has been resolved.

	38.	“Establish a budget for events including all related endowments for named lectures.”	Departmental lectures are supported by a variety of funding sources, including restricted accounts whose usage is conditioned by donor agreements. For each endowed lecture, a budget is established to ensure that expenses for speaker travel, accommodations, hospitality, and honorarium remain within the scope of expendable funds.	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased to note that this recommendation has been resolved.
	39.	“Create events committee to make decisions how to spend funding allocated for these purposes.”	For endowed lectures, each speaker is chosen by a committee of expert faculty in the relevant subfield along with student representatives. This selection is made from nominations solicited from all tri-campus faculty and graduate students. Following the external review, we have added undergraduate student representation alongside the existing committee composition of faculty and graduate students.	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased to note that this recommendation has been resolved.
	40.	“Clarify in writing staff roles and reporting in accordance with either the separate chair or integrated chair model.”	Short term (1–2 years): The chair, as the manager of all department staff, will work with FAS Administrative HR to ensure that staff have up-to-date written explanations of their roles and reporting expectations.	Immediate term: The ASDO Director of Administrative HR is available to discuss these issues with the unit when it is ready.
	41.	“A retreat for the UTSG Department; agenda items might include formulating mission statement(s) and identifying the unique strengths and opportunities.”	Medium term (3–4 years): The UTSG unit held a productive retreat in 2019. We will consult with faculty about the need for a follow-up retreat.	See #1, above.
	42.	“A retreat for the Graduate Program; agenda items here too might include formulating mission statement(s), identifying the unique strengths and opportunities, discussion of new directions (plural) in art and architectural history as a discipline, discussion of how to achieve equity and excellence;	Please see responses to 1 and 32 above. We will plan a retreat for the Graduate Programs to address this recommendation in the medium term; however, this must be	Please see #1, and #32, above.

		the retreat has to discuss a skeleton for a MoA that forms an agreement of shared intellectual and organizational frameworks.”	preceded in the short term by a workshop to create the climate for this conversation.	
Finally, the reviewers broadly observed that “the Department’s problems are too complex and deep-seated to be addressed comprehensively on the basis of a two-day campus visit.” They recommended that the Dean’s office consider commissioning the next review of the Department on an accelerated timeline and noted opportunities to work with colleagues across the three campuses to strategically and collaboratively determine the optimal structure of subsequent reviews.	43.	“It needs to be noted above all that our External Review committee’s charge was unclear: our review was of the Department of Art History on the St. George campus only, plus the full Graduate Program faculty, but the Graduate Program draws from three departments and three campuses; a more appropriate review would be of all three together, or the Graduate Program only on its own.”	This recommendation appears to be beyond the scope of our unit.	Immediate term: The ASDO thanks the reviewers for this observation and recommendation. The current configuration of the UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Art History and its undergraduate and graduate programs is consistent with University and provincial protocols for external reviews of programs.  See also above, #34.
	44.	“We recommend that the Department should be reviewed again in 5 years, with more time, a more carefully defined charge and mandate, and ideally including the three campuses and museum.”	We appreciate the suggestion to align reviews of all related budgetary units across the three campuses, but this does not seem feasible. Among other impediments, the UTM and UTSC departments are multidisciplinary (i.e., they send faculty to other graduate units besides Art History). The Art Museum is an entirely separate entity.	Immediate term: The ASDO thanks the reviewers for this observation and recommendation. The current review schedule of the UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Art History and its undergraduate and graduate programs follows provincial guidelines of external review no longer than every 8 years. The ASDO notes, however, that it is the Dean’s prerogative to commission a review at any time within that 8-year period. As well, we note that the schedule for UTQAP cyclical reviews is a divisional matter and that reviews commissioned by other divisions are under the purview of that division’s commissioning officer, usually the Dean.
Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response	45.	“Make budgets available for next external review.”	The Department will follow university policy and applicable best practices around financial transparency and sharing of sensitive or confidential information.	Immediate term: We thank the reviewers for this recommendation and note that review of and recommendations for divisional and unit budgets is outside the scope of UTQAP cyclical review, which is primarily a review of programs.

	46.	“We urge the Department and Deans to work with the donor to try to conceive of [the France gift] more broadly, including working on collections of art in France that may be from Africa, Polynesia, Southeast Asia, and North Africa, diaspora practices, and on the art of the Francophone world that encompasses areas of Africa, the Caribbean, and other regions across the world.”	Use of these funds is constrained by a signed gift agreement with the donor, a private foundation whose mission is to support exchange between Canada and France. We welcome future fundraising opportunities that might embrace the wider Francophone world.	Immediate-medium term: The ASDO confirms the terms of the donor agreement and supports the unit in identifying advancement priorities that align with the unit’s academic priorities.
	47.	“We encourage all colleagues to identify and pursue similar funding opportunities that might benefit the Department in other areas; the University of Toronto - France Art History Partnership does not seem to stand in the way of obtaining funding for numerous other research and teaching areas.”	The Department welcomes any fundraising leads colleagues may suggest and will work with Advancement to pursue them.	Immediate term: All advancement priorities must be initiated by the chair of the department and go to the Dean for approval. Once they are approved Advancement will work with the appropriate Faculty member(s) as identified by the Department Chair. The ASDO is pleased to work with the budgetary Chair to explore funding opportunities.
	48.	“Job descriptions—for the financial officer, the graduate assistant, and especially for the Visual Resources Curator—have not been updated in a timely manner and consistent with the jobs being performed and with the relevant skill sets required. In order to lift morale and retain its excellent staff, the Department and university administration should prioritize completing these updates and evaluating salary brackets accordingly.”	We are working with Administrative HR to review and, where applicable, to update current staff job descriptions.	Immediate-medium term: The Director of Administrative HR will work with the unit on reviewing and, where applicable, updating current job descriptions, consistent with existing collective agreements where applicable.
	49.	“Explore adding an office assistant position.”	Given current budgetary constraints, it does not appear feasible to hire additional full-time staff.	See also above, #48.
	50.	“Install larger screens in large classrooms.”	We acknowledge this recommendation and agree that large screens are helpful for art history courses.	Medium-term: We thank the reviewers for this observation and note that current infrastructure needs can be assessed by the relevant University or Divisional team if deemed necessary.

	51.	“The spatial integration of the art library into the Department’s space is special: amidst a very large community with hundreds of students, it provides a study space, sense of belonging, and shared identity centered on research and teaching. For this reason, the problems arising from structural capacity limits should be solved while keeping the current library location.”	We agree that the Art History Library’s spatial integration in the department is vital. Now that the renovation is complete and the library collection has been modestly reduced, the structural issues appear to have been successfully mitigated.	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased to note that this problem appears to have been resolved to the unit’s satisfaction.
	52.	“Renew lapsed lecture series”	Some of our endowments yield only enough funds to hold the lecture every few years, depending on investment performance. We will explore ways to make this legible on our website so the series do not come across as lapsed.	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased to note that the unit has begun to address this recommendation.



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

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*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

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The reviewers found much to admire in the Department's offerings at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, noting that significant moves have been made by the Department to diversify the curriculum. They observed that the undergraduate program is thriving, and is one of the largest of its kind in North America. The graduate program attracts high quality students whose innovative work is well-regarded on campus and beyond. The Department has been successful in preparing students at all levels for the job market with a range of internships and productive collaborations, most notably with the Royal Ontario Museum. The faculty across all three campuses are of stellar quality in terms of research and teaching; and impressive hires have been made in the past 10-15 years, reflecting a timely response to ongoing changes in the field and in humanities more broadly. Department staff are competent, knowledgeable, and professional, and greatly respected and appreciated by faculty and students; and the unit is to be commended for its enterprising spirit and success in obtaining internal and external donations and grants beyond individual research funding. Finally, departmental spaces have been effectively renovated, and the integration of the art library into the unit's space is noted as special, providing a study space, sense of belonging, and shared identity centred on research and teaching within a very large community of students.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: developing mechanisms to engage in more fulsome curriculum discussions and planning at both the undergraduate and graduate levels; assessing undergraduate program requirements and enhancing student advising to better position learners for graduate studies and/or museum careers, and examining experiential learning offerings to ensure that they are varied and of high-quality; assessing MA and PhD course requirements and pursuing adjustments as appropriate; exploring the development of an MA offering that could position students more advantageously for potential doctoral studies; strengthening resources for and encouraging community building among graduate students; increasing supports for faculty, particularly more junior members of the Department; engaging in strategic complement planning, and strengthening strategic consultations among cognate tri-campus units related to faculty hiring, promotion and tenure processes; enhancing the department's profile and visibility; strategically strengthening connections and collaborations with the University of Toronto Art Museum and the DFALD Master of Visual Studies in Curatorial Studies; addressing very significant faculty climate concerns, resolving issues and increasing clarity regarding the structure and resources of the tri-campus graduate program, and ensuring consultation and coordination between the Deans of FAS, UTM and UTSC where appropriate; and commissioning the next review of the Department

on an accelerated timeline, working with colleagues across the three campuses to strategically and collaboratively determine the optimal structure of subsequent reviews.

The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty 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

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The Arts & Science Dean's office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with chairs and directors and through regular governance and curricular oversight.

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than midway between the February 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2031-32 on the status of the implementation plans.

The next review will be commissioned no later than 2031-32.

## 6 Distribution

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On July 15<sup>th</sup> 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

<b>Program(s) Reviewed:</b>	Diaspora & Transnational Studies (HBA): Major, Minor
<b>Unit Reviewed:</b>	Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies
<b>Commissioning Officer:</b>	Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
<b>Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebecca J. Lester, Chair and Professor of Sociocultural Anthropology, Professor of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Department of Anthropology, Washington University, St. Louis</li> <li>• Rachel Salazar Parreñas, Doris Stevens Professor in Women's Studies, Professor of Sociology and Gender and Sexuality Studies, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, Princeton University</li> </ul>
<b>Date of Review Visit:</b>	March 27, 2024
<b>Review Report Received by VPAP:</b>	May 29, 2024
<b>Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:</b>	March 3, 2025
<b>Date Reported to AP&amp;P:</b>	April 10, 2025

## Previous UTQAP Review

Date: March 31, 2015

### Summary of Findings and Recommendations

#### Significant Program Strengths

- Unique, vibrant and important program; only program of its kind within the North American academy
- Students are thrilled with the program
- Faculty are producing excellent individual research
- Rapid program enrolment since its inception in 2005, and program is poised to continue to grow

#### Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Reviewing the substantial number of cross-listed courses and clarifying the impact of this on the program's learning objectives
- Gathering information on the accomplishments of its graduates in order that students might better understand the range of careers and opportunities open to them on completion of the program
- Making better connections to help the program address the barriers students have to taking courses in other departments, engage faculty from other units, increase the number of experiential learning opportunities, and improve the Centre's research profile
- Addressing the resource-intensive nature of the tri-campus undergraduate program
- Better using the program's physical space

## Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

### Documentation Provided to Reviewers

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

### Consultation Process

Faculty, students, administrative staff and senior program administrators as well as members of relevant cognate units as determined by the commissioning officer: Vice-Dean Academic Planning, Interim Associate Dean, Unit-level Reviews; Program Director; Faculty; Administrative staff; Undergraduate students; Chairs and Directors of Cognate Units (Criminology & Sociolegal Studies; Religion; Germanic Languages & Literatures; Centre for Industrial Relations & Human Resources).

# Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

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## 1. Undergraduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Objectives
  - ▶ Diaspora & Transnational Studies (DTS) mission includes diverse research approaches, geographies, theories, and historical eras; program engages with disciplinary questions outside of Eurocentric worldviews
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Program takes an inclusive approach by not requiring a minimum grade point average for majors and minors
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Program curriculum appears to work, with no major adjustments recommended
  - ▶ Potential students have "tremendous flexibility" to meet requirements, in consideration of DTS often being a second major
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Students report no difficulty meeting program completion requirements including the year-long introductory 200-level course, 300-level methods course, and upper-level courses
  - ▶ Students are strong advocates for the program and highly value its current approach
  - ▶ Students commend DTS classes for providing tools to understand concepts and issues across all their courses, including those outside the program
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - ▶ Students report a positive experience in DTS classes, reflected in high course evaluations
- Quality indicators – faculty
  - ▶ DTS faculty maintain a highly intellectual, conceptual-focused approach to teaching, rather than an area- or identity-based approach

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Program currently has a single course to fulfil the university's "qualitative and qualitative reasoning" requirement; other courses might also meet this standard
  - ▶ Students do not have the opportunity to apply their skills and knowledge in a capstone course

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Continue offering year-long introductory 200-level course

- ▶ Revisit syllabi of various courses to explore potential options for expanding the range of qualitative and quantitative reasoning courses beyond DTS300H1
- ▶ Consider developing a senior capstone course, with community engagement and research tracks, to help students solidify and integrate their learning
- ▶ Explore options for increasing one-on-one research opportunities with faculty through Research Assistantships
- ▶ Expand experiential learning opportunities for students, such as internships, fieldwork, or community-based learning; “These are especially important given the intellectual focus of the Centre, and Toronto provides an ideal setting for creating such opportunities”
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Enhance advertising strategies to attract prospective majors and minors

## 2. Graduate Program(s) N/A

## 3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ “Highly accomplished and intellectually diverse” faculty have broad expertise across multiple fields including religion, sexuality, race, labour, history, and governance
  - ▶ Faculty have received prestigious fellowships and grants, including the Guggenheim Fellowship and Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar
- Research
  - ▶ Faculty research interests cluster around key areas including religion, diaspora, and transnationalism; ethnography; political economy; African diaspora; and Jewish diaspora
  - ▶ Faculty research covers diverse geographical areas, including Africa, Europe, and the Americas, with specific focus on the Caribbean, Canada, Brazil, and Mexico

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

- Faculty
  - ▶ Hires seem to have occurred without a “strategic masterplan,” which has led to a narrow range of faculty disciplines, limited diversity among senior faculty, and gaps in research on Middle East/North Africa, Asia, and Indigeneity in the Americas
  - ▶ Literary and cultural studies minimally represented among DTS faculty

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
  - ▶ Prioritize building a research cluster in Middle East/North African diasporic studies and expanding faculty expertise in Asia, Indigenous Studies, and Literary and Cultural studies
- Faculty
  - ▶ Address the lack of diversity among tenured faculty

## 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
  - ▶ Program maximizes resources and maintains a robust intellectual community outside the classroom through thematic seminars and outside speakers
  - ▶ Students benefit from robust alumni relations, with events including career panels and alumni lectures
  - ▶ DTS is well regarded within the university and has strong support from university leadership
  - ▶ DTS maintains robust ties with other university units through shared faculty appointments and students often combining DTS with majors or minors in other units; “this arrangement appears to run smoothly and to be enriching for the intellectual life of the Centre”
  - ▶ DTS is a good university citizen offering numerous talks and events open to the wider community
  - ▶ Program has a number of outward-facing activities, and faculty regularly collaborate with scholars at other universities
  - ▶ Faculty relationships within the Centre have historically been collegial and mutually beneficial
  - ▶ Faculty and students report a strong sense of community and commitment to the program
  - ▶ Despite differences, faculty show a shared commitment to the program’s mission that provides an “excellent foundation upon which to build”
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Program has achieved tremendous success in securing external grants
  - ▶ DTS is in an overall positive financial situation and receives sufficient funding from the Faculty of Arts & Science to support operating expenses, speaker series, alumni events, and faculty research

- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Broad, inclusive approach has provided flexibility for strategic planning around hiring, enrolment, and curriculum development
  - ▶ DTS is a “unique and exceptionally valuable program, especially in today’s world”
- International comparators
  - ▶ DTS is one of the longest running programs of its kind, uniquely structured as both a research centre and an academic department
  - ▶ Reviewers note that both DTS and the Yale Center for the Study of Race, Indigeneity, and Transnational Migration follow a similar hybrid model operating as a centre and a department, offering major and minor programs and supporting faculty research through fellowships and seminars; similar units in other institutions function as traditional academic departments

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

- Relationships
  - ▶ Cross-appointed faculty can sometimes feel overburdened balancing expectations of both their home departments and DTS
  - ▶ In the aftermath of the events of October 7, 2023, faculty conflicts have disrupted the historically collegial and intellectually open environment in DTS; “differences have escalated to the point where some faculty are no longer speaking to one another and some report feeling an atmosphere of hostility”
    - Relationship tension is between groups of faculty with opposing political views who are also generationally distinct; differences in faculty rank led to a dynamic with one group feeling especially vulnerable to senior scholars in the other
    - Strong collegial relationships, and a foundation of mutual understanding and support, may not yet be well-established for new faculty members
    - Attempts to minimize interaction and avoid conflict between opposing groups appears to have reinforced divisions
    - DTS cannot effectively grow unless current tensions within the unit are resolved
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ DTS “does not currently have the human resources necessary for the smooth running of its programs”
  - ▶ Key leadership and administrative roles are overextended, with much operational/institutional knowledge concentrated in a few individuals and at risk of being lost should they leave
  - ▶ Administrative support staff have taken on tasks beyond the scope of their roles, limiting the ability to focus on core responsibilities
  - ▶ DTS cannot grow within its current spatial and infrastructural limitations; hiring of staff and faculty is limited by a lack of available office space
  - ▶ Some staff are currently working in inadequate workspaces
  - ▶ Many faculty offices are rarely used, while there is insufficient space for collective gatherings and socializing



- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Long-range planning challenges stem from four interconnected issues: leadership change, space and infrastructure constraints, curriculum development, and internal relations

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ Create a dedicated alumni database to further strengthen relationships with alumni and preserve institutional memory
  - ▶ Improve internal communication and clearly define expectations for involvement in Centre activities, particularly for cross-appointed faculty navigating dual and sometimes competing responsibilities
  - ▶ Reviewers recommended several initiatives/actions toward repairing the division among the faculty, including: organizing a faculty retreat led by a trained facilitator specializing in trauma-informed discussions; holding regular faculty meetings; establishing an internal colloquium to foster engagement with each other's work; increasing opportunities for social interaction among faculty; encouraging cross-collaboration on joint projects that foster shared investment and engagement
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Consider allocating resources to support undergraduate research opportunities
  - ▶ Explore ways to optimize existing office space allocation to reduce inefficient use of space, identify space for essential needs such as collective gathering and socializing, and to better support students, staff, and future hires
  - ▶ Consider accommodations within the activity-based budget model with respect to DTS's unusual positioning as a trans- and interdisciplinary unit with faculty jointly appointed in other departments
  - ▶ Enhance administrative staff support to improve workload allocation, distribute institutional knowledge more broadly, and enhance workflow within the Centre
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Work to strengthen DTS's reputation by redefining its identity and mission, diversifying senior faculty, reallocating office space, and revisiting aspects of the curriculum
  - ▶ Engage in strategic planning with the goals of defining and consolidating a clear identity for the Centre, and addressing gaps in faculty research areas and in the program curriculum
  - ▶ Begin strategic planning in advance of DTS leadership transitions
  - ▶ Continue investing in DTS as both a Centre and an academic department with support for strategic growth to maximize its impact on students, the University, and the Toronto community



March 3, 2025

Professor Nick Rule  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
University of Toronto

**RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies**

Dear Prof. Rule,

I write in response to your letter of November 29, 2024, regarding the March 27, 2024, UTQAP cyclical review of the Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies (CDTS) and its undergraduate programs and requesting our Administrative Responses. The programs reviewed were: Diaspora & Transnational Studies (HBA): Major, Minor.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers: Professor Rebecca J. Lester, Washington University, and Professor Rachel Salazar Parreñas, Princeton University, for their very comprehensive review of the CDTS. We would also like to thank the Director of the program, 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 May 29, 2024, after which the director shared it widely with faculty, staff, and students in the CDTS. We are extremely pleased with the reviewers' positive assessment of the overall strength of CDTS and its outstanding, productive faculty. The reviewers noted that the Centre engages in diverse research approaches, geographies, theories, and historical eras, and with disciplinary questions outside of Eurocentric worldviews; students report a positive experience in DTS classes; and DTS faculty are highly accomplished and intellectually diverse" and have broad expertise across multiple fields including religion, sexuality, race, labour, history, and governance. The review report also raised several issues and challenges and identified areas for enhancement, including that students do not have the opportunity to apply their skills and knowledge in a capstone course; cross-appointed faculty can sometimes feel overburdened balancing expectations of both their home departments and DTS; there is relationship tension between groups of faculty with opposing political views; and leadership and administrative roles are overextended.

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 Interim Director 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 CDST will take place no later than the **2031-32** review cycle.

My office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with chairs and directors. 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 future priorities of the Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies and its undergraduate programs.

Sincerely,



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

cc.

Ken MacDonald, Interim Director, Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies, Faculty of Arts & Science

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

Caitlin Burton, Senior Manager, Curriculum, 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 FAS Diaspora & Transnational 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 (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 that the program curriculum is working well; they offered minor suggestions for enhancements, including exploring whether courses other than DTS300H1 could provide students with adequate preparation in quantitative and qualitative reasoning, and considering the development of a capstone course. They also observed the need to develop experiential learning opportunities for students, such as internships, fieldwork, or other forms of community-based learning.	1	"Regarding the fulfillment of DTS300H1, we doubt only one course in the entire program fulfills the required "qualitative and quantitative reasoning" course for the university and suspect other classes likely do so as well. We suggest that the program revisits the syllabus of various class offerings to see the possibility of expanding the options for the fulfillment of DTS300H1."	DTS300H1 was specifically developed to satisfy the mandatory requirement for qualitative and quantitative reasoning because other courses in our program did not. Notably, the reviewers did not point to courses that they thought might satisfy this requirement. In situations where students are unable to take DTS300H1, we do grant program exceptions for courses that meet Breadth Requirement 5 in cognate programs.	Immediate term: The Dean's office including the Vice-Dean Undergraduate, and the Associate Dean Teaching Learning, will work with the Unit to identify courses in other Units that can satisfy this core competency and can support the Unit in exploring relevant curricular changes within existing courses.
	2	"Students do not have the opportunity to apply their skills and knowledge in a capstone course. We suggest the development of a two-track senior capstone, one geared towards community engagement and the other towards research."	<p>We do not fully agree with this assessment. Students can and do use DTS390H1/Y1 - Independent Study as a research-oriented capstone course. In these cases, students develop a research project in collaboration with a faculty member who subsequently directs the students in carrying out the project and preparing a final research report. We have also used it to facilitate community-engaged learning.</p> <p>Similarly some of our 400-level seminars function as capstone courses and faculty are free to structure those courses as capstone</p>	<p>Immediate-medium term: We support the program's structure that allows for multiple interdisciplinary learning experiences that also satisfy the program requirements for a capstone course experience.</p> <p>The A&amp;S ELOS office is available to support the program in developing more experiential learning-based opportunities and options for this capstone experience that incorporate community engagement. The program has already met with that office's Associate Director.</p>

		<p>courses. Many 400-level seminars that were research-oriented capstone courses were ‘derailed’ by COVID which may have produced this impression on the part of the reviewers.</p> <p>There are also disciplinary differences in what constitutes a research course in an interdisciplinary program. While for a joint DTS/English major a capstone research project might involve a close reading of diasporic novels, and DTS/Anthropology major might pursue an ethnographic project researching the engagement of diasporic communities in ‘homeland’ politics. Some of our senior seminars allow those kinds of projects.</p> <p>DTS410H1 - Diasporic Foodways, as an example, includes a project structure in which students work toward final primary-research based project that interrogates the role of food in the social dynamics and reproduction of diasporic communities. The final output has included student analyses of diasporic recipe books; mini-documentary films on the social meaning and significance of particular foods; archival research that explores the role of food in the dynamics of community reproduction across time and space.</p> <p>DTS405H1 – “Human Trafficking and/in Diaspora” adopts an interdisciplinary lens to explore human trafficking cases for labour and sexual exploitation as they relate to diaspora, migration, economics, politics, and security. Apart from examining legal texts, scholarly articles and case studies, the course incorporates a series of guest lectures</p>	
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			<p>featuring subject-matter experts. This year, the experts included representatives from local NGOs, sustainability advisory firms, Toronto Police Service, and Ontario Human Trafficking Prosecution Team. Students then work through the input of these experts to produce weekly critical analyses that assist them in designing their final projects.</p> <p>We do agree with the need for a greater emphasis on Community-engaged/experiential research and address that below under Recommendation 3.</p>	
	3	<p>“The Centre is in need of developing experiential learning opportunities for students, such as internships, fieldwork, or other forms of community-based learning. These are especially important given the intellectual focus of the Centre, and Toronto provides an ideal setting for creating such opportunities.”</p>	<p>We currently have some courses that involve experiential learning components.</p> <p>As an example, “DTS310H1 - Transnational Toronto” is taught as a field course in which specific course modules are taught at specific sites in Toronto and students are taught observational and analytic skills to understand the functioning of transnational processes in the historical development and contemporary socio-economic and cultural configuration of those sites.</p> <p>We do appreciate the need to develop more opportunities for community-engaged and experiential learning. We intend to act on this recommendation as follows:</p> <p><b>1) Short-term</b></p> <p>i) We have compiled a list of DTS-relevant community, non-governmental and governmental organizations agencies in Toronto that could serve as opportunities for experiential/community-engaged learning.</p>	<p>Please see above, #2.</p>

		<p>ii) We have held, and will continue to schedule, meetings with cognate units who have established successful community-engaged learning programs to learn and benefit from their experiences. (e.g., The Community Engaged Learning Program at New College). We have also met with Associate Director, Office of Experiential Learning and Outreach Support; and have planned meetings with staff from the University of Toronto Career Centre to explore a career-development approach to community-engaged learning.</p> <p>ii) We will encourage DTS faculty to apply for Experiential Learning Fellowships with the initial goal of developing one Experiential Learning Course in DTS.</p> <p><b>2) Medium-term</b></p> <p>i) Develop an outreach strategy to approach organizations and agencies; develop relationships and establish possible learning opportunities, including internships and field-based research projects.</p> <p>ii) We will seek approval to hire a new staff member (Recommendation 10) who has outreach development and management skills. This position would be responsible for managing some aspects of a community-engaged learning program. As a back -up, we will explore opportunities to support training for our Communications and Program Officer to develop outreach development and management skills.</p> <p>iii) Promote and emphasize the opportunity for students to self-identify community</p>	
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			<p>engaged learning opportunities. Simultaneously, develop a process for vetting and approving community-engaged learning opportunities identified by students in the program.</p> <p>iv) Based on faculty interest and hopefully through an Experiential Learning Fellowship, propose a new course through which students can earn credit for participating in community-engaged learning.</p> <p>v) Promote the new course to students and based on demand and enrolment assess the need for a second experiential learning course.</p> <p><b>3) Long-term</b></p> <p>i) Monitor the outcome of community-engaged learning efforts through surveys focused on student experience, impact, and relevance to our program learning objectives.</p> <p>ii) Develop a regular process of renewing existing opportunities while developing new partners.</p>	
	4	<p>“Students can benefit from greater one-on-one research opportunities with faculty through RA-ships.”</p>	<p>We agree but one of the problems faced by a unit with cross-appointed faculty at a top-tier research university is that faculty have ‘competing loyalties’; grants are housed with the unit of their primary appointment, as is their graduate responsibility. In this environment it is typical for RA resources to be used to support graduate students. This pressure will only increase in the new graduate funding environment.</p> <p>Understandably some faculty are uncomfortable using ‘voluntary labour’ but</p>	<p>Immediate term: The ASDO supports undergraduate students in research opportunities through its participation in the University’s Work-Study Program, Research Opportunity Program (ROP), Research Excursion Program (REP) and the University of Toronto Excellence Awards, which provides competitively offered support for undergraduate students pursuing research experiences.</p>



			<p>lack the funds to compensate undergraduate research assistants.</p> <p>That said there are opportunities such as the Work-Study Program, Research Opportunity Program (ROP), and Research Excursion Program (REP) courses.</p> <p><b>1) Short-term</b></p> <p>i) We will encourage faculty to support undergraduate work on their research projects through the use of work-study opportunities (and encourage DTS students to apply for those opportunities) though it has just been announced that Work-Study funding will be constrained in the future.</p> <p>ii) As a unit, CDTS will apply to hire two Work-Study students to work as Research Assistants on faculty research projects specifically related to CDTS activities.</p> <p>iii) We will encourage faculty to participate in the Research Opportunity Program and Research Excursion Program; and explore the possibility of converting existing courses, where they are directly related to faculty research, to ROP courses.</p>	
The reviewers observed that faculty hiring has, to date, resulted in some gaps in the Centre's range of disciplinary coverage and a lack of diversity among senior faculty; they recommended undertaking a strategic complement planning process to explore ways to address these areas.	5	<p>"One important limitation in terms of research emphasis is the lack of concentration in Middle East/ North African Diaspora, Asia, and Indigenous Studies. We encourage the Centre to prioritize these in future hires."</p>	<p>The reviewers seem to have misunderstood our position in developing faculty complement as an EDU-B. While we have tried to expand our faculty complement, that has come through synergies with cognate units. Where those units identify a need to cover a disciplinary interest that aligns with an expertise relevant to DTS, we can work to create a joint position. But we are rarely, if ever, in the position of setting those departmental hiring priorities.</p>	<p>Immediate-medium- term: The ASDO encourages CDTS to continue exploring mutually beneficial partnerships within A&amp;S. Gaps in disciplinary coverage can be met through course collaborations with cognate Units. Alternatively, should the program identify promising partnerships with cognate units for future hires, we encourage those units to develop a proposal to the Faculty Appointments Committee.</p>

			<p>Additionally, we are not an Area Studies department. In fact, DTS was originally structured to challenge the conventional area studies paradigm, still dominant in some U.S. institutions, that this recommendation seems to promote (both reviewers were from American institutions steeped in that tradition). Where students desire an area studies emphasis, they have access to courses in South Asian Studies, African Studies and other area studies programs as well as Indigenous Studies that count toward our program requirements.</p> <p>Rather than an area studies focus, our emphasis on hiring has been on faculty expertise in some dimension of diaspora or transnationalism – e.g., labour, religion, violence, transnational ideologies, etc. The areal focus has typically been secondary (unlike U.S. area studies paradigm, where the areal focus often takes precedence).</p> <p>That said, we are confused by this recommendation, given that we have this disciplinary coverage, with faculty working in the Middle East, North and West Africa, and South Asia</p> <p>While we do not have an Indigenous faculty member, faculty in the program currently integrate Indigenous content into their courses, which results in a broad coverage of indigenous content across our course offerings. As examples:</p> <p>DTS200Y1 - Introduction to Diaspora and Transnational Studies has a module on</p>	<p>All requests for new positions across the Faculty are submitted to the Faculty Appointments Committee (FAC), which includes representation across its sectors (Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences) and from the Colleges. 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 than available positions.</p>
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			<p>Indigeneity and Diaspora.</p> <p>DTS300H1 - Quantitative and Qualitative Reasoning includes modules on Indigenous communities in Mexico, intellectual property rights and the impact of NAFTA; and the application of ‘western’ forms of knowledge in the land claims settlement process.</p> <p>DTS305H1 - Anthropology of Free Trade includes a module that explores the impact of free trade on indigenous communities in Latin America, particularly dispossession and reconfiguration of property regimes.</p> <p>DTS310H1 - Transnational Toronto has a module on Indigenous Toronto and transnational Indigenous relations.</p> <p>DTS316H1 - Filth: Transnational Perspectives on Dirt, Garbage, and Impurity includes modules on smudging/Indigenous healing; and colonial representations of filth in African indigenous contexts</p> <p>DTS401H1 - Diaspora and Liberation incorporates two modules: “Unsettling Canada”; and the indigenous history of the University of Toronto campus.</p> <p>DTS402H1 - Borders and Border Cities incorporates modules on cross-border indigenous communities and mobilities, and the inherent contradictions of law in settler states.</p> <p>DTS405H1 - Human Trafficking in/and Diaspora integrates material related to missing and murdered Indigenous women throughout the course.</p>	
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			<p>DTS410H1 - Diasporic Foodways integrates content on the reproduction of Indigenous foodways.</p> <p>That said, we would gladly partner in a search for a faculty member who specializes in transnational Indigeneity or urban indigenous diasporas.</p> <p><b>1) Short-term</b></p> <p>i) We will initiate discussions with cognate units (primarily the Centre for Indigenous Studies, Anthropology, Geography, Sociology, and Political Science) to identify possible partners in developing a proposal for a joint position in transnational Indigeneity or urban Indigenous diasporas.</p>	
	6	<p>“We also note the minimal representation of literary and cultural studies faculty and someone working on Indigenous issues, both of which would be important additions to the Centre faculty.”</p>	<p>Initially, CDTS had three primary faculty with cross-appointments in English, Geography, and Sociology. As the program grew, that list expanded to include faculty cross-appointed to Jewish Studies, the Centre for the Study of Religion, Anthropology, History and Political Science. As some faculty have left the University, we have not received commensurate replacement positions and, given our status as an EDU-B, have had little control over the development of subsequent hires.</p> <p>The current faculty roster includes cross-appointments with Geography; Anthropology; Centre for Criminology and Sociolegal Studies; Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources; Centre for the Study of Religion; Italian; Women and Gender Studies Institute. Those cross-</p>	<p>Immediate-medium term: The ASDO supports the program’s initiative to identify any additional fruitful partnerships with cognate units to augment the learning experience for students currently enjoy in the areas of literary and cultural studies, and exposure to Indigenous content and subject matter.</p>

			<p>appointments do not necessarily reflect faculty backgrounds or research interests.</p> <p>It is, for example, a misnomer to say we have minimal representation of cultural and literary studies faculty.</p> <p>As a collective, our faculty have graduate education in the fields of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anthropology</li><li>• Divinity</li><li>• Law</li><li>• Sociology and Equity Studies</li><li>• Religious Studies</li><li>• Geography</li><li>• Religion and Culture</li><li>• Gender Studies</li><li>• History</li><li>• Comparative Literature</li></ul> <p>As an interdisciplinary program in an interdisciplinary field, we feel this represents a diverse, and range of faculty scholarly and research expertise. This is reflected in the strength of student feedback on our courses. In a recent review of student course evaluations, CDTS was ranked fourth highest in the Faculty of Arts and Science.</p> <p>That said we are not averse to securing additional faculty complement and building on our strengths. Accordingly, we will contact English and Comparative literature to explore interest in developing joint positions in Literary and/or Cultural Studies.</p> <p><b>1) Short-term</b></p>	
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			i) We will contact English and Comparative literature to explore interest in developing joint positions for faculty specializing in Diasporic/Transnational literatures and/or who work at the intersection of Cultural Studies and Diaspora and Transnational Studies.	
	7	“The program should also address the lack of diversity among its tenured faculty.”	<p>Notably, the reviewers don’t address what dimension of diversity to which they refer - racial, ethnic, social, linguistic, economic?</p> <p>Currently tenured CDTs faculty represent racial diversity, religious diversity, sexual diversity, first-generation university students, and first-generation immigrants.</p> <p>So far as we are aware the reviewers did not conduct a diversity assessment, so we presume they are referring to racial diversity.</p> <p><b>1) Short-term</b></p> <p>i) Where we are able to identify possible joint hires with cognate units (Recommendations 5 &amp; 6) we will simultaneously explore the potential of doing this at a senior level or as an opportunity hire to build on the current diversity of tenured faculty.</p>	Immediate-long term: The ASDO new mentorship program overseen by the Vice-Dean Faculty & Academic Life is working on faculty inclusion and retention, in coordination with ASDO Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. They, in coordination with the Director of Academic HR, will be reaching out to unit leadership in 2025-26 to discuss unit-level demographic data and approaches for diversifying their faculty complements.
	8	“The faculty should have a retreat or strategic planning meeting and address various “holes” in its faculty research areas including the minimal number of literary, cultural studies and other non-social scientists such as philosophers among its faculty and the absence of Asia and indigenous studies in the curriculum.”	See Recommendation 12	Immediate-long term: The ASDO is pleased to offer financial support should the program wish to engage in a faculty retreat to explore its curricular offerings and can also refer the program to resources within the A&S Dean’s office in the areas of teaching and learning.
The reviewers observed that faculty members with their home appointments outside of DTS “can sometimes feel	9	“...faculty can sometimes feel overburdened trying to meet the expectations of their home departments as well as DTS. The leadership	We agree with this recommendation. An ongoing issue with cross-appointed faculty is the additional burden of multiple meetings	Immediate-long term: The ASDO is available to support the program’s plan in this area, and the Vice-Dean, Faculty & Academic Life,

overburdened trying to meet the expectations of their home departments as well as DTS.” They recommended exploring additional supports, particularly for pre-tenure faculty, to help with navigating these demands on their time, including improved communication and “a clearer articulation of the Centre’s expectations regarding involvement in Centre activities.”		of DTS is aware of these challenges, but more could be done to support faculty, particularly pre-tenure faculty, in navigating these dual (and sometimes competing) demands on their time. One key component of this would be improving communication within the group as well as a clearer articulation of the Centre’s expectations regarding involvement in Centre activities.”	and events in which their participation is expected. This feeling of being ‘overburdened’ can be even more significant when the faculty member is appointed to three divisions and their cross-appointment is between St. George and UTSC/UTM. Notably this contradicts Recommendation 13 which suggests holding more faculty meetings among CDTS faculty.  <b>1) Short-term</b>  i) We will remind pre-faculty of the Workload Policy agreement between UTFA and the Administration which articulates a faculty member’s right under the policy to have annual meetings with their respective Chairs and Directors to discuss responsibilities and commitments to their respective units. This should enhance the clarity of expectations and highlight the issue with cross-appointed faculty, given that the Director of CDTS will always be a cross-appointed faculty who shares the experience of split responsibilities.	can support the program director with these concerns as well as advise about support and mentoring that is available to pre-tenure faculty.  The new Faculty of Arts & Science mentorship initiatives support the flourishing of faculty in their early academic careers, encourage faculty to develop personally meaningful mentorship networks, enhance new colleagues’ understanding of institutional policies, procedures, and unit-level practices, promote engagement, and foster a sense of community and belonging.  The new mentorship document is available to all faculty and in the spring of 2025 will also include a list of crucial resources.  The New Faculty Program (a two-year program for all new faculty) will consider including a session on cross-appointments and navigating multiple obligations in its programming.
The reviewers observed that “the Centre does not currently have the human resources necessary for the smooth running of its program” and recommended exploring ways to address workload issues affecting both the Centre’s leadership and administrative staff.	10	“Despite a historically positive financial structure, the Centre does not currently have the human resources necessary for the smooth running of its programs.... We recommend hiring an additional full-time staff person to assist the Associate Director and take over much of the day-to-day administrative duties of the Centre, freeing the current administrative staff to do their jobs and have more bandwidth for creativity and innovation.”	<b>1) Short-term</b>  i) We will develop and submit a request for a new staff person to assist the Associate Director.  ii) We will combine this recommendation with Recommendation 3 and attempt to identify candidates with outreach development and management experience and dedicate 50% of the position to managing the logistics of a Community-engaged/Experiential learning program.	Immediate term: The Dean’s office will facilitate the program director meeting with the Director of Administrative HR to explore the feasibility of this potential new role and develop the specifications for a new role.
The reviewers observed that space and infrastructure constraints are an obstacle for the Centre’s future growth; they	11	“DTS cannot grow in its current spatial and infrastructural configuration...	Some faculty who are cross-appointed have shared offices in their disciplinary homes and use DTS space as their primary office.	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased that space issues observed at the time of the site visit have been resolved, as noted in the

recommended exploring ways to distribute existing office space more effectively to serve the Centre’s needs including staff workspace and student gathering space.		<p>Faculty who have more than one office should share space in the Centre so the remaining space can be used for the current Communications and Program Officer and student lounge space.”</p>	<p>The job description for the Communications and Program Officer lists the position as a primary point of contact. This is why they are situated in the reception area of the Centre. Prior to having this position guests to the Centre were consistently confused by the lack of a central welcome space. Similar to the structure of other units in JHB, our Communications and Program Officer is public-facing and we anticipate will remain in the present space.</p> <p>Currently, we do not have a shortage of office space for Faculty. In 2025, we will reclaim office space which will allow us to provide office space in the Centre for appointed faculty who do not currently have CDTs office space in which to work and meet with students.</p> <p>Regarding student common space, we have developed an implementation plan as follows:</p> <p><b>1) Short Term</b></p> <p>i) We have solicited a design to reconfigure JHB235. This design converts the room from a conventional boardroom, with static furnishings, to a multi-functional space with modular furnishings that can be reconfigured for different uses.</p> <p>The primary use of the room will be as a student common space, but it will also be available for booking for faculty meetings, small research workshops, small seminars, etc.</p>	<p>unit’s response. The Vice-Dean Research &amp; Infrastructure is also available to discuss the additional space requirements for the program’s students as outlined by in the unit’s response.</p>
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			<p>ii) We have secured funds from FAS for this reconfiguration of JHB235.</p> <p>iii) Furnishings to match the design have been ordered and the space should be ready for its re-purposed use by mid-March 2025.</p> <p>iv) We have developed booking policies, an accessible online booking platform, and an online booking schedule so that students can see at least a week in advance when the room is booked. When the room is not otherwise booked, which we plan to keep to a minimum, it will be open for use as a student common space during JHB hours.</p> <p><b>2) Medium Term</b></p> <p>1) We will monitor usage of the room for two years after which we will conduct a survey of users to ensure that it is meeting the needs of CDTS student, faculty and staff.</p>	
The reviewers recommended holding a faculty retreat or strategic planning exercise to discuss objectives such as faculty complement planning for disciplinary coverage and diversity, and defining and consolidating a clear identity for the Centre.	12	<p>“We believe that DTS has the potential for being recognized as one of the best in Canada/North America due to the stellar academic record of its faculty and can solidify its reputation by... revisiting and redefining its identity and mission...</p> <p>Hold a faculty retreat with the following objectives: a. Define and consolidate a clear identity for the Centre”</p>	<p><b>1) Short-Term</b></p> <p>i) We intend to convene a faculty retreat during the 2025-26 academic year. Four faculty members are currently on leave, but we expect to have a full complement present in 2025-26.</p> <p>ii) Schedule and book a location for a full-day faculty retreat that allows time and space for diverse forms of social engagement and reflection among faculty. We anticipate booking space at the Evergreen Brickwork’s Centre for Green Cities</p> <p>ii) Survey the faculty on the need for and, if desired, identify a qualified facilitator to lead</p>	Please see above, #8.

			<p>retreat discussions.</p> <p>iii) Develop an agenda for the faculty retreat that initially includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define a clear identity for the Centre</li> <li>• Address tension and conflict in a referred to by the reviewers and seek reconciliation processes defined by faculty members.</li> <li>• Identify strengths, weaknesses of CDTs; identify opportunities to improve CDTs profile and activities; identify potential obstacles to the continued success of CDTs and how to best address them.</li> <li>• Discuss thematic gaps in the faculty complement and identify hiring priorities</li> <li>• Develop the frame for a strategic 5-year plan based on the above analysis and map out curriculum review/planning/revision; faculty complement and potential joint hiring opportunities; and outreach opportunities to enhance the profile and awareness of CDTs locally and internationally.</li> </ul>	
<p>The reviewers expressed urgent concern over tension and conflict that has arisen between the Centre’s faculty members related to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East; they noted as well that the opposing groups are “generationally distinct,” which has resulted in more junior members feeling “especially vulnerable to senior scholars who are on the other side of the disagreement.” They made several recommendations to help the Centre begin to repair these relationships, including: holding a faculty retreat with a facilitator</p>	13	<p>“It is essential that the Centre repair this division among the faculty as soon as possible. Leaving the situation as it is risks the future of the Centre. There are a number of pathways for accomplishing this, and we offer the following recommendations as a starting point: 1. A faculty retreat with a trained facilitator who can lead trauma-informed discussions. It is critical that the facilitator be trained in trauma-informed work. 2. Hold regular faculty meetings, at least monthly 3. Create an internal</p>	<p>This is a complex issue, not easily addressed in some of the ways suggested by the reviewers.</p> <p>Faculty meetings are not an effective social forum for addressing deep-seated differences. Increasing the number of faculty meetings also contradicts the reviewers’ Recommendation 9 (faculty feel over-burdened by multiple commitments). Some have commitments to three units which effectively triples the time spent in unit-</p>	<p>Immediate-medium term: The ASDO notes the urgent concern expressed by the reviewers regarding division among the faculty.</p> <p>Academic HR and team can support the unit in discussions about internal division and faculty morale. The ASDO Vice-Dean Faculty &amp; Academic Life is also available to support the program’s initiatives here. Together with the Faculty Development and the unit's teams, she can support the design and</p>

trained in trauma-informed work, holding regular faculty meetings, and providing more opportunities for faculty to interact socially and collaboratively.		colloquium option so people can learn about each other’s work 4. Provide increased opportunities for social interaction among the faculty 5. Have faculty from either side of the split collaborate on joint projects in which they can both be invested.”	<p>meetings if they were to attend them all.</p> <p>Similarly, mandating that faculty engage in joint projects seems counter-productive and potentially a breach of academic freedom. It is one thing to encourage joint projects among faculty, but it is another entirely to “have faculty” do this.</p> <p>Conversely, there are settings in which productive relations among faculty can be stimulated. And we will implement a plan to do so, including:</p> <p><b>1) Short-term:</b></p> <p>i) We have re-initiated our Methods Café series in which faculty speak to the origins and methodological focus of their research projects. The series was first developed, in part, to provide faculty in CDTS to learn more about each other’s research programs and the motivation for that work.</p> <p>ii) Incorporate graduate students into the Methods Café as speakers. We can’t make attendance mandatory for faculty and given competing demands on faculty time, attendance is not guaranteed, but we feel that focusing on graduate student research might encourage faculty attendance.</p> <p>iii) Encourage the development of a culture of attendance and participation in CDTS events. We feel that creating a culture of graduate student attendance and participation in CDTS will prompt faculty to attend.</p> <p>iv) In pursuit of that ‘culture’, we will plan to</p>	<p>implementation of the restorative measures to repair the community's relationships.</p> <p>The ASDO also supports the unit’s plans and initiatives to foster internal cohesion and mutually beneficial intellectual projects, social events, and greater intersection with graduate work.</p>
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			<p>hold a social gathering after each of our Speakers Series events combining graduate students and faculty. Attendance may vary based on family commitments but as these events are typically monthly, we will broadcast a schedule far in advance allowing people to plan to attend the social event.</p> <p>v) We will convene a faculty lunch once per semester with no agenda other than to dine together in a pleasant setting. We suspect that ‘breaking bread’ together may well be a more effective means of creating conviviality than a faculty meeting.</p> <p><b>2) Medium-term</b></p> <p>i) after 4 years, we will plan to assess the effectiveness of our efforts at developing a culture of participation at CDTs. While developing an organizational culture takes effort, it also takes time to come to fruition. Four years is a good period to assess the effectiveness of our efforts.</p>	
Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response	14	“Develop new and more effective advertisement strategies for prospective majors and minors.”	<p>While this is not prioritized in the request for a response, faculty view recruitment as important under the new budget model.</p> <p><b>1) Short-term</b></p> <p>i) We will devote our last faculty meeting of the current semester to questions of recruitment and how best to ensure we thrive under the new budget model in which the primary source of DTS revenue will be student course enrolments.</p>	<p>Immediate term: The Dean’s office will connect the Director and College to the Office of the Faculty Registrar to facilitate the unit’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 &amp; 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</p>

				<p>available to Arts &amp; Science students and learn about experiential learning including research, internships and international opportunities.</p> <p>The weekly AMA (Ask Me Anything) event 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.</p> <p>Program student unions also participate in “Clubs Fair” held at the beginning of each academic year.</p> <p>U of T participates in the Universities Fair each year, and the College is encouraged to participate directly in that event.</p> <p>The Dean’s office also suggests the Director explore the most common program pairings with DTS, and initiate discussions with those units to amplify the visibility of DTS programs.</p>
	15	<p>“Students benefit from the robust relations that the program maintains with its alumni. Alumni events include career panels and alumni lectures. Alumni relations can be further solidified with the creation of a database to secure institutional memory.”</p>	<p>We agree that alumni-student interaction is extremely important. While we participate in the FAS Alumni Office’s regular events (e.g., Backpack to Briefcase), our students regularly ask for greater contact with our alumni and each year we strive to organize an alumni panel.</p> <p>Unfortunately, we have had difficulty acquiring up-to-date lists of our alumni from the FAS Alumni Office and have been instructed to notify them in case we contact</p>	<p>Immediate-long term: The Faculty of Arts &amp; Science encourages units to develop strong alumni relationships. Alumni Relations can work with units to support and advise on strategic engagement with their alumni, in collaboration with the alumni relations team. Due to privacy legislation, access to University of Toronto alumni data is regulated; it is not accessible to non-advancement staff. Advancement is legally responsible for alumni contact information.</p>

			<p>our alumni so that the relevant information can be entered in their database.</p> <p><b>1) Short-term</b></p> <p>i) We will reach out to the FAS Alumni Office to investigate more effective ways of developing within CDTS a more secure institutional memory of alumni achievements.</p>	
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### 3 Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

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*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

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The reviewers praised the Diaspora & Transnational Studies program as “a unique and exceptionally valuable program, especially in today’s world,” noting that it is one of the longest running programs of its kind. They commended the program’s broad conception of its mission, which includes “providing students with diverse disciplinary approaches and exposing them to different research approaches, geographies, theories and historical eras to engage questions of diaspora and transnationalism outside of Eurocentric worldviews.” They applauded faculty members as “highly accomplished and intellectually diverse,” representing a range of disciplines and employing a “highly intellectual approach to teaching.” They highlighted the unique structure of the Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies, which operates as both an academic unit and a research centre—successfully offering an in-demand program and providing a space for faculty research exchange in the form of colloquia and seminars. Finally, they praised the Centre as “a good university citizen,” offering numerous talks and events open to the wider university community and fostering strong relationships with units and scholars at the University of Toronto and beyond.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: exploring whether a wider range of courses could provide students with adequate preparation in quantitative and qualitative reasoning, considering the development of a capstone course, and developing experiential learning opportunities for students; undertaking a strategic complement planning process to explore ways to address gaps in the Centre’s range of disciplinary coverage and a lack of diversity among senior faculty; exploring supports for pre-tenure faculty members with their home appointments outside of DTS, including improved communication and a clearer articulation of the Centre’s expectations regarding their involvement in Centre activities; exploring ways to address workload issues affecting both the Centre’s leadership and administrative staff; exploring ways to distribute existing office space more effectively to serve the Centre’s needs including staff workspace and student gathering space; holding a faculty retreat or strategic planning exercise to discuss objectives such as faculty complement planning for disciplinary coverage and diversity, and defining and consolidating a clear identity for the Centre; exploring ways to address urgent concerns over tension and conflict between the Centre’s faculty members related to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, including: holding a faculty retreat with a facilitator trained in trauma-informed work, holding regular faculty meetings, and providing more opportunities for faculty to interact socially and collaboratively.

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

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The Arts & Science Dean's office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with chairs and directors and through regular governance and curricular oversight.

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than midway between the March 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2031-32 to report on the status of the implementation plans.

The next review will be commissioned no later than the **2031-32** review cycle.

## 6 Distribution

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On July 15<sup>th</sup> 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

<b>Program(s) Reviewed:</b>	Hons. BA, East Asian Studies, Specialist, Major, Minor MA, PhD, East Asian Studies
<b>Unit Reviewed:</b>	Department of East Asian Studies
<b>Commissioning Officer:</b>	Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
<b>Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hu Ying, Professor, East Asian Studies, School of Humanities, University of California, Irvine</li> <li>• Tina Lu, Colonel John Trumbull Professor of East Asian Languages and Literatures, Head of Pauli Murray College, Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, Yale University</li> <li>• Christine Marran, Professor of Japanese Literature and Cultural Studies, Department of Asian &amp; Middle Eastern Studies, University of Minnesota</li> </ul>
<b>Date of Review Visit:</b>	February 26-27, 2024
<b>Review Report Received by VPAP:</b>	May 29, 2024
<b>Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:</b>	March 6, 2025
<b>Date Reported to AP&amp;P:</b>	April 10, 2025

## Previous UTQAP Review

Date: January 25-26, 2016

### Summary of Findings and Recommendations

#### Significant Program Strengths

- Programs reflect the emerging state of the field of Asian Studies, which positions East Asia in regional and global contexts
- Innovative undergraduate curriculum that accommodates an enormous number of students
- High enrolments with the potential to grow based on demand
- Potential to become a leading program in preparing students for careers

#### Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Rethinking language instruction, which is currently offered in lecture courses and tutorials—out of step with current innovations
- Expanding language requirements and offering more advanced language and text-based courses in East Asian languages
- Enhancing the undergraduate program, including adding an undergraduate thesis option, changing assessment methods, and tracking career outcomes
- Revamping graduate funding and TA-ships
- Addressing the high attrition rate for Ph.D. students
- Reconsidering academic staffing resources to better support programs and courses offered (including Chinese history and Japanese literature), provide advising for students, and create more opportunities for faculty to advance their careers
- Increasing advancement activity at the department and division levels to support the department's mission and programs
- Collaborating more with cognate units to support programs and expanding the scope of its mission

## Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

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### Documentation Provided to Reviewers

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

### Consultation Process

Faculty, students, administrative staff and senior program administrators as well as members of relevant cognate units as determined by the commissioning officer: Vice-Dean Academic Planning, Interim Associate Dean, Unit-level Reviews; Chair; Faculty; Administrative staff;

undergraduate students; graduate students' Chairs and Directors of cognate units [ Cinema Studies Institute, Centre for Comparative Literature, Department of Philosophy, Dr. David Chu Program in Contemporary Asian Studies, Women & Gender Studies Institute]

## Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

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### 1. Undergraduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Objectives
  - ▶ Undergraduate program objectives align well with divisional and institutional degree objectives, learning outcomes and core competencies
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Student enrolment is noted as high
  - ▶ EAS programs have open enrolment with no specific admission requirements
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Curricular offerings are excellent and innovative, combining media, ecopolitical, literary and culture courses with language training opportunities
  - ▶ Core curriculum introduces undergraduates to East Asia as a major center of thought, culture and politics
  - ▶ The recent decision to switch some core courses from asynchronous to in-person instruction appears to be responsive to student needs
  - ▶ Unit offers impressive range of society and culture courses at the 200, 300 and 400 levels, giving students an opportunity to explore multi- and interdisciplinary research
- Innovation
  - ▶ Progress has been made in incorporating learning technology into language instruction classrooms, in response to previous review recommendations
- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▶ Department plays a crucial role in accomplishing the University's mission to internationalize undergraduate education
  - ▶ The department enrolls the largest proportion of international students of any humanities unit at U of T
  - ▶ Reviewers highly commend the unit's support of its large international student body with a writing program specifically developed for non-native English speakers
- Assessment of learning
  - ▶ Evaluation methods appear standard and appropriate
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - ▶ High school GPAs of EAS students have been rising in recent years, and students' GPAs at graduation also appear to be increasing

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ “...currently the department’s curriculum is profoundly constrained by the number of TAs it has, which in turn has everything to do with graduate recruitment”
  - ▶ Some “bottlenecking” noted in a popular series of core courses, due to its strict sequencing
  - ▶ Language requirements for majors and minors appear out of step with comparable North American programs, and may not fulfil certain program learning objectives
  - ▶ The number of non-EAS students and those with undeclared majors enrolled in EAS courses has risen sharply in recent years, with more than 200 students routinely on waitlists for Korean and Japanese language courses
  - ▶ Faculty are working at maximum capacity, which is exacerbated by limited TA support; reviewers note concern that without “an infusion of faculty and graduate resources, and with the new budget model’s higher percentage of funding directly tied to the number of undergraduates taught, we fear that pressures to take on higher enrolments will result in unsustainably larger classes”
- Innovation
  - ▶ Academic coordinators voiced frustration regarding difficulties using the ACORN system to place students in the correct level of language study

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Reviewers supportive of departmental plans to enhance the flexibility of the core course series and make it more accessible for students to enter the major mid-stream
  - ▶ Students and faculty note that course scheduling might benefit from better coordination
  - ▶ Students voiced interest in a capstone course (though reviewers note that such an offering would be contingent on sufficient faculty resources)
  - ▶ Reviewers note, regarding language requirements in the majors, that “[given] the difficulty of mastering Chinese, Japanese and Korean, students of East Asian languages typically require 1-2 years of additional study to reach levels comparable to students of European languages”
  - ▶ Reviewers note that co-teaching appears to be common practice in other departments, and encourage EAS to consider the potential benefits of adopting such an approach
- Innovation
  - ▶ Explore enhancements to the language placement system, and the use of more advanced technologies at all levels of the process (reviewers highlight that the Korean program in particular has piloted innovative placement techniques)
- Quality indicators – alumni
  - ▶ Reviewers note that it would be useful to have more reliable data on graduates’ career outcomes

## 2. Graduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ Graduate program remarkably successful, especially in placing graduates in high-ranking jobs worldwide
  - ▶ EAS graduate programs at both the MA and PhD level are thriving
  - ▶ Applications have increased in recent years due to the calibre of the program and faculty
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Admission requirements are comparable to R1 North American universities
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Curricular offerings are excellent and innovative
  - ▶ Program requirements are comparable to R1 North American universities
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Graduate students note great enthusiasm for their faculty mentors and scholarship
  - ▶ Students appear enthusiastic about their work and satisfied with the instruction and career training available to them
- Quality indicators – graduate students
  - ▶ Time to completion is within the normal range for both the MA and PhD
- Quality indicators – alumni
  - ▶ 50% of PhD recipients achieved tenure track positions in the past ten years, which reviewers note is excellent

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Few courses appear to be designed for MA students who are not headed toward a PhD program
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ “Extensive conversations with graduate students indicate that graduate funding is drastically inadequate”
  - ▶ “We were especially disheartened to hear multiple stories of students experiencing food insecurity even during their funded years”
  - ▶ Heavy teaching load for graduate students noted as an area of concern, which likely impedes progress in their own studies
- Student funding
  - ▶ “[We] emphasize that we have never seen such a poorly funded, top-ranked graduate program anywhere in North America.”
  - ▶ Graduate recruitment noted as challenging, “because funding packages are inadequate”
  - ▶ Graduate program noted as particularly vulnerable to surges in Toronto rental prices

- ▶ Only approximately 25% of graduate students receive external funding (though this may be related to international students' lack of eligibility for major funding sources)
- ▶ Reviewers highlight issues and inefficiencies related to how graduate students must repeatedly apply for relatively small amounts of funding; "[we] cannot understand this as an efficient means to support graduate students; instead, the current structure can only distract from academic work and creates a prolonged unhealthy atmosphere of anxiety, which must have a negative impact on student success and time to graduation."

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Students voiced a desire to spend more time together as a cohort with faculty; reviewers suggest exploring the possibility of developing a colloquium or seminar series
- Student funding
  - ▶ Graduate program in particular would benefit from better funding
  - ▶ Reviewers suggest that even with the new FAS budgetary model, leadership may need to invest in the graduate program "by supplementing graduate stipends and providing the Department with a larger graduate program budget"

### 3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ EAS faculty are stellar, and widely recognized for their research excellence both nationally and internationally
  - ▶ Faculty are committed to cutting-edge research and place high priority on innovative teaching
  - ▶ Recent hires in transnational and media studies, as well as an internationally renowned faculty at all levels make the department an excellent destination for prospective graduate students
- Research
  - ▶ EAS participation rates in SSHRC competitions have increased in recent years
- Faculty
  - ▶ The unit has done an excellent recent job of recruiting early career faculty
  - ▶ New faculty report informal but effective mentorship, and some noted benefits from the NCFDD Faculty Development Bootcamp
  - ▶ Reviewers supportive of the recent development of a departmental promotion committee

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

- Faculty
  - ▶ No faculty member has been promoted from associate to full professor in the past decade, which reviewers note is “particularly jarring”, given their impressive record of publications and awards. “Although we are told that there is hardly any institutional incentive to this level of promotion, this seems a poor excuse given the international academic norm.”
  - ▶ A significant lack of scholars working on premodern Japan and Korea weakens the department’s transnational emphasis (and reviewers note that waitlists are currently longest for courses on medieval and early modern China and Japan)
  - ▶ Reviewers assert that “the current [faculty] workload distribution is ultimately unsustainable”
  - ▶ Faculty size appears disproportionately small for the department’s wide array of courses
  - ▶ Language faculty recruitment has presented some challenges, which leads to unmet student need in language instruction

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
  - ▶ Reviewers highlight some room to increase participation in national funding competitions, noting that these represent a potential avenue for graduate funding, and could increase departmental visibility
- Faculty
  - ▶ Some faculty note interest in developing unit strengths in Southeast Asian studies, “a direction that is intellectually well justified”
  - ▶ Engage in consultation and strategic planning to determine appropriate approaches for providing greater support for language instruction

## 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
  - ▶ Undergraduate and graduate students observed to be enthusiastic members of a learning community
  - ▶ A “climate of friendly collegiality” is noted among faculty
  - ▶ Departmental leadership is committed and capable

- ▶ Staff appear excellent at addressing departmental needs and important to the long-term health of the unit; staff also involve themselves in new initiatives and technologies
- ▶ Department has excellent ties with cognate units, including the Cinema Studies Institute and the Centre for Comparative Literature
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ A new social media staff person would be important for enhancing the department's visibility on campus
  - ▶ The structure of having Associate Chairs in undergraduate and graduate education appears sound
  - ▶ Reviewers impressed with the unit's financial resilience, "even with its lack of endowed funds"
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Reviewers' overall impression of the department "is one of excellence, both in research and teaching"
  - ▶ Unit is one of the largest humanities departments at U of T, and the largest of its kind in Canada
  - ▶ "We observed a thriving department, with a collegial and productive faculty and engaged students at every level and a highly capable staff"
  - ▶ Reviewers observe that East Asian studies in university-level research and teaching is central in connecting contemporary goals of equity, diversity and inclusion; "U of T's student population clearly seeks the international education that EAS provides and considers it an essential part of training to be a global citizen"
  - ▶ Consistently strong demand for EAS classes demonstrates broad recognition of the importance of its humanities-based approach, particularly in a time when East Asia is a centre of global politics, culture and economy
- International comparators
  - ▶ Reviewers note an "unparalleled" level of undergraduate demand and interest at U of T
  - ▶ "The Department's intellectual vision has clearly resulted in excellent faculty hires and retention"

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

- Relationships
  - ▶ Reports noted from several departmental constituencies that the unit does not feel its efforts are appropriately recognized by central administration, and that it feels insufficiently integrated into the broader University
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Reviewers note concerns that the new FAS budget model will make the department's current decision making processes "almost untenable for the Chair", a role that currently has a very high administrative load
  - ▶ Reviewers note concerns about significant apparent discrepancies across groups in understandings of graduate funding (in particular students' take-home pay) in discussions with institutional and divisional leadership and students



- ▶ Reviewers were “disappointed to learn that the Department did not keep meticulous records of [graduate] student income”
- International comparators
  - ▶ Demand for undergraduate offerings presents challenges for appropriate resource allocation

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ Opportunities noted to further strengthen the visibility of East Asian studies across the University by enhancing collaborations with additional programs and units, such as Contemporary Asian Studies (Munk), and the Department of History
  - ▶ Noting that the Chair appears to be solely responsible for carrying institutional understanding and memory for the department, the reviewers stress the importance of shared governance and citizenship, and of institutionalizing collective decision-making
  - ▶ Reviewers note the importance of equipping EAS faculty to manage continuity when a chair departs or takes a leave; and stress that decisions around curriculum, scheduling, programing, and other departmental business should be made jointly
  - ▶ The department, with support from the Dean’s office, should prioritize scheduling an annual retreat for faculty to allow for open discussion about issues such as priorities, complement planning, graduate funding and budget; these discussions would ideally be reflected in a long-term departmental plan
  - ▶ Reviewers stress the importance of service on committees for all faculty at all levels, noting that such service can improve departmental culture, and have positive impacts on both faculty career development and leadership succession planning
  - ▶ EAS is urged to collectively and collaboratively consider whether it would like to prioritize investing its available resources into enhancing its institutional visibility
  - ▶ “We also learned that some undergraduate programming and academics takes place within the colleges. We recognize that full participation in those might mean some dilution of efforts within EAS, but we also feel that discussion of what should be invested toward greater visibility is long overdue.”
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Greater financial support of the department’s excellent graduate programs “should be a decanal priority”
  - ▶ Decanal leadership urged to name unit leadership successors as early as possible for training and onboarding purposes
  - ▶ Reviewers suggest considering the establishment of several departmental committees, to create leadership pipelines and to emphasize that all faculty members are citizens of the department; such committees might cover topics such as executive decision-making, timetabling, curriculum, graduate affairs, placement tests, and faculty promotions
  - ▶ Reviewers recommend that the Department keep detailed records of student income that can be shared with decanal leadership to ensure clarity and mutual understanding

- ▶ Reviewers recommend that the department undertake discussions on how to maximize clarity, equity and planning related to graduate student funding
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ “Given the high quality of the Department’s research, the caliber of its graduate and undergraduate programs, and the tremendous number of students it serves, this Department needs more resources to do this excellent work”
  - ▶ Increased graduate funding should be a top priority for the unit, both for the health of its graduate program, and for alleviating departmental enrolment pressures
  - ▶ “By supporting graduate students, the Department will be able to strengthen every part of its educational mission”



### UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

March 6, 2025

Professor Nick Rule  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
University of Toronto

#### **RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of East Asian Studies**

Dear Professor Rule,

I write in response to your letter of November 7, 2024, regarding the February 26-27, 2024 UTQAP cycle review of the Department of East Asian Studies and its programs and requesting our Administrative response. The programs reviewed were: Honours BA, East Asian Studies (Specialist, Major, Minor); Master of Arts in East Asian Studies; PhD in East Asian Studies.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers: Professor Hu Ying of the University of California, Irvine, Professor Tina Lu of Yale University, and Christine Marran of the University of Minnesota, for their thoughtful and comprehensive review of the Department. We would also like to thank the Department's leadership, faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study, as well as thank the faculty, staff, and students who met with the external reviewers and provided 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 May 22, 2024, and was shared with faculty and staff in the department. We are extremely pleased with the reviewer's positive assessment of the overall strength of the Department of East Asian Studies and its outstanding faculty teaching and research. The reviewers noted that programs attracted high calibre undergraduate and graduate students, offering excellent and wide-ranging courses that enjoy high enrolment and benefit from the faculty's keen dedication to cutting-edge research and innovative teaching in the discipline. The review further praised the Department for the environment within the department, noting the enthusiasm and collegiality that faculty, staff, and students all expressed. The reviewers did make a series of recommendations that would further strengthen the department and its programs. These recommendations primarily concerned the undergraduate course scheduling and undergraduate language courses but also included recommendations to look into more ways to fund graduate research as well as to better support faculty promotions and to better leverage the department's space within the University and promote visibility of the department across the broader institution.

#### OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Sidney Smith Hall, 100 St. George Street, Suite 2005, Toronto, ON M5S 3G3 Canada

Tel: +1 416-978-3383 • Fax: +1 416-978-3887 • [officeofthedean@artsci.utoronto.ca](mailto:officeofthedean@artsci.utoronto.ca) • [www.artsci.utoronto.ca](http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca)

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 Acting 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 Department of East Asian Studies will take place no later than the **2031-32** review cycle.

My office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with chairs and directors and through the unit'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 future priorities of the Department of East Asian Studies and its programs.

Sincerely,



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

cc.

Linda Feng, Acting Chair, Department of East Asian Studies, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Caitlin Burton, Senior Manager, Curriculum, 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  
Gianna Leggio, Academic Planning & Review Officer, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts  
and Science

2023-24 UTQAP Review of the FAS Department of East Asian 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 (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 highlighted the impressive range of inter- and multi-disciplinary courses available to undergraduate students, and voiced support for the unit’s plans to introduce greater flexibility into the undergraduate curriculum. They broadly observed that the scheduling of courses could benefit from enhanced coordination to ensure greater student access and noted student interest in a capstone course (though emphasized that such an offering would be contingent on the availability of sufficient faculty resources).	1	“The Department offers an impressive range of EAS society-culture courses at the 200, 300 and 400-levels, which gives students opportunities to explore multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research. Our conversations with faculty and students indicate that the scheduling of these courses could use better coordination, so that more students may access this rich array of classes.”	The onboarding of a new Undergrad/Grad Administrator in February 2025 will give us a new opportunity to implement better coordination between the Office of Faculty Registrar and our unit, and to streamline the process of scheduling our class offerings. We have also increased faculty consultation in course planning with a standing Undergraduate Committee to coordinate course planning and curriculum development.	Immediate to medium term. The Dean’s Office applauds the unit’s response to the recommendation and supports their plan to continue to review their course planning via consultation with a faculty committee and work with offered divisional supports in the Office of the Faculty Registrar.
	2	“Students also voiced interest in a capstone course (common in many of the best programs on R1 campuses), but that will be clearly contingent on additional faculty resources.”	The department has discussed this recommendation in the past, when it was raised by previous external reviewers. Given our high number of POSTs and small number of faculty, we concluded that it would be difficult to act upon without additional faculty resources. Currently, interested students take Independent Studies with individual faculty, for which we are unable to offer teaching credit.	Medium to long term. Recognizing resourcing limits, the department’s response is sufficient, but The Dean’s Office encourages the department to look into ways to acknowledge faculty who do take on undergraduate independent studies students via PTR if not via workload reduction. The department is also encouraged to reach out to A&S Teaching &

				Learning for consultation to discuss the curriculum/capstone courses.
The reviewers observed that language requirements in the undergraduate Majors and Minors do not appear aligned with those of comparable North American programs and may not fulfil certain program learning outcomes. Highlighting the difficulty for many learners of mastering Chinese, Japanese and Korean, they encouraged the unit to examine relevant requirements at peer institutions, and consider adjustments as appropriate.	3	“We note that language requirements for Majors (2 years) and Minors (none) are out of step with comparable programs in North America, and may not fulfill PLO 7 and PLO 10. While an attenuated minor has the advantage of introducing students to the study of Asia with a low threshold, majors with only two years of language study cannot be said to have acquired communicative competency, nor to be well prepared for more advanced study. Given the difficulty of mastering Chinese, Japanese and Korean, students of East Asian languages typically require 1-2 years of additional study to reach levels comparable to students of European languages.”	The language requirement for our Specialist program is third-year proficiency, which is in line with US major programs. Students also commonly participate in Study Abroad, which increases their language proficiency. We are committed to retaining a Minor program without language requirements. We will investigate further the potential impact of increasing the requirement for the Major program on our already over-stretched language programs.	Medium to long term. The Office of the Dean supports the unit’s response as appropriate given our division’s expectations for different levels of Subject POSTs and support their commitment to look into ways to increase the language acquisition of students in their Major programs. A&S Teaching & Learning is available for curriculum consultations and development.
The reviewers repeatedly noted significant concerns regarding available funding for graduate students, and stressed the critical importance of exploring a range of approaches to ensure that this group is adequately supported. They also observed significant discrepancies in the understanding of graduate funding across divisional and departmental constituencies, and urged the unit to explore approaches to maximize clarity, equity and planning in this area, in order to increase transparency and stability for students (in developing your response, you are encouraged to consult with the School of Graduate Studies).	4	“We suspect that the graduate program’s success is particularly vulnerable to the surge in rental prices in Toronto, and that even with the new budgetary model in place the Deans will need to invest in this program by supplementing graduate stipends and providing the Department with a larger graduate program budget.”	We agree wholeheartedly with this recommendation. Within our current departmental budget, we have maximized stipends through top-up awards and extra TA hours (this year our lowest package was \$35,000). We do not yet understand how the new budget will impact these efforts, but we will not be able to reach the new \$40,000 package without additional support from the Dean’s office, particularly because we will not be able to include the TA hours we are currently offering in the package.	<p>Immediate term. The <a href="#">University of Toronto has committed to raising the minimum funding package per graduate student in the funded cohort to \$40,000 per year</a>, a move that Arts &amp; Science applauds. All graduate funding packages in A&amp;S will meet the University’s commitment to offer each graduate student in the funded cohort a minimum of \$40,000 annually starting in 2025-2026.</p> <p>The Dean’s Office is meeting with every unit within Arts &amp; Science in early Winter 2025 to review the specifics of their unit’s budget in the New Budget Model, which will</p>

				go into effect in May 2025.
	5	“We recommend that the Department keep detailed on-going records of student income that can be shared with the Dean. Those records should be broken down so that they can be compared easily with the Dean’s records and should distinguish between tuition dollars and income dollars per student.”	We do already have these records in our graduate funding letter archive and our graduate funding plans, which record income from the University. We clearly distinguish between tuition and stipend (our reviewers struggled to understand the Canadian custom of including tuition within the package).	Immediate term. The Dean’s Office applauds the department’s record keeping.
	6	“We also recommend that the Department begin discussions about how to maximize clarity, equity and planning (so that students can have some stability) when it comes to graduate student funding.”	We have recognized this as an ongoing issue over the past decade, when it first became clear that many students do not fully comprehend their funding package as detailed (individually and explicitly) in their Graduate Funding Letter. We also explain funding at our annual Graduate Orientation for new students, and our Business Officer also offers individual advice. With our new Undergraduate and Graduate Administrator, we will explore additional ways to explain the complicated terrain of graduate funding.	Medium term. The Office of the Dean supports the unit’s response as appropriate, and notes that our offices provide regular support in terms of staff support and documentation resources to units with respect to graduate funding
The reviewers expressed surprise and concern that no EAS faculty member has been promoted to the rank of Professor in the past decade. They urged that steps be taken to address this issue, noting the recent establishment of a departmental promotions committee as a positive development (in developing your response, you are encouraged to consult with the Office of the Vice-Provost, Faculty and Academic Life).	7	“Given the impressive record of faculty publications and awards, it is particularly jarring that there has been no promotion from associate to full for the past ten years. Although we are told that there is hardly any institutional incentive to this level of promotion, this seems a poor excuse given the international academic norm. That the Department has formed a promotion committee this year is a welcome change.”	A standing Promotions Committee was established in 2023. As of AY 2024-25 (the year the review took place), two faculty members were promoted to full professors. In AY 2025-26, we expect at least one more associate professor to apply for promotion.	Medium to long term. The Dean’s Office applauds the department’s response to this recommendation, and notes that there are Faculty Development and Academic HR resources offered in the Faculty of Arts & Science should the department seek support or consultations.
The reviewers encouraged the department to engage in strategic faculty complement planning,	8	“We also observe that faculty size is clearly disproportionately small for its wide range of courses. There are gaping holes in premodern	We fully support this recommendation. This year, we will again be submitting a FAC request for a position in premodern East Asia, as currently there	Medium to long term. All requests for new positions across the Faculty are submitted to the

<p>prioritizing enhanced coverage in premodern Japan and Korea when opportunities permit, addressing challenges related to the recruitment of language faculty, and further considering the possibility of developing unit strengths in Southeast Asian studies.</p>		<p>Japanese and Korean positions. Several faculty voiced interest in developing in the direction of southeast Asian studies (Vietnam, for example), a direction that is intellectually well justified.”</p>	<p>is only one faculty member on the entire tri-campus who focuses on any area of pre-20<sup>th</sup> century East Asia outside of China. In the short term, we want to fill this glaring gap which prevents us from competing with top EAS programs for recruitment and training. In the long term, we are interested in exploring the possibility of developing Southeast Asian studies to complement the considerable strengths in the social sciences at UofT on that area.</p>	<p>Faculty Appointments Committee (FAC), which includes representation across its sectors (Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences) and from the Colleges. The FAC reviews all requests for new positions and makes recommendations to the Dean regarding which requests should be granted. In a given year, there are many more requests than available positions.</p>
	9	<p>“Language instruction also needs greater support. We understand that language faculty recruitment has presented numerous problems—and that in turn leads to unmet student needs in language instruction. On these matters, the Department should engage in discussions both as a body and with the Deans in considering remedies, whether by improving the terms by which CLTA faculty are hired or by increasing the number of permanent positions.”</p>	<p>The Chair will follow up on informal discussions with the Dean’s Office to explore the possibility (and consequences) of requesting teaching stream positions. Our recruitment of three CLTA faculty over the past three years has greatly enhanced our language programs, but we now face the problem of being unable to retain highly functioning faculty and of struggling to find equally strong candidates in the job applicant pools.</p>	<p>Medium to long term. A&amp;S Dean’s Office supports our faculty teaching in a number of ways, including through A&amp;S Teaching &amp; Learning who can provide resources and training that may help troubleshoot the identified concerns with respect to language instruction requiring greater support within the available resources on hand.</p> <p>All requests for new positions across the Faculty are submitted to the Faculty Appointments Committee (FAC), which includes representation across its sectors (Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences) and from the Colleges. The FAC reviews all requests for new positions and makes recommendations to the Dean regarding which requests should be granted. In a given year, there</p>



				are many more requests than available positions.
Noting the anticipated arrival of a new divisional budget model at FAS and potential impacts on EAS operations, the reviewers urged the department and Faculty to engage in strategic EAS leadership succession planning, and explore approaches to fostering a spirit of shared governance and citizenship among EAS faculty, with the goal of enhancing continuity and resilience in the department.	10	“We believe that the new budgetary model will make the department’s current model of decision making almost untenable for the Chair. Because so much of the administrative work falls to the Chair currently, we are urging the Deans to name successors and replacements as early as possible so that the substitute/new Chair can shadow the current Chair. That said, we also recommend institutionalizing collective decision-making. Currently, the Chair seems to carry institutional understanding and memory. It is essential that the faculty have broader understanding of the system for greater continuity when chairs either step down or take leaves. More importantly, decisions around curriculum, scheduling, programming and other tasks should be made jointly.”	<p>We recognize that there is currently excessive reliance on the chair for making department-wide decisions. We have been exploring ways to create a culture of shared governance, starting with enhancing the activities of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee in monitoring curriculum, scheduling, etc.</p> <p>We support the reviewers’ recommendation for the Dean to name successors to the chair earlier, to allow an incoming chair sufficient time to have an on-the-ground onboarding process.</p> <p>Regarding the suggestion for a departmental retreat, we ask the Dean’s Office to support such a retreat with resources as well as ideas for creating shared governance.</p>	<p>Medium to long term. The Dean’s Office supports the unit’s commitment to looking into securing succession proactively and developing more committees to support the academic administration of the unit, and note that the recently introduced standing Promotions Committee is an example of the unit’s commitment to respond to this recommendation.</p> <p><a href="#">Arts &amp; Science offers up to \$5,000 of matching funds</a> for faculty retreats per unit every 3 years.</p>
	11	“All faculty, no matter how early in their career, should serve on some committee of importance. Such work not only improves departmental culture, but is itself an important part of mentorship, which should not be understood as limited to early career faculty only. Ultimately this form of work can also serve as a leadership pipeline for the department.”	We agree this is a good solution for bringing early career faculty into administrative roles, while still allowing them to focus on their research. Our early career faculty members have been serving on PTR committees, Grad Admissions committees, as well as organizing lecture series and representing our unit at the Governing Council Meeting.	Medium to long term. The Dean’s Office supports the unit’s commitment to responding to this recommendation.
Highlighting the unit’s limited resources relative to the “tremendous” number of students that it currently serves, the reviewers noted concerns that the new FAS budget model may put pressure on EAS to take on even higher enrolments, which could result in unsustainably large class sizes. They recommended careful, strategic	12	“Given the high quality of the Department’s research, the caliber of its graduate and undergraduate programs, and the tremendous number of students it serves, this Department needs more resources to do this excellent work. In particular, the graduate program would benefit from better funding.”	We fully support this recommendation. We believe that three priorities that will enable our department to thrive include: 1) increasing graduate minimum funding package beyond \$40,000 by increasing graduate recruitment funds, top-ups and restricted awards, 2) increasing our faculty complement in critical areas such as pre-modern East Asia	Immediate to medium term. The <a href="#">University of Toronto has committed to raising the minimum funding package per graduate student in the funded cohort to \$40,000 per year</a> , a move that Arts & Science applauds and is working to ensure all

consideration of these issues, and taking steps to ensure that the unit is appropriately supported.			and environmental humanities, among others, and 3) stabilizing the complement in the language programs and providing resources to offer much-needed graduate-level language instructions.	graduate units in the division will meet starting in 2025-2026. The New Budget Model will provide more flexibility to units that will benefit the graduate program and funding graduate students.
Observing a perception among unit members that the Department is insufficiently integrated into the University as a whole, the reviewers highlighted opportunities to enhance EAS's visibility on campus and strengthen ties with the broader University community (in particular, with Contemporary Asian Studies at the Munk School, and the Department of History). They stressed that the Department should understand these efforts as an investment of resources, and consult with its constituents about potential goals and approaches.	13	"The Department has excellent ties with cognate units such as Cinema Studies Institute and the Centre for Comparative Literature. There is still room to make the study of East Asia more visible on the U of T campus by enhancing programmatic collaboration with other units such as Contemporary Asian Studies and History. Our meeting with cognate chairs indicates significant potential in this direction."	We are interested in exploring ways in which we might collaborate with CAS and History, beyond our existing ties of shared faculty (in the case of CAS), shared undergrad and grad students, research collaborations, and serving on each other's job search committees. EAS teaches half of the courses that may be counted as electives by CAS students. Despite these strong ties, we have not had discussion on how we might better coordinate our programs. The Chair will meet with the new director of CAS to explore possibilities.	Immediate to medium term. The Dean's Office will support the conversations between the unit and the Contemporary Asian Studies program offered through the Munk School.
	14	"[We] also heard repeatedly from many parties a sense that the Department does not feel that its efforts are fully recognized by central administration and that it feels insufficiently integrated into the University as a whole. Therefore, we urge that the Department understand visibility as an investment of resources that would otherwise be channeled elsewhere; as such, the time and effort that should be dedicated towards increasing visibility should be the subject of Department-wide discussions, perhaps at the retreat. We are unequipped to make specific recommendations, but we hope that the following points might start relevant conversations.	We support investing in higher visibility of our department. We now have a full-time Communications and Events Coordinator who is in charge of the departmental website, newsletter and social media accounts. We welcome more resources for enhanced publicity.	Medium to long term. A&S views the Department of East Asian Studies as an important part of our transdisciplinary division and will meet with departmental leadership to discuss ways to ensure efforts of the department are better recognized. The Dean's Office supports the unit's commitment to responding to this recommendation. A&S Communications is available for consultations should the department be interested in further enhancements to their publicity.

	15	i.	All of the cognate chairs want more collaboration with EAS. Perhaps these chairs should be invited to an occasional departmental meeting to share in planning. The Chair of Contemporary Asian Studies seemed particularly enthusiastic about building stronger connections with CEAS, whether these take the form of programming and speaker series, or more long-lasting institutional connections;	We will reach out to the incoming David Chu Chair of CAS to discuss future collaborative goals.	Immediate to medium term. The Dean's Office will support the conversations between the unit and the Contemporary Asian Studies program offered through the Munk School.
	16	ii.	We heard from the Deans and cognate chairs that the university incentivizes faculty application for national grants. We encourage faculty to take advantage of this opportunity both to fund their own research and to provide student support. An incidental benefit would be to increase departmental visibility.	Over the past 5 years we have taken advantage of the Dean's Bridge Funding program. We have actively encouraged new faculty to apply for SSHRC grants and pointed them to resources such as the JHI to improve their applications—all with great success. Currently multiple tenure stream faculty hold SSHRC grants and more faculty are applying new applications in coming year. Our faculty have also been highly successful in JHI fellowship competitions.	Medium to long term. The Office of the Dean applauds the department's efforts. A&S funds the salary of the JHI Research Officer, who is also the front-line dedicated team member in the A&S Research Services Office who supports the Department of East Asian Studies. Her role is to support research application development for all faculty members in the unit. The Officer is also available to visit Department meetings to share information with the unit about key funding opportunities, strategies and best practices. If the unit would like a customized session focused on grants and budgeting/including students in grants, the Officer can tailor her presentation to include this important consideration. The Research Awards Writer and Coordinator is another important resource for supporting awards and honours nomination

				development in the unit.
17	iii.	We heard from chairs of other units that co-teaching is a common practice among other departments. Even with the recognition that participation might temporarily divert teaching from core courses, it seems such participation might be a good use of departmental resources;	Co-teaching may be attractive to faculty, though it is perhaps not as common of a practice as the reviewers suggest. However, as we already struggle to satisfy our student demand with our current faculty complement, we will explore ways to enable co-teaching without sacrificing the robustness of our programs. We would be interested in hearing more about how other departments enable co-teaching within the current and new budget model.	<p>Medium to long term. The Office of the Dean supports the department's response and encourages them to discuss different teaching models with cognate units and may also wish to reach out to A&amp;S Teaching &amp; Learning for consultation.</p> <p>Under the new budget model (NBM), Unit budgets will be determined primarily by their activity - the net revenue from their graduate enrolments, undergraduate teaching activity, and research overhead revenues. Unit budgets will be stable in transition – they will receive the same budget they would have received under the old methodology (and this will persist), so that their budgets will change under the NBM incrementally. Going forward, Units will have both the changes in revenues and responsibility for changes in costs. They will have greater budgetary clarity and agency as they will be well informed and able to pursue their own academic priorities and goals.</p>
18	iv.	We also learned that some undergraduate programming and academics takes place	A few EAS faculty members are already involved in college programs, particularly the Vic One program.	Medium to long term. Inter-program faculty involvement is

		<p>within the colleges. We recognize that full participation in those might mean some dilution of efforts within EAS, but we also feel that discussion of what should be invested toward greater visibility is long overdue.”</p>	<p>In the future, a department-wide discussion on our relationship with the colleges may be a good idea.</p>	<p>encouraged in a division as trans-disciplinary as Arts &amp; Science. In addition to faculty involvement in College programs where possible, the Office of the Dean encourages the department to reach out to College Registrar’s offices to address areas of confusion about the programs that may help support the registrars in their academic advising of students enrolled, or interested in enrolling in, programs offered by the Department. Enhanced communication between the College Registrars and the department may help promote the visibility of their programs as well as bring broader understanding to the department’s language course enrolment practices.</p>
<p>Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>“At the same time, academic Coordinators voiced frustration with the ACORN system whose unwieldiness results in many days of intense labor on the part of the instructors in placing students into the right level of language study. We recommend improving the placement system with better technologies at all levels of the placement process and would like to praise the Korean program in particular for piloting innovative placement techniques.”</p>	<p>Language placement is time-consuming yet necessary to maintain the quality of our language programs. We have begun and will continue exploring how new technologies might reduce some of the workload involved.</p>	<p>Medium to long term. The Office of the Dean encourages the Department to consult with colleagues in the Office of the Faculty Registrar and A&amp;S Teaching &amp; Learning to explore creative ways to address language placement bottlenecks.</p>

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

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*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

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The reviewers praised the department's excellence in both teaching and research, highlighting the high quality of its undergraduate and graduate programs. Curricular offerings are excellent, wide-ranging and innovative, highlighting ecopolitical, literary, and cultural offerings combined with language-training opportunities. Student enrolment is high; EAS is one of the largest humanities departments at U of T, and enrolls the largest proportion of international students of any humanities unit. The reviewers commended the graduate program as remarkably successful, particularly in placing alumni in high-ranking positions worldwide; and students appear enthusiastic about their training and mentorship. They observed that EAS faculty are committed to cutting-edge research and prioritize innovative teaching, and that the department has done an excellent job of recruiting early-career faculty with emerging strengths in transnational and media studies. Students at all levels appear to be enthusiastic members of a learning community; a climate of "friendly collegiality" is noted among faculty; and departmental leadership is committed and capable. The department enjoys excellent ties with cognate units; and staff appear highly competent, and actively involve themselves in new initiatives and technologies. Finally, the reviewers highlighted the central importance of East Asian Studies in university-level teaching and research to contemporary institutional goals related to equity, diversity and inclusion.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: introducing greater flexibility into the undergraduate curriculum, and enhancing coordination of course scheduling to ensure greater student access; examining language requirements at peer institutions and considering adjustments to the unit's own requirements as appropriate; exploring a range of approaches to ensure that graduate students are adequately supported, and developing methods to maximize clarity, equity and planning related to graduate student funding; addressing concerns that no EAS faculty member has been promoted to the rank of Professor in the past decade; engaging in strategic faculty complement planning; engaging in strategic EAS leadership succession planning, and exploring approaches to fostering a spirit of shared governance and citizenship among EAS faculty; strategically engaging with concerns that the new FAS budget model may put pressure on EAS to take on even higher enrolments; and pursuing opportunities to enhance EAS's visibility on campus and strengthen ties with the broader University community.

The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty 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

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The Arts & Science Dean's office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with chairs and directors and through regular governance and curricular oversight.

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than midway between the February 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2031-32 on the status of the implementation plans.

The next review will be commissioned no later than 2031-32.

## 6 Distribution

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On July 15<sup>th</sup> 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 leadership.

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

## 1 Review Summary

<b>Program(s) Reviewed:</b>	History (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor ( <i>Specialist/Major Foci</i> : Law and History); History MA, PhD
<b>Unit Reviewed:</b>	Department of History
<b>Commissioning Officer:</b>	Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
<b>Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bonnie Effros, Professor and Department Head, Department of History, University of British Columbia</li> <li>• Scott Levi, Professor and Chair, Department of History, Ohio State University</li> <li>• Carla Gardina Pestana, Distinguished Professor and Joyce Appleby Endowed Chair of America in the World History Department, University of California, Los Angeles</li> </ul>
<b>Date of Review Visit:</b>	April 3-4, 2024
<b>Review Report Received by VPAP:</b>	May 8, 2024
<b>Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:</b>	March 6, 2025
<b>Date Reported to AP&amp;P:</b>	April 10, 2025



## Previous UTQAP Review

Date: November 16-17, 2015

### Summary of Findings and Recommendations

#### Significant Program Strengths

- Impressive department offering a broad range of undergraduate and graduate courses offered on a range of areas, periods, and themes
- Excellent recent revision of graduate fields in global, transnational, and comparative frames
- Rigorous, attractive undergraduate program that balances geographic, chronological, and thematic breadth
- Impressive department with leadership among Canadian universities during a period of rapid change
- Impressive rate of research publication during the past five years
- Several faculty members have become active in pioneering media and digital projects
- Relatively large faculty drawn from three campuses offers unusual breadth
- Chinese history has become a major strength since the last external review

#### Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Taking a more deliberate approach to graduate and undergraduate curriculum development, including strengthening assessment practices, adding specific courses, and providing internship opportunities
- Rethinking recruitment strategies at the undergraduate and graduate levels in light of declining enrolments
- Considering the structure of graduate funding and TA roles in relation to the structure and length of the graduate curriculum
- Recruiting and funding international graduate students to strengthen U of T's global position
- Engaging in complement planning to provide coverage of Latin American and African fields
- Addressing concerns about diversity and issues of gender equality
- Providing relief to associate professors through mentoring and teaching releases
- Supporting collaboration, intellectual community, and communication within the department, while still maintaining connections to interdisciplinary centres and institutes
- Addressing departmental space use and determining how to best serve tri-campus faculty

## Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

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### Documentation Provided to Reviewers

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

### Consultation Process

Faculty, students, administrative staff and senior program administrators as well as members of relevant cognate units as determined by the commissioning officer: Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Interim Associate Dean, Unit-Level Reviews; Department Chair, Associate Chairs, Dept. Administrative Manager and Administrative Staff, Assistant, Associate, and Full Professors, Chairs of Cognate Units, Graduate faculty; and undergraduate and graduate students.

## Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

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### 1. Undergraduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Department has made numerous changes to undergraduate program requirements and curriculum recommended in the previous review
  - ▶ Departmental practice of scheduling courses in a wider range of days and times rather than concentrated at midday a few days a week has had a good effect
  - ▶ One-semester 100-level courses have been successful in attracting additional students to the History minor
- Innovation
  - ▶ Recent successful innovations include launching the undergraduate writing support centre and increases in half-year course offerings
  - ▶ Law-school oriented track through the undergraduate curriculum has yielded excellent results.

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Implementation of undergraduate program changes on a piecemeal basis has resulted student confusion due to layered program requirements, opportunities, and expectations
  - ▶ Difficulty navigating program requirements may have contributed in part to a decline in enrolments in the Major program

- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Students registered some concerns regarding timely availability of course syllabi and receiving grades a timely fashion

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Conduct a systematic review of entry/completion requirements in order to create accessible and comprehensible tracks through the program and eliminate barriers to completion; reduce requirements and course prerequisites where justified
  - ▶ Update the department's course catalog, removing listings for courses that are no longer taught and accurately describing current courses
  - ▶ Continue beneficial practice of scheduling courses across a wider range of days and times
  - ▶ Continue developing one-semester 100-level courses in order to attract additional students to the History minor
  - ▶ Reviewers recommend against the practice of offering tutorials in upper-year courses and discourage "participation points" as part of their grading scheme
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Make course syllabi available to students as early as possible, to allow them to select appropriate courses and plan for their learning
  - ▶ Ensure that faculty are aware of grading practices policies when designing course syllabi, particularly regarding the requirement to return grades on a certain portion of course work prior to the course drop deadline
  - ▶ Improve communication with students to foster a more welcoming environment and to help students navigate their programs, e.g., via emails, in-person advising, and website enhancements
  - ▶ Discuss the idea of having faculty take an increased role in undergraduate student advising, with careful consideration of pros and cons; reviewers note that clarified curriculum requirements may make an additional layer in the advising process unnecessary
  - ▶ Consider making lecture slides available to students for viewing after the class

## 2. Graduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Excellent graduate students are admitted, "intent on studying a range of topics far beyond the department's traditional areas of focus"
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Recent shift in language requirement completion deadline, to after the comprehensive exam, gives students additional time without slowing general progress

- Quality indicators – graduate students
  - ▶ Graduate students serving as teaching assistants in undergraduate courses are essential to the University’s teaching mission
  - ▶ Students have excellent prospects for placement in Canadian universities and beyond
- Student funding
  - ▶ Reviewers applaud recent practice of expanding the use of restricted funds to meet graduate student needs

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Reduction in incoming class sizes creates difficulty offering courses aligned with students' own interests; reviewers observe that "specifically tailoring courses seems an impossible goal"
  - ▶ Language requirement presents challenges as students’ language needs shift with the pursuit of new areas of study, which may increase time to degree completion
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Reviewers express concern regarding department’s reliance on the Graduate History Society as a primary vehicle for interaction with the graduate student community, due to limited student involvement in the Society
  - ▶ Reduction in incoming class sizes may impact opportunities to build a sense of community among graduate students studying the same field
  - ▶ Feelings of isolation experienced by some students in the department, while others find intellectual and practical support in other units with which they are affiliated
  - ▶ Opportunities for active mentoring and community building appear to be available only to students whose advisors actively work to meet these needs
  - ▶ Students expressed that they would like more time dedicated to their archival research without facing financial penalties for doing so
  - ▶ International students face unique challenges including added financial constraints, the need to travel far afield for their research, and acclimating to an unfamiliar cultural context
- Quality indicators – graduate students
  - ▶ Lengthening time-to-completion rates attributed to a number of causes, including: the impact of the pandemic on student research timelines, the need to balance teaching assistantships with their academic work, and the “globalizing trend in the research that graduate students pursue”
- Student funding
  - ▶ Reliance on teaching assistantships for student funding slows progress on research and extends time to completion
  - ▶ High cost of living in Toronto is a significant challenge for graduate students; financial vulnerability “negatively affects morale, demands time away from studies to pursue funds for survival, and slows time to degree”

- ▶ While commendable, the use of restricted funds for student support is not sufficient to meet students' needs, and requires the use of departmental funds that could otherwise be used for research support

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Consider developing a year-long required graduate course, offered during the first year, to introduce PhD students to the discipline and to issues of professionalization
  - ▶ Consider ways to develop courses with appeal for as wide a range of students as possible
  - ▶ Consider ways of introducing flexibility into program language requirements, in response to students' need to learn languages in support of global studies
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ An additional required course for all incoming students would help to develop a stronger sense of community among each new cohort
  - ▶ Consider developing cross-field course work to help community building among graduate students
  - ▶ Improve departmental communication with graduate students through direct outreach to the student population; reduce reliance on Graduate Student Society for communications with students
  - ▶ Undertake a "sustained and general" effort to provide broadly available opportunities for student mentoring and community building
  - ▶ Develop additional supports for the unique needs of international students, including special mentoring, opportunities to integrate closely within the university community, and financial assistance where possible
- Student funding
  - ▶ Explore ways to provide additional resources to support research travel and time away from teaching, particularly for students whose research programs require international travel
  - ▶ Consider establishing an emergency fund to assist graduate students experiencing financial crisis

### 3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Research
  - ▶ The faculty boast stellar research accomplishments including pathbreaking monographs, edited collections, articles, and chapters
  - ▶ Faculty have regularly won SSHRC Insight and Insight Development grants, Jackman Institute Research fellowships, and prestigious international awards
- Faculty
  - ▶ Accomplished faculty members support undergraduate students through History programs as well as other units with which individual faculty have relationships

- ▶ Tri-Campus Graduate Department draws on faculty expertise from each of the three campuses to guide graduate students
- ▶ Faculty pursue innovative scholarship and serve in a variety of administrative capacities

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

- Faculty
  - ▶ Reviewers caution that the graduate programs' recent (and successful) shift to a more global emphasis may lead to an undue burden on younger and more recently hired faculty, due to heightened student interest in these areas and a general tendency among graduate students to prefer working with younger faculty
  - ▶ Associate professors appear to be having difficulty advancing into the rank of Professor
  - ▶ Department currently has no clear guidelines on the requirements for promotion to the rank of Professor; current standards for promotion are informal and unevenly implemented
  - ▶ “Lack of transparency around promotion and perceived inequities in standards has bred mistrust in the system and undermines morale at the associate rank, where many faculty have remained for a long time despite their record of research, teaching productivity, and contributions to the department. This imbalance seems disproportionately to affect female faculty and may also contribute to disengagement from departmental activities and intellectual life.”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
  - ▶ Consider the need for equitable distribution of advising responsibilities in the graduate admissions process, with an understanding that some faculty will attract a greater proportion of applicants
  - ▶ Distribute teaching responsibilities more evenly among faculty, in order to create a more equitable environment and allow more time for in-demand faculty to pursue research
  - ▶ Develop a robust mentorship program for pre-tenure faculty members, to help orient them to departmental expectations and develop strategies for career success
  - ▶ Increase transparency in governance and develop clear written guidelines articulating expectations for tenure and promotion, and for promotion to the rank of Professor.
  - ▶ Consider general disciplinary trends toward allowing additional flexibility in tenure and promotion processes (e.g., “requiring a second monograph *or the equivalent* for promotion”); such a change “would be consistent with the departments’ coverage of new fields of study, outreach to a broader audience, and hiring of a new generation of scholars with innovative topics and approaches”

## 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
  - ▶ Departmental culture is collaborative, responsive, and supportive
  - ▶ Faculty enjoy considerable freedom to teach to research strengths and pursue activities in affiliated programs
  - ▶ Department is “a good partner” and supportive of inter-departmental partnerships
  - ▶ Faculty members gratefully highlighted a number of equity-related initiatives supporting them in times of need
  - ▶ Strong, stable staff enjoys working together
  - ▶ Widespread support and appreciation for the efforts of the current chair to shepherd the department through “an exceptionally challenging term”
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ History Department “is an exceptional academic unit by any appropriate metric”
  - ▶ Department has a longstanding international reputation, considered by many measures as “the highest ranked in Canada and among the top programs in North America more broadly”
  - ▶ Fruitful recent efforts to expand offerings at the undergraduate level and to develop a more global emphasis in the Tri-Campus Graduate Department
  - ▶ Positive steps taken since last review to develop a more global curriculum that reflects the disciplinary trend emphasizing thematic rather than geographic foundations for courses
  - ▶ Stable undergraduate enrolments, as well as the Department’s decision to restrict graduate cohort size in response to the current academic job market and a desire to ensure that students receive adequate financial support, all suggest that the unit is in good health
- International comparators
  - ▶ Department is placed highly in international rankings (QS/Times Higher Ed), and ranks “at the very top among Canadian universities and all North American public universities” in terms of publications

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

- Relationships
  - ▶ Self Study and some unit stakeholders expressed the need to foster a greater sense of community in the Department

- ▶ Large department size and dispersal of space across campus creates a sense that there are limited opportunities for intellectual engagement in the department; some faculty and students look elsewhere to find a sense of community
- ▶ Reviewers note ongoing challenges arising from the complex nature of tri-campus relationships
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Departmental governance structure, “largely run by committees rather than involving general consultation,” limits discussion, debate, and transparency in decision-making processes; “This has led some faculty to disengage from the department’s intellectual life and governance, attending department meetings only virtually or choosing to skip them entirely”
  - ▶ Faculty members commented on feeling excluded from faculty search processes; “Many articulated a desire for an open discussion of such important decisions”
  - ▶ Faculty members commented on a lack of clarity around retention processes and decisions
  - ▶ Large departmental office dispersed across campus creates challenges in building a cohesive sense of community
  - ▶ Shortage of departmental space on the St. George campus limits opportunities for UTM and UTSC faculty members to meet with and provide mentoring for graduate students
  - ▶ Departmental communications and events coordination duties are distributed among several staff members with limited capacity due to other responsibilities; faculty and staff expressed concern regarding inconsistent and inadequate departmental communication processes, “which negatively impacts morale and undermines opportunities to enhance the unit’s reputation on campus”
  - ▶ Faculty in leadership roles may become overextended, particularly if they elect to continue with a full teaching load; overextension often results in additional labor being undertaken by staff members
  - ▶ Reviewers observe the apparent lack of a formal document of departmental bylaws and a lack of clarity among faculty regarding how the department operates
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Regarding discussions of the new FAS budget model, reviewers note concern over possible outcomes of shifting greater financial responsibility directly to individual departments
  - ▶ Duplication of material in courses offered by other units may threaten the continued health of the Department and dilute students’ education
  - ▶ Shift toward a more global curriculum, and emphasis on thematic rather than geographic foundations for courses, while positive, has resulted in faculty working within areas of traditional strength feeling that their work may be undervalued
  - ▶ Faculty specializing in the history of regions outside of Europe and North America appear to be more concentrated at the UTM and UTSC campuses than at St. George, with problematic implications



- ▶ Recent faculty departures have left some critical disciplinary subject areas underrepresented including Russia, the Soviet Union, and China; reviewers note that these are areas with natural alignments with other important U of T units

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ Consider providing additional support for events (e.g., workshops, speaker events, manuscript workshops, grant writing events, a departmental colloquium) to help model intellectual life and reinforce a sense of shared purpose in the department
  - ▶ Expand efforts to leverage professional events, writing and research workshops, graduate research conferences, and other mechanisms to build and maintain a more cohesive sense of community among faculty and graduate students
  - ▶ Explore ways to convene regular meetings of the full departmental staff on days when all are working in person, to promote communication and a greater sense of community
  - ▶ Appointment of a new Tri-Campus Graduate Department Chair will hopefully help to address ongoing challenges in tri-campus relationships
  - ▶ Enhance communication and consultation between tri-campus history units around graduate education and other shared agendas
  - ▶ Consider sharing a general statement of the mechanics of retention processes with departmental faculty
  - ▶ Encourage faculty to maintain professional connections with other units, to enhances interdisciplinary relationships and departmental visibility
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Allocate resources for a Communications Officer position, with responsibility for communication with various populations connected to the department, website management, and coordination of events
  - ▶ Enhanced departmental communications will bolster efforts to reach and build relationships with alumni and other potential donors, and have the potential to attract new students, increase enrollments, and generate additional revenue for the department
  - ▶ Explore options for providing space on the St. George Campus for graduate faculty at UTM and UTSC to meet with their graduate students
  - ▶ Consider whether faculty in leadership positions might be required to take course releases during their period of service
  - ▶ Discuss and draft a formal set of departmental bylaws with input from all departmental stakeholders
  - ▶ Creation of detailed guidance for departmental leadership roles would flatten the learning curve for subsequent leaders and lighten responsibility of staff members to serve as holders of institutional memory
  - ▶ Revise the departmental Policy Committee to include an advisory role for the Chair
  - ▶ Consider additional steps toward decentralizing departmental governance to bring more conversations and additional decision-making authority to the faculty as a whole

- ▶ Consider adding a departmental Ombuds position role with responsibility for orienting new faculty and addressing issues relating to morale, community, and other appropriate tasks
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ FAS should remain conscious that “big changes may take several academic cycles to take root; and, more specifically, the U of T History Department’s push to offer more equitable global coverage will only succeed if the FAS continues to offer appropriate languages and other skills crucial to undertaking historical research”
  - ▶ Consider how Faculty curriculum processes can prevent competition between departments offering courses covering similar material
  - ▶ Implementation of a new budget model that incentivizes student recruitment will create new challenges as well as new opportunities
  - ▶ Consider strategies for lessening “the inherent imbalance in the Tri-Campus structure for the purpose of graduate training” such as rotating the Graduate Chair appointment among the faculty of all three campuses
  - ▶ Consider faculty hiring strategies to improve the balance of disciplinary and geographic coverage among faculty at the three campuses
  - ▶ Offering a robust curriculum in areas relevant to the trajectory of global geopolitics may lead to increased enrolments and revenue for the department, and generate positive recognition for the University

March 6, 2025

Professor Nick Rule  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
University of Toronto

**RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of History,**

Dear Professor Rule,

I write in response to your letter of December 10, 2024, regarding the April 2024 UTQAP cycle review of the Department of History and its programs, and requesting our Administrative response. The programs reviewed were: Hons. BA, History (Specialist, Major, and Minor), Master of Arts in History, and a PhD in History.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers: Professor Bonnie Effros of the University of British Columbia, Professor Scott Levi of Ohio State University, and Carla Gardina Pestana of University of California, Los Angeles, for their thoughtful and comprehensive review of the Department. We would also like to thank the Department's leadership, faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study, as well as thank the faculty, staff, and students who met with the external reviewers and provided 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 May 8, 2024, and was shared with faculty and staff in the department. We are very pleased with the reviewers' positive report on the Department of History and its programs. They praised its international scholarly reputation and research accomplishments evident in their faculty obtaining awards, grants, and in their monograph outputs. The reviewers commended the expanded services for students including the writing centre and the new law-school focused undergraduate track. The reviewers also recognized the strong relationships and partnerships with cognate units. The reviewers identified some areas for consideration including recommending a comprehensive curriculum review to clear up some of the student confusion regarding program requirements and expectations. They also recommended some improvements to the graduate student experience and to the overall sense of community in the department, while noting communication challenges facing the department should be addressed.

Each of the review 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.

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Sidney Smith Hall, 100 St. George Street, Suite 2005, Toronto, ON M5S 3G3 Canada

Tel: +1 416-978-3383 • Fax: +1 416-978-3887 • [officeofthedean@artsci.utoronto.ca](mailto:officeofthedean@artsci.utoronto.ca) • [www.artsci.utoronto.ca](http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca)

My Administrative Response and Implementation Plan was developed in consultation with the Acting 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 Department of History will take place no later than the **2031-32** review cycle.

My office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with chairs and directors [and through the unit'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 future priorities of the Department of Political Science programs.

Sincerely,



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

cc.

Eric Jennings, Chair, Department of History, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Caitlin Burton, Senior Manager, Curriculum, 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  
Amanda Pullan, Academic Planning & Review Officer, Office of the Dean, Faculty of  
Arts and Science

2023-24 UTQAP Review of FAS Department of History - 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 that recent updates to the undergraduate curriculum have been carried out in a piecemeal way, leading to student confusion regarding program requirements and expectations. They recommended undertaking a comprehensive curriculum review to clarify entry and advancement requirements, create clear pathways through the program, eliminate barriers to completion, and update the Department’s course catalog.	1.	“Since the last review, the department has made numerous recommended changes to the undergraduate program requirements and curriculum. Having undertaken this work on a piecemeal basis, it now finds that students are confused by layered requirements and the resulting opportunities and expectations... Rather than continue to rely on individual exceptions, the department should undertake a systematic review of entry and advancement requirements, offering clear tracks through the program and eliminating barriers to its successful completion.”	<p>Curriculum review is underway, with curriculum consultation and an undergraduate programme retreat set for the fall of 2025 for all St. George history faculty. The Undergraduate Chair’s office has already started working with the Curriculum Review Specialist in the Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education and the Assistant Director, Teaching &amp; Learning Initiatives at in the Faculty of Arts &amp; Science to support our curriculum renewal goals.</p> <p>We have completed an environmental scan of peer institutions’ history programs internationally and of other U15 universities. This winter term, we are participating as a department in a conversation about generative AI in curriculum, teaching and learning. Next, the Undergraduate chair and staff complete a thorough review of our existing program and courses in the summer of 2025, bringing additional retirements and calendar clean-up forward in the fall 2025</p>	Immediate to medium-term: The Vice-Dean, Undergraduate and the Vice-Dean, Academic Planning support the Department of History's plan to review its curriculum and will work with the Department leadership on any proposed curricular changes.

			governance cycle (we did a fair bit this year as well). We will then be working collaboratively with A&S Governance to bring forward a comprehensive plan for renewal in the 2026-2027 cycle following our departmental retreat and as a culmination of work began this past year. In the interim, the undergraduate programme committee and the Department as a whole are continuing to promote large thematic and methodological courses for the first and second year levels, making some of these classes modular so that professors can step in for colleagues on leave, sabbatical, etc., such as HIS112H, Ten Events that Shaped the Word, HIS115H, History Now: How the Past Shapes the Present, HIS101Y: Histories of Violence, HIS108Y, What is History?	
	2.	“When this process is completed and the department has updated its major requirements, it should also clean up the catalog, eliminating course listings for courses that are no longer taught and accurately describing current courses.”	This is an ongoing process. The department regularly eliminates courses that are no longer taught, in keeping with Arts and Science Policy.	See #1 above.
The reviewers recommended consideration of a required introductory graduate course in historiography/methods and exploring ways to address professionalization within the graduate programs.	3.	“We suggest a methods/historiography course that serves as a general introduction to the discipline, preferably offered in the first year... In addition, students need assistance with professionalization, which might be handled in a course, but could also be addressed in workshops. We encourage the department to consider a yearlong required course, offered during the first year, which might begin with the discipline and then turn to professionalization issues.”	The MA level already has a methods/historiography course known as HIS 1997 The Practice of History, which trains Masters’ students in historiography, archival methods and professionalization. The PhD programme has not included that because an MA is required to enter our PhD and our very few direct admit candidates must take HIS 1997. Methods/historiography are also built into many other graduate seminars.	The Dean’s Office recognizes that the Department has addressed this review report recommendation by reviewing its current methods course HIS 1997 The Practice of History.
The reviewers noted that financial concerns for graduate students negatively affect morale and result in increased time-to-completion rates. They recommended	4.	“...the department should consider locating funds to support research travel and time away from teaching, as mentioned previously. These resources are especially	With the implementation of the new budget model in May 2025, the department will have greater autonomy over distribution of funds. A suggestion would be to set aside a specific	Immediate to long-term. As the Unit notes, the new budget model will provide the Unit with greater budgetary autonomy, clarity, and agency, so they can allocate resources to

exploring ways to provide supports for students' research travel and time away from teaching, and establishing resources to support graduate students in moments of financial crisis.		pressing for those whose research programs require travel to foreign countries. Financial vulnerability of the sort experienced currently by the graduate students negatively affects morale, demands time away from studies to pursue funds for survival, and slows time to degree."	<p>amount (i.e. \$1,000 per eligible student per academic year) to support graduate student research travel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Immediate actions – the department manager shall analyze available funds and suggest an amount per student that is supportive of research while ensuring funds for other initiatives within the department.</li> <li>- Intermediate actions – the department manager will determine the long-term feasibility of the plan, designate the writing of a terms of reference document and make it available to the HIS community.</li> <li>- Long-term actions – establish a priority when creating an annual budgetary term of reference with initiatives to be included on an ongoing basis.</li> </ul>	their own academic priorities, such as to support graduate students.
	5.	"The department might want to consider establishing an emergency fund to assist graduate students in moments of financial crisis. Students report that university funds for such purposes are inadequate and restricted."	<p>The department has currently set aside an EDI distribution fund and sends a call for applications to graduate students. Any requests within the defined boundaries of the call for applications are considered. In the previous academic year, additional funds from the Dean's office were used to support the EDI distribution funds. The entirety of the fund was disbursed to students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Immediate actions – the department manager will determine the availability of funds in the new budget model and in collaboration with the leadership team determine whether to continue with the current model and the amount to be set aside for disbursement.</li> <li>- Intermediate actions – the department manager will determine the long-term feasibility of the plan,</li> </ul>	See # 4 above.

			<p>designate to write a terms of reference and publish to the HIS community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Long-term actions – establish a priority when creating an annual budgetary term of reference with initiatives to be included on an ongoing basis.</li> </ul>	
The reviewers recommended exploring ways to provide additional support to address the unique concerns and needs of international students.	6.	“We note that either the university or the department (or both) should attend better to the needs of international students. They face added financial constraints, often need to travel far afield for their research, and confront an unfamiliar cultural context. They would benefit from special mentoring, efforts to see them incorporated within the university community, and any added financial assistance that can be arranged.”	The Graduate History Society has put forward an initiative along these lines at the graduate level. At the Undergraduate level, our Undergraduate teaching team works in close conjunction with College Registrars to support international students, although their financial constraints cannot be addressed by the History Department, especially in the new budget model.	Immediate. The Dean’s Office supports the unit in their plan to work with their Graduate society to better support international graduate students. The Dean’s office further encourages the Department to consider how to communicate supports offered by the Centre for International Experience (CIE) for international students, both undergraduate and graduate.
The reviewers noted concerns related to the range of disciplinary coverage in the department, observing that “retirements and other separations have left some critical areas of the department’s intellectual life underrepresented or entirely vacant” and noting that faculty specializing in the history of regions outside of Europe and North America appear to be concentrated on the UTM and UTSC campuses. They recommended exploring ways to improve how the three campuses balance disciplinary coverage.	7.	“Another issue to consider is that retirements and other separations have left some critical areas of the department’s intellectual life underrepresented or entirely vacant. This includes Russia and the Soviet Union as well as China. Both areas have natural alignments with other important U of T units, and, considering the trajectory of global geopolitics, it seems likely that offering a robust curriculum in these areas would generate both positive recognition for the U of T, and student enrollments would also generate a positive revenue stream for the department and FAS.”	This is an important point. In 2024-2025 we were able to hire a new historian of Brazil and a historian of China, two much-needed areas. Both have had an immediate impact and are drawing impressive numbers of undergraduates in their classes. We agree that there is a clear need for a Russia/Soviet historian, especially given the current geopolitical climate and the strength that we have in terms of library support in that field. The Department is in the process of putting forward a new complement plan for 2025-2026, which addresses both the retirements of our Soviet Historian and our Japan and South Asian historians. These were the only scholars of those two essential areas on our St. George campus.	Immediate to long-term. The Dean’s Office recognizes that the Department is prioritizing this recommendation and will work with the unit to explore their options through the faculty complement planning process.
	8.	“It also appears that there has been greater success hiring faculty who specialize in the history of regions outside of Europe and North America on the other campuses than the St. George Campus. It is problematic to	There is a clear need in multiple areas, especially with two retirements that will leave us with no tenure-track historian of South Asia on the St. George campus, which is not just shocking in its own right for a city	See # 7 above.



		house (or perceive to house) the histories of areas external to Europe and North America on the UTM / UTSC campuses. Looking ahead, insofar as it is possible, we encourage the department to aim for an improved balance of coverage among the various campuses.”	like Toronto, but also a major step backward for a St. George Department which previously had two South Asianists circa 2000 (one for early South Asia, one for modern). We will also be without a historian of Japan.	
The reviewers raised concerns regarding a lack of clear guidelines for promotion and tenure processes; they observed that "perceived inequities in standards has bred mistrust in the system and undermines morale at the associate rank" and highlighted that imbalances appear to disproportionately affect female faculty members. They suggested providing mentorship opportunities for junior faculty, developing written guidelines for PTR processes, and considering more flexible pathways for promotion (in developing your response you are encouraged to consult with the office of the Vice-Provost, Faculty & Academic Life).	9.	“The department currently has no clear guidelines on the accomplishments requisite for promotion to professor. This situation would be problematic even if what informal standards existed were implemented evenly. The lack of transparency around promotion and perceived inequities in standards has bred mistrust in the system and undermines morale at the associate rank, where many faculty have remained for a long time despite their record of research, teaching productivity, and contributions to the department. This imbalance seems disproportionately to affect female faculty and may also contribute to disengagement from departmental activities and intellectual life.”	As we understand the rules, the Department’s tenure and promotion guidelines must be those of the Faculty of Arts and Science. The expectations are clear and are moreover listed in Arts and Science documents which are sent out to candidates and external reviewers alike. However, it is true that past practice in History was that two books were required for promotion. The new front office team have made it clear to the Promotions Committee and to Associate Professors that no such wording exists in either departmental or Arts and Science governance documents, and that a CV featuring one book and many high-calibre articles and chapters and/or public history interventions would certainly be eligible. We have run into a challenge, though: despite our insisting on this rule, some outside colleagues at other universities still believe in the convention of two books (the fact that we are asking senior colleagues elsewhere explains this in part, as the shift across the discipline has occurred in the last decade).	Immediate to long-term. The Dean’s Office supports the Department in improving communication about the requirements for tenure and promotion and encourages consultation with the office of the Vice-Provost, Faculty & Academic Life for further guidance as needed.
	10.	“...we note that associate professors appear to be having difficulty advancing into the rank of Professor. As a long-term solution to this problem, we recommend a robust mentoring program for new faculty, whose senior colleagues can orient them toward expectations and strategies for success throughout their careers”	We have a mentoring programme and policy and have bolstered it since September 2024. Concretely, the Department is encouraging mentors to invite their “mentees” out to lunch, covered by the department.	Immediate to medium-term. The Dean’s Office supports the Department’s plan to further enhance and encourage mentorship in the Department.

	11.	<p>“ The department should develop written guidelines and consider joining the more general trend in favor of flexibility, requiring a second monograph or the equivalent for promotion... Accepting the general trend toward widening our discipline’s objectives and audiences would be consistent with the departments’ coverage of new fields of study, outreach to a broader audience, and hiring of a new generation of scholars with innovative topics and approaches. This change would also acknowledge that public-facing scholarship benefits the discipline and society as a whole, and recognize the value of and impact on the discipline of increasing funding sources for collaborative work and digital research.”</p>	<p>As indicated above, this is indeed the trend in the discipline of history. Acknowledging public history, outreach and public-facing scholarship is certainly important, and we shall endeavour to give those serious attention within our Promotions Committee and Salary Committee.</p>	<p>The Dean’s Office supports the Department’s plans to address this review report recommendation.</p>
<p>The reviewers noted opportunities to improve the graduate student experience and, more broadly, to enhance the sense of community within the Department; they recommended supporting Department-wide intellectual activities to reinforce a sense of shared purpose.</p>	12.	<p>“As the situation currently stands, some students feel isolated; others find intellectual and practical support in other units with which they are affiliated; and only those working with advisors who offer active mentoring and opportunities for community building feel that their needs in these areas are met within the department. We advise a more sustained and general effort to meet their needs.”</p>	<p>Key to addressing students’ sense of isolation is a consistent system for clear benchmarking of progress through the programme. The department is normalizing a system of regular mentorship meetings with clear and well-communicated expectations for students, their supervisors and their committee members of what these meetings should track. We offer students and faculty questions to discuss at these meetings, tailored to the student’s stage in the program.</p> <p>For PhD students, in accordance with best practice from the School of Graduate Studies the Graduate Chair, Graduate Administrator and Associate Chair Graduate manage a system of regular, scheduled meetings between students, their supervisors and (eventually) their comprehensive and dissertation committees. First year students must have a meeting at the beginning of the first year with their supervisor; in the middle of their first year and with their new</p>	<p>Immediate to medium-term. The Dean’s Office supports the Department’s plan to establish a consistent system for clear benchmarking of student progress through their graduate degrees. The Dean’s Office encourages the Department to advise their graduate student society and graduate faculty of resources available through the School of Graduate Studies Centre for Graduate Mentorship and Supervision.</p>

			comprehensive examination committee at the end of their first year. Students preparing for comprehensive exams must meet with their full committee at least once during their second year before sitting the exam. Every year after that, students must meet with their dissertation committee once a year and submit a report to the graduate office. In addition to a meeting at the beginning of the academic year, MA supervisors have been asked to have a January meeting with their MA students. This has been introduced in 2024-25 and will be continuing practice.	
	13.	“We encourage the department to launch a year-long required graduate course, offered during the first year, which could introduce PhD students to the discipline and professionalization issues. We feel that this would enhance the department’s efforts to build a greater sense of community among each PhD cohort.”	There is currently a mandatory course for MA students. However, there is no such course for PhD students. While we think this is a good idea in principle, we must balance the pedagogical benefits with the real concern that adding more course requirements to the PhD program could increase our times to completion, as well as increase the workload of our graduate students. The Graduate Chair, Associate Chair Graduate are investigating models in the university to include such a mandatory requirement that could perhaps been completed at a low intensity pace over several years in Years 1, 2 and 3 of the PhD programme. In 2023, the department created the position of Professional Development and Language Coordinator to run non-mandatory workshops in professional development for graduate students throughout the year. We are exploring ways to integrate this professional development as a mandatory part of the graduate curriculum for MA and PhD students.	Immediate to medium-term. The Department is encouraged to engage with the Vice-Dean Graduate Education regarding potential program modifications. and the Coordinator, Graduate Student Professional Development in the Experiential Learning Office for consultation about developing professionalization modules.
	14.	“The Self Study and some of the people with whom we spoke stated the need for a greater sense of community. Toward that end, we	In the recent past, there was a chair’s initiative fund created as part of the previous Chair’s package. This was typically used to	Immediate to long-term. The Dean’s Office supports the Department’s efforts to address this review report recommendation.

		<p>recommend developing a fund, to which department members could apply, to support events. Such a fund might increase the number of intellectual activities bringing together colleagues within the department.”</p>	<p>support initiatives within the department to promote a greater sense of community. A suggestion would be to create a term of reference for the History operating budget in the new model that includes the need for department wide events, faculty retreats, community events etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Immediate steps - department manager to determine availability of funds based on proposed model of interactions.</li><li>- Intermediate actions – department manager to determine long term feasibility of the plan, designate to write a term of reference and publish to the HIS community.</li><li>- Long-term actions – make a priority when creating an annual budgetary term of reference with initiatives to be included on an ongoing basis.</li></ul>	
	15.	<p>“The department might hold faculty and/or graduate manuscript workshops or reading groups, SSHRC grant writing events, and a departmental colloquium. Such activities would help model intellectual life and might reinforce a sense of shared purpose in the department.”</p>	<p>One of the Department’s faculty already leads a very productive writing workshop, where colleagues read one another’s work and obtain constructive feedback. Additionally, our Fellowships committee makes itself available to read all SSHRC grants, the Chair has insisted on the importance of applying for them and has shared resources for doing so within the University.</p> <p>The Graduate Chair has introduced a History Postdoctoral Fellows Speaker Series that is beginning in Winter 2025. As we get this series up and running the graduate department will consider other programming for faculty and graduate students. We have also worked with the Graduate History Society to begin regular coffee hours in the common room at least once a month.</p>	<p>See # 14 above.</p>

			The Graduate Chair is keenly aware of the labour demands that supporting these kinds of events places on our slim complement of front office staff and is proceeding cautiously in order to ensure that creating a stronger intellectual life for faculty and students does not create new forms of invisible labour for staff.	
The reviewers highlighted communication challenges affecting both the undergraduate and graduate programs and noted comments from faculty and staff that departmental communications are “inconsistent and inadequate.” They recommended assessing administrative staff supports to ensure that departmental communications are appropriately resourced.	16.	“...better communication with students will make the department more accessible and assist them in getting through the program. These improved communications could include emails to enrolled students, better counseling, and an upgrade to the website that gives more guidance to students about courses, the major, and the minor.”	The Department Chair has engaged A&S Administrative Human Resources in reviewing and identifying operational needs including the communications functions, so that duties are allocated in a coherent fashion. The review highlights a lack of bandwidth for communications duties amongst the existing staff complement.	Immediate to medium-term. The A&S Administrative Human Resource Services office will continue to work with the Department Chair on addressing operational needs as they relate to the communications functions.
	17.	“...the department should address better communication with graduate students. The Graduate History Society seems to be the primary vehicle for the department’s interaction with the graduate community, but apparently only a small minority of students are actually involved in it and some students registered hesitation with it when consulted in the Self-Review phase of this process. The department should decide whether relying on the GHS is ideal, and if so figure out how to involve more students in it”	Same as above, the introduction of a communications officer can address these issues.	See #16 above.
	18.	“[the Department] should also reach out directly to the student population with information and opportunities, not leaving all communications to graduate students.”	Same as above, the introduction of a communications officer can address these issues.	See #16 above.
	19.	“The department desperately needs a Communications Officer. This individual could manage the website, communicate with various populations connected to the department, assist with advertising events,	Same as above, the introduction of a communications officer can address these issues.	See #16 above.

		produce a newsletter, and otherwise coordinate outward facing elements. A first-rate graduate faculty ought to tout its many accomplishments. This new position, which we understand is already staffed in other units in the university, would free up the other staff to do their main work, which would also benefit students and others in the community.”		
<p>The reviewers observed that the Department’s committee-based governance structure “does not sufficiently encourage discussion, debate, and transparency in decision-making processes,” eroding the departmental community and resulting in faculty disengagement. They recommended clarifying and communicating departmental governance processes, engaging in succession planning for leadership, and considering ways to help the faculty feel more involved in decisions.</p>	20.	<p>“We would encourage the department to come together as a whole, perhaps at a retreat, to discuss and draft a formal set of bylaws. We would also encourage those faculty who have stepped forward to take on more onerous leadership roles in the unit to create a detailed calendar of responsibilities to pass on, as this may lessen the learning curve for their successors and reduce some of the burden that staff bear to serve as institutional memory.”</p>	<p>Detailed calendars of responsibilities have been drawn up since the UTQAP report, by the incoming Chair and the incoming Business Officer. The Undergraduate Chair has also developed a draft calendar of responsibility.</p> <p>A retreat is being planned for the fall of 2025 to discuss key undergraduate matters, especially in light of the new budget. The department’s leadership team has also rekindled community-building by marking retirements at a fall celebration at the Faculty Club and with a holiday lunch reception. Both were well attended and elicited enthusiasm.</p>	Immediate to medium-term. The Dean’s Office acknowledges that the Department is pursuing several initiatives to address this recommendation.
	21.	<p>“...the department’s faculty expressed a feeling of having insufficient agency in governance. This sense appears to contribute to the diminished faculty engagement in department meetings and intellectual life. We recommend that the department’s Policy Committee be revised to include an advisory role for the chair. We also recommend that the department take a number of additional steps toward decentralizing governance and bringing more conversations and additional decision-making authority to the faculty as a whole. Another positive step would be to consider adding an Ombuds position to the service chart, assigning responsibility for orienting new faculty and addressing issues</p>	<p>Agency in governance is a complex matter. The past front office team definitely made increased transparency a priority. There has been a decentralizing shift thanks to the untangling of the tri-campus Graduate chair from the St. George Chair, which creates a system of checks and balances. One forthcoming change involves an annual report on our budget by the Business officer, which will take place every fall.</p> <p>All of this said, agency is a double-edged sword. Precious few colleagues express an interest in serving in the key front office posts, so the desire to enact change does encounter some limits in terms of colleagues</p>	See #20 above.

		relating to morale, community, and other appropriate tasks.”	willing to spend the critical administrative time necessary to make it possible. The Policy Committee has in effect been doubled since the advent of a new Chair model. It is also renewing with its advisory role.	
The reviewers broadly observed that there is opportunity for enhanced communication and consultation among tri-campus graduate faculty, particularly regarding space usage and graduate student training. They suggested that rotating the tri-campus graduate chair appointment among faculty across the three campuses could support balanced participation and representation.	22.	“The complex nature of the relationship between three campuses with different undergraduate populations and research emphases joined by a shared Graduate Department presents on-going challenges. We hope that some of these issues will be addressed through the appointment of a new Tri-Campus Graduate Department Chair (separate from the Chair of History). We recommend greater communication and consultation between campuses around graduate education and other shared agendas.”	This important issue has begun to be addressed with the creation of a Tri-Campus Graduate Chair, separate from the Chair of the St. George History Department, precisely as the external examiners recommended. We have separated the UTSG Policy Committee, chaired by the St. George Chair, from the new Tri-Campus Advisory Council, chaired by the Graduate Chair. We have also ensured clearer separation of and distinction between the work and jurisdictional responsibility of these two crucial committees, and between UTSG and tri-campus departmental meetings. At the same time, both the UTSG and Graduate Chair have heard faculty members’ desire for clearly designated space for open discussion among faculty. For both UTSG and Graduate department meetings some meetings are clearly advertised in advance as open to all constituent groups of departmental life (whether UTSG or tri-campus). At least two meetings a year are designated in advance as “faculty-only” in order to create spaces where faculty can discuss policy issues and more sensitive professional matters more freely.	Immediate to long-term. The Dean’s Office acknowledges that the Department is pursuing several initiatives to address this recommendation.
	23.	“Shortage of space affects community as well as graduate mentoring. The St. George Campus should provide a dedicated space for graduate faculty located on other campuses to meet with their students.”	In October of 2024, the Graduate Chair and the St. George chair agreed on seven offices (two more than previously allotted) as shared office space for tri-campus colleagues. Working in consultation with an ad hoc committee of faculty from UTM and UTSC, the Department Manager and the Graduate	Immediate. The Dean’s Office supports the Department’s plans to provide space at St. George for their graduate faculty, located on other campuses, to meet with their students.

			<p>Chair oversaw a renovation and reallocation of office space for tri-campus faculty, trying to make sure that everyone who needed St. George office space received it.</p> <p>We are in the final stages of allocating desks and we will now work with tri-campus faculty to support them with a system of managing use of this office space so that the system feels more respectful, collegial and workable. For now, we adopted the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- everyone who teaches in the grad programme should have access to a designated office and, if possible, a designated desk (we accept that the latter may not be permanent);</li><li>- each office has adequate space for people to be in there at the same time on the rare occasions when that might be necessary;</li><li>- each office has adequate space for faculty to hold meetings with graduate students (so, not crowded with desks);</li><li>- offices are designate for colleagues, not campuses;</li><li>- more than one person can work there at the same time comfortably if necessary</li><li>- faculty don't have to come to the front desk for a key to access an office. The front desk has a record of who has a key to each office. There is also other bookable space for anyone who wants to hold a private meeting but doesn't have a space to do it at that moment (say, two occupants of the same office need to meet someone privately in person at the same time).</li></ul>	
	24.	<p>“Rotating [the Tri-campus Graduate Chair] appointment among the faculty of all three campuses would go some distance toward responding to the perception that the St. George Campus enjoys an advantage in the tri-campus relationship.”</p>	<p>This is an interesting idea, but concretely SGS, rather than our department, runs the process to nominate and select the Tri-campus Graduate Chair. This suggestion therefore seems to be beyond the mandate of the department and should be addressed to SGS.</p>	<p>The Dean’s Office recognizes that the Department has considered this review report recommendation.</p>



			The point is taken, however, that it is important, during the selection process for Graduate Chair, that the committee be mindful of the importance of faculty from all campuses being considered equally for the position.	
Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response	25.	“Course scheduling that scatters course times rather than concentrating them at midday a few days a week has reportedly had a good effect and should be continued”	The Undergraduate Office is continuing to implement a revised timetabling process begun in 2022-2023. Instead of indicating a specific time and day for each course, as was past practice, faculty provide a range of hours and days when they would be available to teach. This greatly simplifies the timetabling process and avoids multiple email messages. We are able to accommodate nearly all faculty members' preferred times, and child-care pickups, etc., while greatly reducing conflicts for students.	The Dean's Office recognizes that the Department has already undertaken actions to address this recommendation.
	26.	“In addition, we commend the department for offering a number of one-semester 100-level courses, which attract additional students to the minor, and we encourage the department to create more such offerings.”	We have. This past governance cycle, we have created “HIS115H: History Now: How the Past Informs the Present.”	See #25 above.
	27.	“Requiring faculty to post syllabi during course registration or at the very least at the start of the term will allow students to select appropriate courses and to plan for their learning.”	We would like to do this but there are concerns about copyright and intellectual property and academic integrity as well as having a consistent policy that is fair to our sessional and course instructors as well. We are exploring testing a new option for the fall of 2025 in which faculty would submit to post on our website either the entire syllabus OR the proposed marking scheme (without necessarily due dates as course registration is in July) and a statement about the amount of weekly reading and a sample reading so that students could better gauge their preparedness to take the course.	Immediate and medium-term. The Dean's Office recognizes that the Department has considered this recommendation and is exploring other options.

	28.	“In designing syllabi, faculty should recall that students need grades on a certain portion of course work by the course drop deadline.”	Faculty have been adhering much more consistently to the Grading Practices Policy. We have had no infractions in the past 12 months.	The Dean’s Office recognizes that the Department has already undertaken action to address this recommendation.
	29.	“We heard some discussion of shifting undergraduate advising to faculty... Once the curriculum is regularized, it might be possible to make this change, but we suspect that greater transparency will make the need for an additional layer in the advising process unnecessary... In any event, the department should discuss whether such a system would benefit students.”	While the need for and benefits of mentorship for undergraduates is a topic that has come up before, our large number of students has made that likely unworkable. One potential change that will be discussed thoroughly at the Fall 2025 program retreat was whether faculty mentorship could be offered to students only in our specialist program. At present, there are 73 History specialists. That would create added value for the specialist program and better support students who are likely intending additional graduate training.	Medium-term. The Dean’s Office encourages directing students to undergraduate advisors on matters of curriculum and encourages the Department to work with their faculty to enhance student mentorship including for those undergraduate students enrolled in a Specialist program.
	30.	“Undergraduate students requested an accommodation which ought to be easily met: faculty should consider posting slides shown in lecture for viewing subsequently by the enrolled students. This practice makes it easier for students to review their notes after lecture or to make up for occasional absences.”	Many faculty already do this. We will discuss whether it should become a departmental teaching expectation at the fall meeting.	Immediate to medium-term. The Dean’s Office recognizes that the Department has considered this recommendation and is exploring options for implementing.
	31.	“Admissions decisions for the graduate program should take into account the need to spread the advising burden equitably, understanding that some faculty, because of their reputation or their field, will attract a greater proportion of the applicants.”	Every year, the Graduate Admissions Committee receives a current list of faculty and the students whom they are supervising, as well as each student’s year in the program. The committee only recommends admission for applicants in cases where a willing faculty supervisor has identified themselves during the stage of the admissions process when files are evaluated by all faculty. The committee chair and Graduate Chair reach out to ensure that any faculty member in the applicant’s area of interest or whom the applicant specifically mentioned as a potential supervisor or mentor has a chance to weigh in on the file.	The Dean’s Office recognizes that the Department has considered this recommendation.

			Our process does in fact take into account the need to spread the burden of advising equitably, along with other considerations.	
	32.	“...faculty in departmental leadership roles exhibit a tendency to become overextended, which often results in additional labor being pushed to the staff members. This problem escalates when committee chairs, who are offered a course release to offset their service commitment, elect not to take that release. We recommend that faculty in such positions be required to take course releases during their period of service.”	There seems to be some confusion here. Committee chairs are not offered course release. In fact, the Faculty of Arts and Science seems to be reining in course release and with the new budget model, and our 2/2 teaching load, it seems impractical to implement this idea.	The Dean’s Office supports the Department’s plan to manage the workload in their unit in accordance with the Department workload policy.
	33.	“...the FAS’s curriculum processes must guard more carefully against other units offering history courses to large numbers of students, especially courses that compete with those that History offers... this form of duplication by other units will threaten the continued health of the History Department and dilute the education offered to students.”	We agree with this point. See for example “MUN120 Revolutions,” which was originally a small first year seminar but has now been allowed to grow to 100; We hope this will not be the case with MUN197 (Strong States or Weak Parties?), currently at 30, which duplicates the content of our HIS242, 20th Century Europe . We also point to college programs like Trinity offering TRN152Y which covers the same period and history as HIS103Y. It would also be helpful to better clarify the boundaries between departments such as East Asian Studies and Near and Middle Eastern Studies in terms of time periods and topics offered to undergraduates. Similar clarification would be helpful around programs such as Canadian Studies and American Studies especially when they mount courses that are not interdisciplinary in methodology but are clearly historical and are intended to be taught by historians (or are taught by historians	Immediate to long-term. The Vice-Dean, Undergraduate and the Vice-Dean, Academic Planning will support the Department throughout the curriculum governance process, which ensures consultation happens when new courses are proposed. The Department is encouraged to address any further identified overlaps through collegial discussions.



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

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*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

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The reviewers praised the Department of History for its longstanding international reputation, noting that it is widely regarded as the top-ranked in Canada and among the leading programs in North America. They praised recent innovations in the Department's curriculum and student services, including the development of the writing center, the increase in introductory one-semester course offerings to attract new students, and the successful law-school-focused undergraduate track. The reviewers highlighted History faculty's stellar research accomplishments, including their pathbreaking monographs and significant success in obtaining SSHRC grants, Jackman Institute research fellowships, and prestigious international awards. Finally, the reviewers praised the Department for its collaborative, responsive, and supportive culture and its strong relationships and partnerships with other units.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: undertaking a comprehensive undergraduate curriculum review to clarify entry and advancement requirements, create clear pathways through the program, eliminate barriers to completion, and update the department's course catalog; considering a required introductory graduate course in historiography/methods and exploring ways to address professionalization within the graduate programs; exploring ways to provide supports for students' research travel and time away from teaching and establishing resources to support graduate students in moments of financial crisis; exploring ways to provide additional support to address the unique concerns and needs of international students; addressing concerns related to the range of disciplinary coverage in the Department and exploring ways to improve how subject areas are balanced across the three campuses; addressing concerns regarding a lack of clear guidelines for promotion and tenure processes and perceived inequities in these processes; providing mentorship opportunities for junior faculty, and considering more flexible pathways for promotion; considering opportunities to improve the graduate student experience and enhance the sense of community within the Department; assessing administrative staff supports to ensure that departmental communications are appropriately resourced; clarifying and communicating departmental governance processes, engaging in succession planning for leadership, and considering ways to help the faculty feel more involved in decisions; considering ways to enhance communication and consultation among tri-campus graduate faculty, particularly regarding space usage and graduate student training; and considering the rotation of the tri-campus graduate chair appointment among faculty across the three campuses in order to support balanced participation and representation.

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

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The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than midway between the April 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2031-32 to report on the status of the implementation plans.

The next review will be commissioned no later than the 2031-32 review cycle.

The Arts & Science Dean's office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with chairs and directors and through regular governance and curricular oversight.

## 6 Distribution

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On July 15<sup>th</sup> 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

<b>Program(s) Reviewed:</b>	<b>Undergraduate program</b> ( <i>housed within Victoria College</i> ): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literature &amp; Critical Theory, HBA: Specialist, Major, Minor</li> </ul> <b>Graduate programs</b> ( <i>housed within the Centre for Comparative Literature</i> ): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comparative Literature, MA, PhD</li> </ul>
<b>Division/Unit Reviewed OR Division/Unit Offering Program(s):</b>	Centre for Comparative Literature
<b>Commissioning Officer:</b>	Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
<b>Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patricia Badir, Professor &amp; Head of Department of English Language and Literatures, University of British Columbia</li> <li>Ayesha Ramachandran, Associate Professor, Department of Comparative Literature, Yale University</li> <li>Krzysztof Ziarek, Professor &amp; Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Comparative Literature, University of Buffalo</li> </ul>
<b>Date of Review Visit:</b>	February 7-8, 2024
<b>Review Report Received by VPAP:</b>	April 29, 2024
<b>Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:</b>	March 6, 2025
<b>Date Reported to AP&amp;P:</b>	April 10, 2025

## Previous UTQAP Review

Date:

### Summary of Findings and Recommendations

#### Significant Program Strengths

- One of the most important graduate programs in the field
- Very high quality graduate students with very wide breadth of academic focus
- Uniquely flexible undergraduate program provides an alternative independent major for students in the humanities
- High quality educational experience for undergraduates, evidenced by students' feedback
- Commendable levels of engagement between faculty, students, and administrators
- Wide ranging and internationally visible research conducted by faculty

#### Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Revising the graduate program's curriculum and structure, including its support of alternative career pathways and the development of professional competencies
- Reviewing the structure of TA assignments and their impact on times-to-completion
- Increasing mentoring for all students and tracking outcomes
- Finding the right balance between core and affiliated faculty for the graduate program
- Encouraging further collaboration between the undergraduate and graduate programs
- Improving organizational and financial structures to ensure optimal support for the programs

## Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

### Documentation Provided to Reviewers

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

### Consultation Process

Dean, Vice-Dean Academic Planning, Interim Associate Dean, Unit-Level Reviews, Faculty of Arts & Science; Centre's Graduate Program Director; Graduate program faculty; Graduate Students; Centre Administrative Staff; College Principal; LCT Program Coordinator; Program Faculty; Program/College administrators; Undergraduate Students; as well as members of relevant cognate units (East Asian Studies; English; Classics; Germanic Languages and Literatures; Jackman Humanities Institute; Jewish Studies; Medieval Studies; Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations; Philosophy; Spanish and Portuguese; Slavic Languages & Literatures; Women and Gender Studies).



# Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

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## 1. Undergraduate Program(s)

### a. Literature and Critical Theory (LCT) program housed in Victoria College

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ Program is highly valued by both students and faculty
- Objectives
  - ▶ LCT program provides students with opportunities for literary study that is comparative and interdisciplinary, and linked to critical theory
  - ▶ Program's structure and learning objectives are consistent with the University's commitments and priorities
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ While the program remains small, it has no entrance requirements and is open to any interested student
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Curriculum appears to be strong and innovative; its topics model provides opportunities for students to read widely, deploy a range of methodologies and explore alternative forms of scholarship
  - ▶ The program's emphasis on comparative approaches and critical theory complements its focus on close reading and critical reasoning
  - ▶ LCT draws on faculty from a wide range of units to deliver its courses, which supports a greater diversity of offerings
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Students are enthusiastic and invested in the program
  - ▶ Students are generally satisfied with the program's curriculum and structure
  - ▶ Victoria College fosters a "fertile intellectual environment" for students, who also benefit from its cohort structure
  - ▶ Small classes enhance the student experience, particularly with regard to writing and research
  - ▶ Student morale appears to very high; reviewers note this as particularly laudable, given reports of unprecedented undergraduate student anxiety and other mental health concerns across post-secondary institutions
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - ▶ "LCT is clearly attracting some of the best students in the U of T (with very high GPAs, but also with varied interests)"
  - ▶ "[F]aculty, without exception, spoke about the extraordinary quality of the LCT students"

- ▶ Many LCT students intend to pursue graduate studies or pathways to teaching careers, indicating the rigorous academic nature of the program

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ There is some duplication between LCT course syllabi, with students asked to read the same texts for multiple classes
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ “Given that CCL students TA for the LCT program, it is surprising how little students seem to know about CCL”
  - ▶ The unit’s self-study notes that student advising protocols could be enhanced; reviewers also note that students appear to be left to figure out much on their own, particularly regarding program language requirements

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Encourage faculty to consult on their course reading lists before each term begins, to minimize any duplication
  - ▶ Recruit faculty from FAS units other than CCL (in particular African Studies), to enhance the diversity of course offerings
  - ▶ Explore developing a dedicated first-year course, based in Victoria College; such an offering could encourage enrolment in the LCT program
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ LCT and CCL student advisors are encouraged to “consult and coordinate to the mutual benefit of both programs”
  - ▶ Encourage LCT student participation in existing experiential learning opportunities through promotion and student advising
  - ▶ Noting LCT program desire to enhance international learning opportunities, reviewers recommend promoting existing opportunities and dedicating resources to developing LCT-specific global opportunities
- Student funding
  - ▶ CCL and LCT encouraged to work together to identify potential MA applicants in the LCT program, and assist them with applications for SSHRC grants to fund their master’s studies

## 2. Graduate Program(s)

### b. Faculty of Arts and Science Centre for Comparative Literature (CCL)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Objectives
  - ▶ CCL's graduate programs provide opportunities for students interested in comparative studies to pursue their chosen coursework and undertake research
  - ▶ CCL provides an academic pathway for talented students from LCT to continue their studies
  - ▶ MA and PhD are consistent with U of T's commitment to liberal arts education; and its emphasis on research, scholarship and advanced graduate training
  - ▶ Program requirements and learning outcomes are clear and appropriate
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Graduate curriculum and course offerings "have an inspiring breadth"
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Students report that the frequency and quality of faculty supervision is good
  - ▶ The development of the Graduate Writing Program in CCL is noted as having very positive impacts on student welfare, morale and time to completion
  - ▶ Graduate student morale seems high
- Quality indicators – alumni
  - ▶ PhD graduates pursue scholarly and pedagogical careers in Canada and beyond
  - ▶ Most PhD graduates since the previous review have gained academic appointments as postdoctoral fellows or assistant professors
  - ▶ Quality and breadth of scholarly interest among graduate students is very high level
  - ▶ Time to degree completion is generally quite good
- Student funding
  - ▶ PhD students are funded for five years

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

- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Graduate students note desire for more opportunities to interact with their cohorts, and to learn about various program opportunities earlier on
  - ▶ Students note desire for more structured faculty mentorship
  - ▶ The Graduate Writing Program initiative lacks sustained funding
  - ▶ Concerns noted regarding the shrinking academic job market in the humanities
- Quality indicators – graduate students
  - ▶ Doctoral students often take a long time to complete their degrees, which reviewers note is connected to graduate funding challenges, and the very competitive humanities job market

- Student funding
  - ▶ Reviewers observe a lack of stable funding in the MA program

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Reviewers recommend that the PhD program size should remain stable, due to the state of the current academic job market
  - ▶ Reviewers note potential for substantial growth in the MA program
  - ▶ “We [...] believe that CCL is underestimating the number of MA students willing to do an unfunded MA and recommend that CCL extend more offers to strong students”
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Consider a smaller number of annual graduate course offerings that strategically and consistently highlight CCL’s areas of research excellence; such an approach could aid in student recruitment, particularly in the MA
  - ▶ PhD time to degree could be shortened by modifying the stages between coursework and dissertation prospectus, and by introducing “at least 1 scholarship year” devoted to writing, without teaching commitments
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ LCT and CCL student advisors are encouraged to “consult and coordinate to the mutual benefit of both programs”
  - ▶ Linking program strengths to the various potential professional opportunities afforded by the MA may significantly aid with MA recruitment
  - ▶ Consider instituting a formal structure of cohort meetings to enhance the experience of graduate students
  - ▶ Consider enhancing the structure of student-supervisor relationships, perhaps through the use of mentorship agreements to encourage productive conversation and set appropriate expectations for both students and their advisors
  - ▶ Reviewers urge continued investment in writing and professionalization programs for graduate students, and recommend allocating CCL faculty service to such initiatives
- Student funding
  - ▶ CCL and LCT encouraged to work together to identify potential MA applicants in the LCT program, and assist them with applications for SSHRC grants to fund their master’s studies
  - ▶ The CCL PhD program would benefit from more substantive overall funding for its students
  - ▶ Explore the feasibility of releasing PhD students from teaching for 1-2 years without decreasing their overall funding package; reviewers note this could have a significant impact on shortening the time to degree and the quality of finished dissertations

### 3. Faculty/Research

#### a. Literature and Critical Theory (LCT) program housed in Victoria College

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ LCT program benefits from the research expertise of both tenured and non-tenured faculty from across FAS
  - ▶ Program enjoys close ties with research faculty in CCL
  - ▶ “The program is reasonably well-resourced with a strong complement of faculty that is somewhat diverse in terms of interests and experience”
- Faculty
  - ▶ The mix of tenure and teaching stream faculty contributing to the LCT program appears to be working in the college-based program context

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

- Faculty
  - ▶ “Teaching-Stream appointments are not advantageous for the LCT’s relationship with CCL and it seems clear that CCL faculty teaching in LCT are invested in the program and would like to participate more fully in LCT appointments procedures”
  - ▶ There is only one faculty member with a joint appointment between CCL and LCT, which places a large burden of teaching and administrative responsibility on this individual

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
  - ▶ Opportunities highlighted for LCT to work with African Studies, as well as other relevant units, to continue to diversify the faculty that teach in the program
  - ▶ Reviewers affirm LCT’s assertion that the program’s curriculum would be greatly enhanced by the appointment of an Indigenous Scholar; such an appointment could also benefit CCL
  - ▶ LCT faculty feel strongly that the program would benefit from the greater stability that would come with further dedicated appointments
  - ▶ Reviewers stress the importance of strategic complement planning between CCL and LCT, particularly in underrepresented fields such as Indigenous Studies and African Studies
  - ▶ Explore the possibility of an additional tenure-stream faculty member, who could devote time to integrating CCL and LCT

## **b. Faculty of Arts and Science Centre for Comparative Literature**

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ CCL faculty composed of prominent and widely recognized scholars, who are active in research and publication, and who make innovative interdisciplinary contributions
- Research
  - ▶ Faculty research publication records are strong; and many have received research grants in recent years
  - ▶ Faculty achievements seem comparable with those of faculty in other prominent Comparative Literature PhD programs
- Faculty
  - ▶ CCL and its graduate programs effectively make use of the expertise of faculty across a number of units and programs
  - ▶ Recent hires in CCL, and a proposed hire in Indigenous Literature respond to changing trends in the discipline

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

- Research
  - ▶ CCL's ability to obtain SSHRC funding is severely compromised by a quota system which only allows them to put forward a small number of candidates
  - ▶ U of T's model for managing faculty research grant quotas appears to disadvantage students and faculty in CCL (and in humanities units more broadly); CCL's joint appointments pose a particular challenge, because faculty SSHRC success is counted only in their home units
- Faculty
  - ▶ Although 15 faculty members have appointments at CCL, their appointment percentages are equivalent to only 5.37 'full' lines; reviewers also note that faculty with split appointments often end up doing more work than those appointed to a single unit
  - ▶ There is only one faculty member with a joint appointment between CCL and LCT, which places a large burden of teaching and administrative responsibility on this individual

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
  - ▶ Work with divisional and institutional administration as appropriate to ensure clarity and equity related to research funding allocation processes for CCL faculty who teach and supervise in multiple units
- Faculty
  - ▶ Reviewers strongly recommend adding faculty members to CCL when opportunities permit with appointments that are primarily in the Centre, in order to create a more

stable core of faculty supporting the unit, and assure leadership of the program as well as its pedagogical commitment to the field

- ▶ CCL urged to “consolidate its existing strengths” when pursuing any new appointments
- ▶ Noting some flux in the state of the Comparative Literature discipline, reviewers observe that it could be advantageous for the Centre “to think creatively about how its research profile and faculty could be clustered”; CCL would benefit from identifying visible and appealing core areas of excellence, “giving a recognizable stamp to its innovative teaching and scholarship”
- ▶ Reviewers stress the importance of strategic complement planning between CCL and LCT, particularly in underrepresented fields such as Indigenous Studies and African Studies
- ▶ Cooperation between CCL and the Centre for Indigenous Studies in complement planning could be mutually beneficial
- ▶ Explore the possibility of an additional tenure-stream faculty member, who could devote time to integrating CCL and LCT

## 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.*

### a. Literature and Critical Theory (LCT) program housed in Victoria College

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ LCT has a strong relationship with CCL, enhanced by a recent MOA
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ LCT program’s embeddedness in Victoria College has allowed it to remain small, and faculty and students benefit from a unique cohort experience

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

- Relationships
  - ▶ LCT faculty “seem anxious” about the program’s stability
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Many LCT program community members indicate there is a need for additional administrative support
  - ▶ Reviewers highlight concerns that it is difficult to find faculty to run the program when the director takes leave
  - ▶ CCL faculty are encouraged to teach LCT courses, but reviewers note a lack of clarity regarding when and how many of these courses should be staffed by CCL members

- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Implementing recommendations of the current review will place additional burden on the program director
  - ▶ Reviewers note some potential long-term challenges related to their recommendation to further integrate CCL and LCT, including potential faculty reluctance to take on additional undergraduate teaching, and concerns in both CCL and Victoria College related to governance and control of the LCT program

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ Reviewers observe that LCT would benefit from stronger promotion to first year students, and recommend that FAS and Victoria College work together to enhance the program's visibility beyond Victoria College
  - ▶ LCT should develop a robust social media and web presence; staff or student work-learn support should be allocated to such endeavors
  - ▶ Reviewers recommend that the LCT program develop stronger, closer relationships with CCL to further leverage resources and enhance the substantial disciplinary and faculty crossover; partnership between LCT and CCL "needs to be stronger if both both programs are to thrive and grow"
  - ▶ Reviewers note potential for synergies between LCT, CCL and Victoria College's Creativity and Society Minor; and the programs are encouraged to consider further opportunities for collaboration, with support from Victoria College
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ The program might stay connected to Victoria College in order to retain its unique seminar-oriented cohort nature, and to leverage Victoria College resources
  - ▶ Explore the creation of a hybrid steering committee between LCT and CCL, responsible for governance of the LCT program and pedagogical training for CCL graduate students; such a committee might include faculty from both Victoria College and CCL
  - ▶ "To ensure equitable exchange between CCL and Victoria College [related to a potential LCT/CCL Hybrid Steering Committee], there may need to strategic cross-appointments between U of T and Victoria College"
  - ▶ Reviewers recommend development of a Memorandum of Agreement that clearly outlines CCL faculty teaching responsibilities in LCT to encourage stability, closer links and long-term growth between both programs
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Reviewers note capacity for LCT program growth; and observe that "[i]ndeed, it will need to grow if it is to build a case for new faculty appointments"
  - ▶ Noting anticipated administrative burden on LCT program director of implementing review recommendations, reviewers encourage pursuing "at least a 50% appointment, ideally shared with CCL"
  - ▶ "It is clear from conversations with faculty and administrators across various parts of the university that the vibrancy and dynamism of CCL's academic mission (both research and teaching) would be best served by closer integration with an



undergraduate program. The most obvious connection is with the Literature and Critical Theory program, currently located at Victoria College: stronger intellectual and governance collaborations between the 2 units would strongly benefit both programs.”

- ▶ U of T administration and Victoria College are urged to consider “whether LCT and Creativity and Society might profitably be linked together and with CCL to create an innovative, indeed groundbreaking, creative-critical program in literary and theoretical studies”

## **b. Faculty of Arts and Science Centre for Comparative Literature**

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ CCL provides an “umbrella” for intellectual and pedagogical work for faculty from various units
  - ▶ CCL students hold faculty in high regard, and faculty appreciate the quality and breadth of interests of graduate students
  - ▶ The faculty engaged in administrative and committee work for CCL are to be commended
  - ▶ Staff are diligent, hard-working and experienced
  - ▶ CCL has a strong relationship with LCT, enhanced by a recent MOA
  - ▶ CCL has begun to develop exciting connections with other undergraduate programs housed in Victoria College, such as the Creativity and Society Minor; and some CCL graduate students serve as TAs in Creativity and Society
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ With the support of a new part-time administrative staff person, staff are able to meet daily challenges of running the program
  - ▶ CCL is well-supported in terms of space, with meeting spaces and a lounge area for graduate students
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ The Centre and its graduate programs constitute an important, “unique hub for interdisciplinary studies” at U of T
- International comparators
  - ▶ While highlighting the difficulty of comparing Comparative Literature units and offerings across institutions, reviewers note that in terms of faculty scholarly productivity and international reputation, and graduate placements, CCL compares very well with international peer institutions

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

- Relationships
  - ▶ Faculty seem anxious about the future of CCL, especially related to PhD funding and the resources required for more robust MA recruitment

- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ The complexity of split faculty lines means that few people are able to serve in leadership positions in CCL
  - ▶ CCL faculty are encouraged to teach LCT courses, but reviewers note a lack of clarity regarding when and how many of these courses should be staffed by CCL members
  - ▶ Staff note some capacity challenges, and concerns that any new staff will require substantial training and introduction to the culture and budgetary complexities of the Centre
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ CCL faculty hail from many different departments and are partially appointed in the Centre; “While this arrangement provides for a plethora of interesting avenues of graduate study (and results in inventive undergraduate course offerings for LCT), it also does not immediately project the sense of a distinctive academic and scholarly profile”
  - ▶ “The future of CCL as a sustainable unit within the institutional structure of the U of T system has been negatively affected by the challenges of funding graduate education, the difficulty of placing graduate students in relevant teaching assistantships, and the pressures facing doctoral students in the humanities more generally”
  - ▶ Reviewers note some potential long-term challenges related to their recommendation to further integrate CCL and LCT, including potential faculty reluctance to take on additional undergraduate teaching, and concerns in both CCL and Victoria College related to governance and control of the LCT program
- International comparators
  - ▶ “[T]he overall comparison of quality and program outcomes in the discipline of Comparative Literature is notoriously difficult and imprecise, because of the fact that departments and programs in this discipline have varying configurations at different institutions”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ Reviewers recommend that CCL distribute administrative and committee burdens more effectively across its faculty, and engage more of its faculty directly in decision-making processes
  - ▶ Reviewers recommend that the LCT program develop stronger, closer relationships with CCL to further leverage resources and enhance the substantial disciplinary and faculty crossover; partnership between LCT and CCL “needs to be stronger if both programs are to thrive and grow”
  - ▶ Reviewers note potential for synergies between LCT, CCL and Victoria College’s Creativity and Society Minor; and the programs are encouraged to consider further opportunities for collaboration
  - ▶ Explore expanding the exchange program with the University of Utrecht, and developing ties with cognate programs in the United States

- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Explore the creation of a hybrid steering committee between LCT and CCL, responsible for governance of the LCT program and pedagogical training for CCL graduate students; such a committee might include faculty from both Victoria College and CCL
  - ▶ “To ensure equitable exchange between CCL and Victoria College [related to a potential LCT/CCL Hybrid Steering Committee], there may need to strategic cross-appointments between U of T and Victoria College”
  - ▶ Reviewers recommend development of a Memorandum of Agreement that clearly outlines CCL faculty teaching responsibilities in LCT to encourage stability, closer links and long-term growth between both programs
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Noting anticipated administrative burden on LCT program leadership of implementing review recommendations, reviewers encourage pursuing “at least a 50% appointment, ideally shared with CCL”
  - ▶ “What was repeatedly stressed to us was the need for creating a more stable number of faculty members whose primary appointment and responsibilities, pedagogical, scholarly, and administrative, would be in CCL”
  - ▶ “Although CCL was created for the sake of advanced study, our sense is that in order to continue to fulfill its university mission, the Centre needs to strengthen its ties with LCT and expand its undergraduate teaching”
  - ▶ Reviewers suggest that it may be beneficial for CCL to develop several focal points to highlight its most innovative research and study opportunities; this could serve to attract more graduate students, especially to the MA
  - ▶ Potential expansion of the MA program could serve as a bridge between LCT and CCL, and “fill out the graduate cohorts in a responsible and ethical manner”
  - ▶ “It is clear from conversations with faculty and administrators across various parts of the university that the vibrancy and dynamism of CCL’s academic mission (both research and teaching) would be best served by closer integration with an undergraduate program. The most obvious connection is with the Literature and Critical Theory program, currently located at Victoria College: stronger intellectual and governance collaborations between the 2 units would strongly benefit both programs.”
  - ▶ U of T administration and Victoria College are urged to consider “whether LCT and Creativity and Society might profitably be linked together and with CCL to create an innovative, indeed groundbreaking, creative-critical program in literary and theoretical studies”



## 2 Administrative Response & Implementation Plan

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

February 28, 2025

Professor Nick Rule  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
University of Toronto

**RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Literature & Critical Theory undergraduate program and the Centre for Comparative Literature and its graduate programs**

Dear Prof. Rule,

I write in response to your letter of November 7, 2024, regarding the February 7-8, 2024, bundled UTQAP cyclical reviews of the Literature & Critical Theory undergraduate program (housed in Victoria College); and the Centre for Comparative Literature and its graduate programs, and requesting our Administrative Responses. The programs reviewed were: Literature & Critical Theory, Hons. BA: Specialist, Major, Minor (Victoria College); Comparative Literature, MA, PhD (Centre for Comparative Literature).

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers: Professor Patricia Badir, University of British Columbia, Professor Ayesha Ramachandran, Yale University, and Professor Krzysztof Ziarkek, University of Buffalo, for their very comprehensive review of the Literature & Critical Theory undergraduate program and the Centre for Comparative Literature and its graduate programs. We would also like to thank the Director of the Centre for Comparative Literature, the Victoria College Principal, the Literature & Critical Theory 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 30, 2024, after which the Director of the Centre for Comparative Literature and the Victoria College Principal's office shared it widely with faculty, staff, and students in both units. We are extremely pleased with the reviewers' positive assessment of the overall strength of both units and their outstanding, productive faculty.

At the Centre for Comparative Literature, the reviewers noted that the quality and breadth of scholarly interest among graduate students is very high level; faculty are prominent and widely recognized scholars, who are active in research and publication and make innovative interdisciplinary contributions; and faculty engaged in administrative and committee work for CCL are to be commended. The review report also raised several issues and challenges and identified areas for enhancement in the Centre, including anxiety about the future of CCL,

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Sidney Smith Hall, 100 St. George Street, Suite 2005, Toronto, ON M5S 3G3 Canada

Tel: +1 416-978-3383 • Fax: +1 416-978-3887 • [officeofthedean@artsci.utoronto.ca](mailto:officeofthedean@artsci.utoronto.ca) • [www.artsci.utoronto.ca](http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca)

especially related to PhD funding and the resources required for more robust MA recruitment; and the complexity of split faculty lines that means that few people are able to serve in leadership positions in CCL.

Regarding the Literature & Critical Theory program, the reviewers noted that LCT clearly attracts some of the best students in the U of T who are enthusiastic and invested in the program; the program's embeddedness in Victoria College has allowed it to remain small, and faculty and students benefit from a unique cohort experience. They also raised several issues and challenges and identified areas for enhancement including concerns that it is difficult to find faculty to run the program when the director takes leave; there is some duplication between LCT course syllabi and some gaps in disciplinary coverage.

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 Director and the College Principal, 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 bundled review was deferred from the 2022-23 review cycle and took place in the 2023-24 review cycle, the next UTQAP cyclical review of the Centre for Comparative Literature and the Literature and Critical Theory program will take place no later than the **2030-31** review cycle, as stipulated in your letter to my office dated October 7, 2022.

My office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with chairs and directors and through the Centre for Comparative Literature'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 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 Literature & Critical Theory undergraduate program and the Centre for Comparative Literature and its graduate programs.

Sincerely,



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

cc.

Alex Hernandez, Principal, Victoria College

Conrad James, Program Coordinator, Literature & Critical Theory program, Victoria College

Grase Kim, Director of Administration, Office of the Principal, Victoria College

Jill Ross, Director, Centre for Comparative Literature, Faculty of Arts & Science

Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, 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 Literature & Critical Theory Program (Victoria College); and the Centre for Comparative Literature and its 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>	Unit/Program Response	Dean’s Response
<b>Literature &amp; Critical Theory (LCT):</b>				
The reviewers highlighted opportunities to encourage greater faculty interaction related to LCT course content and reading lists, with an eye to minimizing overlap across course offerings.	1	“We recommend that LCT provide an opportunity for colleagues to consult on their reading lists, before the term begins, to [avoid duplication].”	We agree that duplication of reading and course content may incur opportunity costs for both students and the program, though we also believe that such overlaps are in fact rare. In the medium term, the Principal’s Office will conduct a curricular review of the program to better assess its overall offerings, which would profit from close collaboration with a proposed CCL Steering Committee. We could provide faculty members with a more structured way of sharing their syllabi, by providing Program Coordinators with SharePoint or OneDrive space dedicated to this purpose.	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased to note that the unit has already begun to respond to this recommendation.
The reviewers recommended exploring the possibility of expanding the involvement of faculty from various units across the Faculty of Arts and Science (in particular African Studies) in the delivery of LCT courses, noting that such an approach could compensate for	2	“In order to enhance the diversity of course offerings, we recommend that LCT recruit faculty from units in FAS other than CCL. In particular we recommend recruiting faculty from African Studies to make up for recent departures in this field”	We agree that LCT would profit from diversifying its offerings and would gladly partner with other FAS units. While we note that such collaborations may be complicated by uncertainties surrounding the new budget model, Victoria College would invite FAS to help us in crafting and encouraging durable,	Immediate-medium term: The ASDO supports the College identifying other production relationships with cognate units that would strengthen program offerings for students. The ASDO will ensure that all Units are well informed about the new budget model, which will facilitate inter-Unit teaching.

any disciplinary coverage gaps, and enhance the diversity of course offerings.			medium-term MOAs with its partner units that would render it possible for LCT to expand its teaching scope. In particular, partnerships with African Studies, Diaspora and Transnational Studies, and South Asian Studies would be welcomed. Such measures would strengthen existing diversity within a program that consistently draws from instructors affiliated with the Centre for Caribbean Studies, East Asian Studies, Spanish and Portuguese, Slavic Languages and Literatures, and other units. We emphasize as well that we are excited by the prospect of a joint-hire with CCL for a specialist in Indigenous Literatures (see no.19).	Longer-term: Regarding the proposed joint hire with Comparative Literature, the units are invited to submit a request to the Faculty Appointments Committee (FAC). All requests for new positions across the Faculty are submitted to 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 than available positions.
The reviewers encouraged FAS and Victoria College to collaborate on developing approaches to enhance the visibility of the LCT program beyond Victoria College. They also noted opportunities to strengthen promotion and awareness of existing experiential learning and international opportunities.	3	“We recommend that The Faculty of Arts & Science work with Victoria College to enhance the program’s visibility beyond Victoria College.”	3, 4, and 5. We agree with this recommendation and will work to enhance the visibility of LCT programs beyond Victoria College. We see two means by which to achieve this in the short and medium term. First, the CCL will have a new website which will offer information about LCT programs and courses for undergraduates interested in the subject. Second, Victoria University (and thus, Victoria College) will similarly be overhauling its website which will allow us to promote LCT programs. Creative social media promotion will also link to these online resources in the hopes of increasing overall visibility and wayfinding for LCT programs. We will also continue to take full advantage of in-person recruitment events sponsored by the Faculty of Arts and Science (program exploration days, etc.) on an ongoing basis.	<p>Immediate-medium term: The ASDO is pleased to note that Victoria College has already begun working on this recommendation and is addressing the changes needed on the College website to enhance the visibility of both its own and CCL’s programs, and that CCL has likewise done the same.</p> <p>The Faculty recommends that the College work with A&amp;S Student Success Programs regarding events such as Program Exploration Days and with A&amp;S Student Recruitment &amp; Admissions regarding outreach such as the Ontario Universities Fair and Fall Campus Day. To support its reputation-building, A&amp;S Communications &amp; Public Affairs can work with the College to help promote their news and events within the University community and beyond.</p> <p>Through the Sidney Smith Commons, the Faculty of Arts &amp; Science offers a series of in-person and online events, workshops and</p>



				<p>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 &amp; Science students and learn about experiential learning including research, internships and international opportunities.</p> <p>The weekly AMA (Ask Me Anything) event 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.</p> <p>Program student unions also participate in “Clubs Fair” held at the beginning of each academic year.</p> <p>U of T participates in the Universities Fair each year, and the College is encouraged to participate directly in that event.</p>
	4	“We recommend LCT develop a social-media presence and work with communicators to enhance student access to LCT programming on their website (perhaps through video interviews of current students).”	See # 3, above.	See # 3, above.
	5	“We recommend that Victoria College allocate staff support (or student work-learn support) to the promotion of the LCT program.”	See #3, above.	See # 3, above.
	6	“We recommend that LCT and Victoria College develop a first-year course (a Vic 100 course) for the LCT program and that this course be advertised broadly to incoming students in all colleges.”	This is already one of the stated goals of the Frye stream of Vic One. We will also consider building existing Vic One Hundred courses into the program structure of LCT, where	Immediate term: The ASDO’s Vice-Dean Undergraduate and Associate Dean Teaching and Learning are both available for guidance on curricular changes related to the unit’s plan.

			appropriate, in order to create new pathways into the program.	
	7	“We recommend that LCT promote, through advising, existing experiential learning opportunities available to students (thesis, graduate courses in CCL).”	The Victoria College Programs Liaison Officer already promotes such experiential learning opportunities, but we can work harder to foreground such programs for students in their 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> years. Additionally, Victoria College can work alongside ELOS to develop further experiential learning opportunities in the medium term.	Immediate term: The Office of Experiential Learning and Outreach Support (ELOS) is available and would be pleased to work with the College to develop further experiential learning opportunities for LCT program students, and to help in the promotion of experiential learning initiatives.
	8	“We recommend that LCT promote, through advising, existing international opportunities (study abroad etc.) and consider developing program specific opportunities.”	Victoria College has long promoted study abroad opportunities for all its students and expects to continue to do so. One result of the curricular review mentioned in 1. (above) might be the launch of a program-specific LCT course to be run by Woodsworth College’s Study Abroad program. Further consultation on this possibility may begin as early as next year.	Immediate term: The ASDO’s Vice-Dean Undergraduate, Associate Dean Teaching and Learning and ELOS Office are available for guidance on curricular changes related to the unit’s plan for international opportunities for LCT students.
<b><u>Centre for Comparative Literature (CCL):</u></b>				
The reviewers broadly recommended the development and articulation of a “visible and appealing core of interests” to distinguish CCL’s innovative teaching and scholarship. They noted related opportunities to assess and streamline CCL’s assortment of graduate course offerings, with an eye to more closely aligning course topics with faculty research interests.	9	“We recommend that the CCL articulate a visible and appealing core of interests that would give a recognizable stamp to their innovative teaching and scholarship.”	At our Faculty Retreat in September, we discussed the need to articulate a core set of intellectual principles that animates both the research of the faculty at the Centre and the courses offered that grow out of and enrich this research. The Centre comprises a group of faculty members whose work is not only culturally, chronologically and geographically diverse, but is also broadly interdisciplinary. A core feature of this interdisciplinarity is the strong role played by philosophically-oriented critical theory and its major thinkers in the comparative research and teaching that takes place at the Centre. We intend to highlight this common theoretical focus of comparativity, an approach to research that undergirds all the teaching and research at the Centre. We intend to develop language highlighting this focus and make it clearly	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased to note that the unit has begun to address this recommendation.

			available on our website that is currently being redesigned. We are beginning to draft this language and will refine the text at meetings in the spring semester, both at our Policy and Curriculum Committee and in a full Faculty Meeting, with the intention of posting this on our newly revamped website by June of this year. As part of the process, we will also develop categories of different modes of comparativity with a view to making clear how each of our courses is informed by this comparative focus, a focus that is integral to all of the research and teaching at the Centre.	
	10	“We recommend that CCL reduce the number of graduate courses with an eye to research foci and core interests in the faculty.”	We agree that we could reduce the number of courses we offer in a given year. Next year’s course schedule has already been reduced to 6 courses per semester from the more typical 8 courses per semester. We will continue to monitor the number of courses, privileging the teaching of core faculty members. The incoming Director will monitor the number of courses for the next several years and maintain stability in our course offerings.	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased to note that the Centre has already begun responding to this recommendation.
The reviewers made several recommendations related to strengthening supports and resources for graduate students. They suggested approaches that include enhancements to the structure of student-supervisor relationships; continuing to support writing and professionalization offerings; considering the expansion of international exchange opportunities; and broadly encouraging interaction and community building among members of the graduate student population.	11	“We recommend that CCL institute a formal structure of cohort meetings to enhance the experience of graduate students.”	We agree that we could be providing more opportunities for student cohorts to enhance both the intellectual and social experiences of graduate students. While students who are in the midst of course work have many cohort-building experiences, this tends to fall off once they have achieved candidacy. The greatest need, then, is to bring cohorts together who are currently engaged in the writing of their dissertations. To that end, we have already instituted a new in-person colloquium beginning this January for post-field examination students. All post-field exam students will be expected to attend. Each student will be invited to share their research and any other challenges they are	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased to note that the Centre has already begun responding to this recommendation.

			facing. There will be two presenters each semester. Following the presentation and discussion, there will be refreshments and opportunities to socialize.	
	12	“We recommend that CCL enhance existing exchange opportunities and seek out new ones.”	We agree that more could be done to enhance exchange opportunities. We already have an agreement in place with the Comparative Literature program at Utrecht University. We have initiated further conversation with the Director of that Program to explore other ways of deepening the relationship through student colloquia or shared online course participation. Given budgetary constraints and our inability to support students financially on long-term exchanges, we don’t think it is feasible to establish concrete exchange opportunities with U.S. universities. We already provide other shorter-term, but highly prestigious, opportunities for our students to interact with scholars and students from universities in the U.S. and around the world. Every summer we support one student’s attendance at the Institute of World Literature run by Harvard University. We are an affiliate of that Institute. We also send one student per year to the School of Critical Theory held every summer at Cornell University. These opportunities are, in effect, wonderfully robust models intellectual exchange. Our Centre covers tuition, travel and accommodation costs for both these programs. Medium term implementation.	Immediate term: The ASDO supports the unit’s approach to this recommendation. The ASDO will also bring to the Unit’s attention the University’s International Doctoral Clusters program, which supports doctoral training through research engagement with international collaborators.
	13	“We recommend that CCL offer PhD students at least 1 year of postcandidacy funding in which they are not expected to teach.”	We would love to be able to have the budget to offer PhD students at least one year of post-candidacy release from teaching, as many of our peer U.S. institutions do. Given the anticipated constraints of the new budget model, we do not foresee this as a possibility unless the Faculty of Arts and Science is willing to fund such a release from teaching. We could foresee having a competitive	Immediate-long term: Under the new budget model (NBM), Unit budgets will be determined primarily by their activity - the net revenue from their graduate enrolments, and undergraduate teaching activity (whether in their Unit or other Units). Unit budgets will be stable in transition – they will receive the same budget they would have

			process where we could only offer teaching release to one doctoral student per year. This would be a medium-term goal since the incoming Director will need to assess how and whether the new budget model will enable this. We also should point out that given the rules set out by CUPE and the provisions of labour law, we will be unable to prevent students from accepting other teaching, but a paid teaching release would certainly reduce the burden.	received under the old methodology (and this will persist), so that their budgets will change under the NBM incrementally. Going forward, Units will have both the changes in revenues and responsibility for changes in costs. They will have greater budgetary clarity and agency as they will be well informed and able to pursue their own academic priorities and goals, such as choosing to provide an extra year of doctoral support.
	14	“We recommend that CCL structure supervisor-student relationships perhaps through a mentorship agreement between the supervisor and the student.”	The Centre follows the guidelines set out by the School of Graduate Studies for both supervisors and supervisees. The new Centre for Graduate Supervision and Mentorship provides excellent resources for students as they navigate relationships with their supervisory committee. Recently updated guidelines for supervisors already include a checklist of important elements and expectations that must be discussed and put into practice, while also recognizing that there are differences in supervisory styles. Students also receive a copy of the SGS guidelines that pertain to supervisees. The Centre ensures that all students have scheduled meetings with their committees and supervisors engage frequently with their supervisees. We will be sure to circulate these documents to our faculty again and remind them to discuss the supervisory process fully with their students. We don’t see the need to re-invent the wheel given the already robust set of guidelines and resources provided by SGS.	Immediate-long term: As noted, CCL is utilizing the guidance provided by the new Centre for Graduate Supervision and Mentorship.
	15	“We recommend that CCL continue to support writing and professionalization programs for graduate students. We also recommend that CCL allocate faculty service to such initiatives to garner	We, along with the help of FAS’s Milestones and Pathways program, support a writing initiative that includes weekly meetings of a writing group as well as two annual retreats,	Immediate term: The Dean’s office, in 2023, introduced a new Office of Graduate Professional Development & Student Success (GPDSS). The office offers regular graduate

		institutional recognition in the form of funding and/or course equivalents.”	one in-house at our Centre, and the other, off-site at a cottage north of the city. Given the very few faculty members at our disposal, we would find it difficult to release faculty from teaching or provide extra funding for guiding this initiative. Advanced graduate students have stepped into a leadership role in this initiative, with the Associate Director ready to provide support and advice. The Associate Director’s 1.0 course release, stipend and research funding allows for involvement in the writing initiative. We see student leadership in this writing initiative as an opportunity for both leadership and professionalization, providing valuable experience in honing organizational skills that will be helpful on both the academic and non-academic job markets.	<p>professionalization workshops, as well as a dedicated 8-session cohort-based program for PhD students that facilitates students’ preparation for strong career prospects both inside and outside the academy.</p> <p>The GPDSS office also works closely with graduate units to offer tailored support for unit-level programming and initiatives with respect to academic and non-academic careers. This unit-level work on graduate professionalization is informed by unit and sector level data on doctoral employment outcomes (and indeed, master’s employment outcomes) in academic and non-academic careers (tracked and provided by the School of Graduate Studies).</p> <p>The Director, Graduate Writing Support in the Faculty of Arts and Science, also offers a series of workshops and writing groups for graduate students to support their writing progress and is available to offer tailored workshops for individual academic units.</p>
The reviewers recommended engaging in strategic faculty complement planning with an eye to enhancing the unit’s stability. They encouraged CCL to prioritize the consolidation of existing disciplinary strengths in pursuing any potential hiring opportunities.	16	“We recommend to the Faculty of Arts & Science that CCL receive a dedicated appointment of 1 new faculty member whose appointment would be primarily (that is 60-70%) in CCL in order to assure the stability of the program’s directorship as well as its pedagogical commitment to the field. We have no recommendation with respect to field, but CCL should consider consolidating its existing strengths when making this appointment.”	The Centre fully agrees with this recommendation for a majority position in Comparative Literature. In addition to a position in Indigenous literatures and theory, we would seek a faculty member whose area of specialty aligns with our research focus on comparativity. It is also important for our Centre to have more majority Complit faculty members to help support the Centre’s administration as well as the undergraduate LCT program.	Medium-long term: The unit is invited to submit a request to the Faculty Appointments Committee (FAC). All requests for new positions across the Faculty are submitted to FAC, which includes representation across its sectors (Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences) and from the Colleges. The FAC reviews all requests for new positions and makes recommendations to the Dean regarding which requests should be granted. In any given year, there are many more requests than available positions.
The reviewers urged CCL and FAS leadership to work with the School of Graduate Studies as appropriate, to ensure clarity and equity	17	“We recommend that the School of Graduate Studies revisit its SSHRC quota allocation model in order to take into account the research funding won	We fully agree. This recommendation arises out of the inequities of which the reviewers were made aware by the faculty and	Immediate term: Arts & Science utilises the same criteria as SGS in determining the quota of research applications forwarded to tri-

related to research funding allocation processes for CCL faculty who teach and supervise in multiple units.		by CCL faculty – this funding is currently counted only in the faculty member’s home unit – if the faculty member is actively teaching and supervising in both units, it should be counted in both units.”	administration at CCL. The fact that the research grants of our budgetary faculty whose home departments are in other units (nearly everyone!) do not count towards the algorithm for determining things like SSHRC quota allocations, or even more importantly, for the allocation of PhD spots (research grants are one of 5 criteria used to determine this), points to the need to adjust how research grants are counted and distributed. The reviewers were mistaken about the role of SGS in this process. It is the Faculty of Arts and Science that makes such decisions.	<p>Council funding bodies (i.e., how successful the unit’s applications have been, averaged over the past three years; and the unit’s % of the doctoral population).</p> <p>The research grant metric is based on administering unit of the grant and not home unit of the faculty member. Grants being administered through CCL would be captured.</p>
<b><u>Joint LCT and CCL Recommendations:</u></b>				
<p>The reviewers made several suggestions related to strengthening connections and coordination between the CCL and LCT programs, and further leveraging the resources of both. They highlighted opportunities to encourage more routine interactions, formalize teaching agreements, and consider strategic faculty complement planning between CCL and LCT, prioritizing enhanced coverage in underrepresented areas such as Indigenous Studies and African Studies. The reviewers further noted opportunities to strategically strengthen collaboration between CCL, LCT and the Creativity and Society minor program, also housed in Victoria College.</p>	18	<p>“Our sense is that the [LCT] program could stay connected with Victoria College in order to retain its unique seminar-oriented cohort nature and to leverage Victoria College resources (academic, administrative, and student-facing). At the same time, we do recommend that the program develop a stronger, closer relationship with CCL in order to further leverage resources and enhance the already substantial disciplinary and faculty crossover.”</p>	<p>We agree that it is highly beneficial for both LCT and CCL to maintain close links to optimise our shared disciplinary resources. Comp. Lit faculty have, at different points, served as coordinators for the LCT program and, as outlined in our MOA, Comp. lit faculty have specific commitments to teaching in LCT. In order to strengthen the already close relationship which we have with LCT we will be establishing a steering committee which will oversee curriculum development and course administration among other issues. This collaborative steering committee will be comprised of the LCT Program Director, Vic faculty, the director of CCL and two or more faculty members of CCL.</p>	<p>Immediate-medium term: The Dean’s Office supports the creation of a steering committee, which will enhance communication between LCT and CCL on both curricular matters and pedagogical synergies.</p> <p>In addition, please see below, #21.</p>
	19	<p>“An Indigenous Literatures appointment would be consistent with U of T’s stated priorities and goals as well as with the recommendations of the TRC. Such an appointment would also enhance CCL.”</p>	<p>We agree with the need to hire a specialist in Indigenous Literatures. This has been our goal for the last 5 years. Such a hire would attract Indigenous students and the growing number of students interested in Indigenous literatures to both the Centre for Comparative Literature and to the Literature and Critical Theory program, and would provide unique, non-Western approaches to theory, oral literary traditions, Indigenous languages and</p>	<p>Please see above, #16.</p>

			comparatist approaches between artistic media. It would work towards the efforts at diversifying LCT course offerings otherwise highlighted by the external reviewers. We will be submitting another appointment request this winter.	
	20	“The creation of a hybrid steering committee between CCL and LCT that is vested with the governance of the LCT program and pedagogical training for CCL graduate students. Such a committee should preserve the strengths of an undergraduate college-based program with the benefits of close ties to an interdisciplinary, wide-ranging graduate unit. This might include faculty from both CCL and Victoria College who have defined terms of service and who oversee the curricular structure, staffing, and academic pathways for LCT students. To ensure equitable exchange between CCL and Victoria College, there may need to strategic cross-appointments between U of T and Victoria College.”	We think this is an excellent idea. We will have a joint steering committee made up of faculty from both CCL and LCT in place by the summer. One of the faculty members on this committee should be the Director of CCL in order to better coordinate the resources available. The Director’s term on the steering committee should extend to the full term of the Directorship. Other committee members from CCL could be appointed for terms of 3 years in order to create continuity and stability in the LCT program. We are looking towards the strategic cross-appointments as recommended by the reviewers (see answers to points 16 and 19), and we envision such appointees becoming part of our MOA. Short to Medium term.	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased to see that both units are taking up this recommendation and considering how and when to implement it.
	21	“A clear MoA that outlines the teaching responsibilities of CCL faculty to LCT. Currently, CCL faculty are encouraged to teach LCT courses, but there is no clarity of when and how many such courses should be staffed by CCL faculty. For stability, closer links and long-term growth between the two programs, teaching responsibilities to each unit need to be clearly defined.”	21 and 22. There is already a clear MOA in place that outlines which faculty members of CCL regularly teach in LCT and how much of their FTE is placed in that program. Beyond the faculty members named in the MOA, CCL has passed a policy that requires any CCL member whose teaching cycle would allot 2 graduate seminars to CCL, to move one of those seminars to LCT. These cycles are variable depending on the percentage of the appointment held in CCL with the result that there is not a stable number of courses taught in LCT by CCL faculty each year. However, the system has been working well. We are in the midst of updating the MOA to take into account retirements and new faculty members who will be added. New shared appointments	Given the impending implementation of the new budget model, this is an opportune time to revisit the MOA. In the Immediate term, the Dean’s office will take an active role in the MOA review and revisions.



			between CCL and LCT would go a long way to creating more predictability in the delivery of the LCT curriculum. We fully agree that such appointments should be a priority. Short to Medium term	
	22	“Strategic hiring between CCL and LCT is necessary, particularly in traditionally underrepresented fields (such as Indigenous Studies, African Studies, etc) [...] 1 additional line of research faculty (beyond the line in CCL that we recommend above) devoted to integrating CCL and LCT will make a significant difference to the development and governance of both programs. Faculty in both programs have indicated that the first of these appointments should be in Indigenous Studies. We agree that this is a priority area.”	See #21 above.	Please see above, #16 & 21.
	23	“We recommend that Victoria College facilitate further collaborations between LCT and the Creativity and Society Minor also housed at Victoria College.”	We agree with this sentiment, but note as well that such collaborations fall almost entirely within the scope of Victoria College only (and not the CCL). Nevertheless, a number of LCT and CRE instructors regularly teach across these two programs, including instructors secured by MOAs with partner FAS units and interdivisional arrangements (e.g. Faculty of Music). We would similarly welcome opportunities for CCL faculty to teach across these two programs when appropriate.	Please see above, # 21.
	24	“Finally, we note that CCL has begun to develop exciting connections with another undergraduate programs located in Victoria College: the Minor in Creativity and Society. Currently, some graduate students in CCL pursuing the new creative track towards the dissertation serve as teaching assistants in Creativity and Society. We recommend that UT and Victoria College consider whether LCT and Creativity and Society might profitably be linked	We will continue to foster connections between CCL and Victoria College’s undergraduate programs. For the last two years, a CCL post-doc has served as a course instructor in the Creativity and Society Minor program, while CCL graduate students have served as TAs in various courses. We will consider additional teaching opportunities for CCL students, and enhance networking and	Immediate-medium term: The ASDO supports the College’s and Centre’s exploration of fruitful collaborations that enrich the teaching and learning environment for students.

		together and with CCL to create an innovative, indeed groundbreaking, creative-critical program in literary and theoretical studies. The above reflections on governance, hiring, and steering of the curriculum would apply in this case as well.”	research collaboration via the College’s Junior Fellows program and Northrop Frye Centre. Further, we will review curricular offerings to explore opportunities for critical-creative collaboration. Innovative cross-listed courses may appeal to students in both programs; we will also review cognate courses to maximize opportunities across both programs while maintaining the distinct priorities and learning outcomes of each.	
<b>Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response</b>	25	“We recommend that CCL increase the size of its MA program. The PhD program should remain stable.”	The M.A. program in CCL this year has already expanded significantly. We currently have 10 M.A. students in the program (5 domestic, 5 international). Our application pool this year promises to be robust and we hope to continue attracting many excellent M.A. students. The next Associate Director will be expected to continue the active recruitment of M.A. students in collaboration with the Director of CCL.	Immediate-medium term: The office of the Vice-Dean, Graduate Education would be pleased to provide advice to CCL as they consider whether the continued expansion of the MA program should be an academic and budgetary priority for the unit.

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

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*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

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The reviewers highlighted the following strengths:

- **LCT Program:** The reviewers observed that the Literature and Critical Theory (LCT) undergraduate program is highly valued by both students and faculty, and provides students with the opportunity to pursue comparative interdisciplinary literary study with links to critical theory. Its location in Victoria College allows the program to remain small, and students and faculty alike benefit from this unique cohort experience. The program attracts exceptional students, and is reasonably well-resourced, with a strong complement of faculty who have diverse interests and experience.
- **CCL:** The Centre for Comparative Literature (CCL) compares very well with international peer institutions, and reviewers note that it is an “important and unique hub” for interdisciplinary studies at U of T. Its graduate programs offer a pathway for talented students from the undergraduate LCT program to continue their studies; program requirements and learning outcomes are clear and appropriate; and contributing faculty are prominent and widely recognized scholars, active in research and publication and praised for innovative interdisciplinary contributions. The reviewers observe that the quality and breadth of scholarly interest among graduate students is on a very high level, and PhD graduates appear to be successful at finding faculty or teaching-related positions after completion. Finally, the Graduate Writing Program, which supports writing practice and professionalization opportunities is noted as positive, and the Centre is well-supported in its space needs.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed:

- **LCT Program:** encouraging greater faculty interaction related to LCT course content and reading lists, with an eye to minimizing overlap across course offerings; exploring the possibility of expanding the involvement of faculty from various units across the Faculty of Arts and Science (in particular African Studies) in the delivery of LCT courses; pursuing collaboration between FAS and Victoria College on developing approaches to enhance the visibility of the LCT program beyond Victoria College.
- **CCL:** developing and articulating a “visible and appealing core of interests” to distinguish the CCL’s innovative teaching and scholarship, and streamlining CCL’s graduate course offerings; strengthening supports and resources for graduate students; engaging in strategic faculty complement planning with an eye to enhancing the unit’s stability; and working with the School of Graduate Studies as appropriate, to ensure clarity and equity related to research funding allocation processes for CCL faculty who teach and supervise in multiple units.

- **LCT and CCL:** strengthening connections and coordination between the CCL and LCT programs, and further leveraging the resources of both; and strategically strengthening collaboration between CCL, LCT and the Creativity and Society minor program, also housed in Victoria College.

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

## 5 Monitoring and Date of Next Review

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The Arts & Science Dean's office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with chairs and directors and through regular governance and curricular oversight.

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than midway between the February 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2030-31 on the status of the implementation plans.

The next review will take place no later than 2030-31.

## 6 Distribution

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On July 15<sup>th</sup> 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 and program leadership.

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

## 1 Review Summary

<b>Program(s) Reviewed:</b>	Political Science (HBA): Specialist, Major, Minor Political Science: MA, PhD
<b>Unit Reviewed:</b>	Department of Political Science
<b>Commissioning Officer:</b>	Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
<b>Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barbara Arneil, Professor, Department of Political Science, University of British Columbia</li> <li>• Mark J. C. Crescenzi, Nancy Hanes White Distinguished Professor of Political Science, Department Chair, Department of Political Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</li> <li>• Jacob T. Levy, Tomlinson Professor of Political Theory, Chair, Department of Political Science, McGill University</li> <li>• Michael D. Martinez, Professor of Political Science, Department of Political Science, University of Florida</li> </ul>
<b>Date of Review Visit:</b>	March 25-26, 2024
<b>Review Report Received by VPAP:</b>	June 26, 2024
<b>Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:</b>	March 6, 2025
<b>Date Reported to AP&amp;P:</b>	April 10, 2025

## Previous UTQAP Review

**Date:** February 22-23, 2016

### Summary of Findings and Recommendations

#### Significant Program Strengths

- Well-designed undergraduate curriculum with links between the study of politics and hands-on policy skills
- Many research options for undergraduates, including independent study courses with faculty, research participation courses, International Course Modules, and the senior thesis course
- Considerable experiential learning opportunities for graduate students, including research assistantships, field research, summer programs, and participation in interdisciplinary centres
- Extremely satisfied, highly-employable graduate students who contribute to the profession; a Toronto PhD in Political Science is recognized as a strong indicator of the quality of the applicant
- Extraordinarily large number of undergraduates; impressive growth in the number of masters and doctoral students
- Very active, engaged research faculty well-recognized by the discipline nationally and internationally for their research contributions, with publications in major journals and major presses
- Very good progress in recruiting women faculty

#### Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Creating a centralized curriculum committee to address redundancies and gaps in the undergraduate curriculum
- Providing more internship or co-op opportunities to enhance students' employability
- Improving graduate course offerings in quantitative and qualitative methods
- Addressing the uneven quality of teaching assistants and implementing TA training at the departmental level
- Increasing the length of Ph.D. support
- Resolving gaps in coverage due to several recent and upcoming retirements
- Ensuring that the climate for women continues to be positive and that issues of racial/ethnic/national diversity are furthered in the student body and in the courses offered
- Addressing the diversion of the leadership and teaching efforts of the faculty away from the department towards research centres
- Encouraging more centralized decision-making structures in the department, which has traditionally made decisions via small groups
- Increasing departmental control over its financial situation

## Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

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### Documentation Provided to Reviewers

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

### Consultation Process

Faculty, students, administrative staff and senior program administrators as well as members of relevant cognate units as determined by the commissioning officer: Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Interim Associate Dean, Unit-Level Reviews; Department Chair, Associate Chair, Tri-Campus Graduate Chair; Tri-Campus Chairs; Program Directors; Graduate Area Group Convenors; Dept. Administrative Manager and Administrative Staff, Assistant, Associate, and Full Professors, Chairs of Cognate Units, Graduate faculty; and undergraduate and graduate students.

## Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

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### 1. Undergraduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ Recently revised program is increasing enrolment and becoming more inclusive and diverse in its curriculum
  - ▶ Positive changes made to the program since the previous UTQAP review
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Increased options for first year courses support student choice and flexibility
- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▶ Department has engaged in important work of increasing the diversity of program content, adding courses on indigenous politics, race/racialization, and feminism, as well as working to deparochialize political theory by including non-western thinkers and scholars
  - ▶ Students highlighted POL200Y1, which puts western and non-western thinkers into conversation with each other, and summer courses with a broad set of scholars/thinkers, as aspects of the curriculum incorporating EDI
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Undergraduate students spoke positively about their experiences
  - ▶ Impressive work by undergraduate student association to create opportunities for students to gather, including multiple community events and an undergraduate research conference

- ▶ Survey results showing increased satisfaction among first year students in Political Science courses indicates appreciation for increased flexibility in course options
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - ▶ Impressive enrolment increases in recent years
- Quality indicators – faculty
  - ▶ Decline in percentage of courses taught by sessional faculty viewed positively by reviewers

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

- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▶ Students feel EDI could be more widely incorporated into the curriculum
  - ▶ Faculty noted tensions between traditional understandings of political science and the need to have an inclusive curriculum incorporating race, gender and other equity issues
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - ▶ Reviewers note survey data indicating that students were less likely to say they would enroll in political science at U of T again if they were to start over, compared to students in other political science departments or in other departments at U of T

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▶ Continue ongoing work of increasing diversity of curricular content
  - ▶ Explore ways to increase support for faculty engaged in pedagogical innovation related to curricular diversity; “diversifying the curriculum needs to be a responsibility for all faculty members and courses, and not limited to courses specifically designated as equity/diversity learning”
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Students raised a number of suggested enhancements including additional work-study options, opportunities to engage in research, and the creation of a space for student gatherings
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - ▶ Explore causes for undergraduate student survey results indicating lower likelihood of re-enrolling if starting over compared with survey benchmarks; consider working in conjunction with the undergraduate student society to investigate contributing factors and strategies for improvement



## 2. Graduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ Excellent PhD program draws on key strengths including the great breadth and depth of faculty in all areas of the discipline, and a large cohort of doctoral students who create a lively, research-intensive intellectual climate
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Full-year course focusing on completion of Major Research Paper is an important distinctive experience for MA students
  - ▶ Introduction of limited enrolment, tutorial-style workshops focusing on small-group work is a very promising enhancement to PhD program coursework, and “a particularly valuable opportunity to enhance a graduate education that is otherwise especially centered on larger core classes”
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ PhD students generally expressed very high satisfaction with the program

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

- Overall quality
  - ▶ Significant concerns raised regarding the MA program, including considerable variation in enrolments, variable assessment of student quality, and competition from other professional master’s programs offered at the University
  - ▶ PhD program faces concerns common across the discipline: “an uncertain academic job market; trade-offs between professionalization via publication and improving time to completion; ratcheting demands for research skills and methods without sacrifice of substantive knowledge”
- Objectives
  - ▶ Faculty offered varying opinions on the future of the MA program with some suggesting that the program be closed, and others advocating for reimagining of the program to serve research-oriented students at a lower cost than competing U of T master’s programs
  - ▶ Regarding the possible closure of the MA program, reviewers caution that doing so would eliminate a pathway for students into the department’s PhD program
  - ▶ MA program streams in Political Science and Political Theory appear to be a historical legacy, with limited justification to remain as separate streams
  - ▶ Reviewers raise concern that creation of quantitative methods subfield may encourage the marginalization of qualitative methods and other kinds of non-quantitative methods used by diverse scholars in the department; “the set of research skills and tools within the department may also tend to emphasize one kind of method and discourage the development of the skills of mixed-method research”

- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ MA student recruitment is hampered by lack of funding and by competition from more professionally oriented and better-funded MA programs at the University
  - ▶ High enrolment in PhD program raises concerns with respect to limited opportunities in the academic job market
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Faculty raised concerns regarding insufficient methods training for PhD students
  - ▶ MA students taking advanced undergraduate courses (with additional graduate-level requirements) to earn academic credits undermines the distinctiveness of the MA program
  - ▶ Major Research Paper-focused course results in supervision of MA students being concentrated in the hands of very few faculty members
  - ▶ Reviewers highlight challenges from current practice of linking PhD field exams to two-semester core courses: teaching to the exam encourages a more fixed canonical approach, while tailoring exams to each year's course reduces intellectual consistency from year to year; “the trade-offs here are real, and the knot could only be cut by a wholesale reform of the core course-exam structure that would require a reorganization of the whole coursework and exam stage of the program”
  - ▶ Existing restrictions limiting faculty to teaching only one graduate course per year requires faculty to choose between teaching methods courses or courses in their substantive areas of interest/expertise; this can lead to challenges finding adequate numbers of staff to teach quantitative methods courses
- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▶ Faculty noted tensions between traditional understandings of political science and the need to have an inclusive curriculum incorporating race, gender and other equity issues
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Reviewers note concerning survey results indicating that a significant minority (25%) of Ph.D. students rate relations between graduate students and faculty as fair or poor, attributable to a number of possible factors impacting students’ experience
- Student funding
  - ▶ PhD students raised significant concerns regarding financial stress and economic precarity, due to funding levels and the high cost of living in Toronto

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ Give careful consideration to the future of the MA program; reviewers express a preference for program redesign/restructuring rather than closure, but note that “closing the program would be preferable to the status quo”
- Objectives
  - ▶ Develop an MA program mission statement that includes goals, objectives, intended audience, and possible career outcomes for students in the program
  - ▶ Consider eliminating separate streams for Political Science and Political Theory in a reconceptualized MA program

- ▶ Consider creating a subfield in research methods that includes qualitative and mixed methods research, rather than strictly limited to quantitative methods
- ▶ Engage in open discussion within the Department regarding a relaxation of the “one graduate course” rule, particularly for faculty who teach both a methods course and a substantive course in the same academic year
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Ensure that selectivity in admissions processes balances both program quality and viability
  - ▶ Reflect on the appropriate size of the PhD program; consider reducing program size to better align with student funding levels and opportunities in the current academic job market
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Define the length of the MA program with consideration of trade-offs between different options; reviewers note that extending the program would allow students to better prepare for possible PhD programs, but would also increase program cost
  - ▶ Explore possibilities for offering a thesis option in the MA program, in support of a renewed research focus
  - ▶ Consider ways to redefine MA program course requirements, preserving the required cohort building seminar course and optional internship, and adding seminars shared with doctoral students “to give MA students preparing for a doctoral program experience in the exchange of scholarly ideas in graduate seminars”
  - ▶ Give regular consideration to trade-offs in approaches to connecting PhD field exams with core courses; “It is possible that experimentation could be done one field at a time, or that there could be a serious department-wide commitment to make use of the option of supplemental reading lists for the exams...We suggest only that the possibility of reform be openly considered every so often.”
  - ▶ Allow time for consideration and evaluation of newly-introduced tutorial-style PhD courses
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Explore ways to identify contributing factors for PhD students’ relatively low rating of relations between graduate students and faculty; work across several dimensions (e.g., additional support for professionalization and/or student mentorship opportunities) to address this concern
- Student funding
  - ▶ Explore ways of providing financial support for MA students (e.g., through opportunities for teaching assistantships)
  - ▶ “A key recommendation whose solution lies primarily beyond the unit’s own control is to address the ongoing urgent need to fund Ph.D. students at a level compatible with living in Toronto without falling into debt”
  - ▶ Explore opportunities to improve on seeking and obtaining external grants, in order to provide additional financial support for doctoral students
  - ▶ “To the extent that this committee is able to make recommendations beyond the department, it was unclear to us whether the university is increasing funding for PhD

students or if the department under a new budget model might be able to have more control over finances in its graduate program. We recommend that the program should be reduced in size, that the per student funding levels for doctoral students be increased, and the department have greater control over how to direct that funding.”

### 3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall Quality
  - ▶ U of T’s research strengths lie in asking big questions and embracing methodological pluralism
- Research
  - ▶ Faculty research funding comes from many sources including the internal Connaught fund, not for profit agencies, CIHR, and government sources
  - ▶ Faculty have been very active publishing books since the last review
  - ▶ Department has received many awards for faculty scholarship
  - ▶ Faculty success rates in SSHRC Insight Development Grants were higher than the national average
- Faculty
  - ▶ Faculty expressed a sense of feeling supported and that the department was generally well run
  - ▶ Faculty welcomed teaching load equalization of 3 lectures and 1 seminar across all three campuses
  - ▶ Junior faculty largely supported departmental diversification efforts
  - ▶ Full professors largely felt that community had been rebuilt after the pandemic
  - ▶ Number and breadth of awards received by faculty is impressive, including recent appointments to the College of New Scholars, two faculty appointed to the Order of Canada since 2015, and 17 faculty elected as Fellows to the Royal Society of Canada since 1989

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

- Research
  - ▶ Reviewers note fluctuations in faculty SSHRC participation rates, and SSHRC Insight Grant success rates lower than the national average between 2015 and 2022
  - ▶ Number of Tri-Agency research grants and amount of funding decreased between 2015 and 2022
- Faculty
  - ▶ Assistant professors expressed some frustration over the time available for research with a higher teaching load compared with some comparators in the US
  - ▶ Some junior faculty felt BIPOC colleagues were not fully supported
  - ▶ Junior faculty expressed worry and uncertainty on decisions around tenure

- ▶ Lack of clarity among Associate professors regarding the requirements for promotion to Full professor; faculty are clearer on requirements for promotion to Associate and tenure
- ▶ Associate professors commented on an increase in service after being promoted to Associate level; workload can be a significant cause of concern, particularly for faculty with cross appointments
- ▶ Associate professors expressed concern about finding faculty available to teach methods courses due to rigidity in teaching assignments
- ▶ Associate professors expressed concerns regarding PhD student funding and the cost of living in Toronto, and the continuing need to build community after the pandemic
- ▶ Full professors raised concern regarding hiring and retaining diverse faculty, particularly black and Indigenous faculty, and commented that the department lacks sufficient scaffolding and networks to support BIPOC faculty
- ▶ Full professors noted concerns regarding recent retirements that have impacted the department's strengths in the area of Canadian politics; this subfield is now disproportionately located on UTM / UTSC campuses
- ▶ Faculty elections to the Royal Society of Canada have slowed since 2015, and faculty elected are not representative of the diversity of the department

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
  - ▶ Explore strategies for improving faculty participation and success rates in SSHRC and Tri-Agency funding competitions
  - ▶ Create a clear and transparent internal accounting of all faculty research funding; “an annual review/survey of faculty is needed to ensure an accurate and fulsome accounting of the percentage of faculty, including those with cross appointments, who have Tri-Agency research funding and the exact amounts across all three campuses”
  - ▶ Set targets for Tri-Agency funding, specifically Insight Grants, in Political Science across all three campuses, with goals to exceed the national average in the discipline or at least match the University average
  - ▶ Encourage all research faculty to apply for grants/funding, regardless of subfield, to help support PhD students while facilitating their own research activity
  - ▶ Increase number and diversity of research award nominations for national and international awards
- Faculty
  - ▶ Consider ways to enhance mentorship opportunities for associate professors
  - ▶ Develop more inclusive and transparent hiring practices that include wide participation from racialized and BIPOC faculty
  - ▶ Consider engaging external resources to evaluate and consult with faculty to improve hiring, promotion and retention with respect to BIPOC faculty
  - ▶ Include EDI as a central dimension in recognition of achievements and nominations for awards, including senior or career awards
  - ▶ Incorporate EDI voices in departmental leadership and governance

- ▶ Include a faculty member from the EDI committee on the PTR and hiring committees, to provide BIPOC faculty agency in representation, with planned increases over time in departmental capacity for this form of inclusion

## 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
  - ▶ FAS Dean commented that the Political Science Department is a “foundational department in the University that has made many contributions”
  - ▶ “Striking” number of political science faculty currently serve in various administrative roles
  - ▶ Staff provide impressive support for faculty and students
  - ▶ Staff expressed positive views on the working environment and sense of community in the department
  - ▶ Department has good relationships and faculty cross-appointments with other units and a
  - ▶ Department has a positive, collaborative relationship with the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy
  - ▶ Chairs and faculty from UTM and UTSC expressed that the overall department seems to be working well, with good tri-campus relationships
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Digital learning coordinator role fulfils a real need in the department and provides opportunities for students and faculty to use studio facilities for podcasts and audio recordings
  - ▶ Creation of Associate Chair, Special Projects, role supporting applications for research grants and nominating faculty for awards, is a very positive step and provides important support for the department
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Senior faculty highlighted departmental strengths including methodological pluralism, theory as a foundational field, good relationships with the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, and the development politics subfield which routinely attracts a diversity of students from around the world
  - ▶ Some positive progress has been made in recruitment of BIPOC faculty and curriculum diversification
  - ▶ Ziibiing Lab Global Indigenous Politics Research Collaboratory represents significant commitment of space and support for Indigenous scholarship; Director’s

contributions to the department are a strong source of recruitment of Indigenous students, and create new opportunities for the department and the University

- International comparators
  - ▶ U of T Political Science ranks first in Canada, sixth among public institutions, and 15th among North American peer institutions in the Social Sciences Citation Index
  - ▶ U of T Political Science is highly ranked in the Shanghai Academic Ranking of Work Universities (AWRU) subject-specific rankings (2nd in Canada and 41st in the world)

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

- Relationships
  - ▶ Assistant professors group noted that the departmental junior faculty advisor/advocate role did not seem to be as active a position as it once was, and observed a general lack of clarity regarding the purpose of the role
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Tri-campus model adds complexity to departmental governance and has led to some ambiguity regarding roles and responsibilities, particularly for the relatively new graduate chair position
  - ▶ “Shrinking availability” of shared office space on the St. George campus for UTM/UTSC faculty has impacts on opportunities to meet with graduate students and the general sense of belonging within the department
  - ▶ Some staff expressed a desire for more common gathering spaces
  - ▶ Limited funding affects department’s ability to host top international visitors, with related impacts on student recruitment and community building
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Overall economic climate is one of uncertainty; proposed new budget model presents important challenges and opportunities for the department
  - ▶ Current limits on budgetary carry forward amounts “has been challenging compared to historical practice of saving for future contingencies”
  - ▶ Opportunities for recruitment of BIPOC faculty and curriculum diversification are not being fully realized; “in its current stage of development, we are concerned that the department’s investments into EDI are at risk of stalling or rolling backward.”
  - ▶ “Our time in the department left us with the sense that EDI still gathers at the edges of the core community. Hiring leading scholars is an essential and laudable step forward, but to preserve these steps, and to continue to build upon them, more work toward inclusion into the core of the department is needed.”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ Department should consider approaches to ensure that it hears from its faculty members on a regular basis, particularly the more junior members and those from historically marginalized groups
  - ▶ As FAS moves towards a new activity-based budget model, the Department will need to work collaboratively with the Munk School to ensure that both units’

- interests are being met, and that relations are not impacted by any proposed undergraduate program growth at Munk
- Organizational and financial structure
    - ▶ The department would benefit from access to details of upcoming budgetary changes, to ensure that leadership can plan effectively
    - ▶ Divisional and institutional leadership urged to consider how to appropriately remunerate units shouldering disproportionately large administrative loads
    - ▶ Ensure that Chairs are appropriately empowered to carry out the responsibilities of their role, including some amount of budgetary and teaching assignment oversight
    - ▶ Explore strategies for space allocation and prioritization and consider creating a departmental Space Committee to address these issues
    - ▶ In recognition of the additional time and effort required for UTM and UTSC faculty to attend in-person events at the St. George campus, consider offering a hybrid option for some seminars and holding select departmental meetings and events at UTM and UTSC
  - Long-range planning and overall assessment
    - ▶ With appropriate support from the Faculty and the University, the tri-campus Political Science community can play a leading role in developing and supporting faculty and students who embrace the innovations and challenges of scholarship rooted in EDI; “Hiring leading scholars is an essential and laudable step forward, but to preserve these steps, and to continue to build upon them, more work toward inclusion into the core of the department is needed”
    - ▶ Ensure that workload of diversifying departmental practices and norms is appropriately distributed; “Have conversations about who will do the work that the department agrees needs to be done.”
    - ▶ Explore ways to improve accessibility; “Consider collecting and voicing the concerns and ideas of faculty with disabilities on how to ensure a more accessible workplace.”
    - ▶ Engage external EDI experts, particularly in racial inequality, to facilitate ongoing faculty discussions and set actionable goals related to EDI and the various dimensions of the practice of academia; suggested topics include the challenges faced by minority faculty in teaching, research, and service, and issues related to hiring, tenure, and promotion
    - ▶ Reviewers acknowledge that logistical challenges related to housing and cost of living are often exacerbated for the BIPOC community, and recommend that the departmental EDI committee work to identify and prioritize resources that would assist racialized, BIPOC faculty and graduate students
    - ▶ Integrate new voices broadly in departmental operations to re-energize program curricula, the daily practices in the department, and the crafting of the department’s community
    - ▶ Embrace the diversity of voice that comes with EDI investments; “BIPOC and racialized faculty as well as other equity seeking group members bring a set of expertise, resilience, and life experiences that are intrinsically valuable to the core goals of academia.”



- ▶ “When their voices seem counter to the norm, extreme, or focused on the consequences of status quo power, that is often a sign that these faculty are still viewed as outsiders. The department should work to amplify these voices and support them when they speak to power. Allow racialized faculty to be the voice they were hired to be.”
- ▶ “We recommend embracing [EDI-related] goals with enthusiasm and grace... Our best advice is to proceed with a daily commitment to crafting a working and learning environment where everyone feels welcome and supported, where they feel safe to learn and to work, and where they feel that their voices have value.”
- International comparators
  - ▶ Use all three international rankings (QS, THE, and AWRU) in departmental comparisons with peers, with an understanding of the different information each provides



## 2 Administrative Response & Implementation Plan 36

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

March 6, 2025

Professor Nick Rule  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
University of Toronto

### **RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of Political Science**

Dear Professor Rule,

I write in response to your letter of December 10, 2024, regarding the March 2024 UTQAP cycle review of the Department of Political Science and its programs and requesting our Administrative response. The programs reviewed were: Honours BA, Political Science (Specialist, Major, Minor); Master of Arts in Political Science, and PhD in Political Science.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers: Professor Barbara Arneil of the University of British Columbia, Professor Mark J.C. Crescenzi of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Professor Jacob T. Levy of McGill University, and Professor Michael D. Martinex of the University of Florida for their thoughtful and comprehensive review of the Department. We would also like to thank the Department's leadership, faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study, as well as thank the faculty, staff, and students who met with the external reviewers and provided 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 June 26, 2024, and was shared with faculty and staff in the department. We are very pleased with the reviewers' positive assessment of the overall strength of the Department of Political Science, its enrolment increases in recent years, increased flexibility and choice for undergraduate students, and the positive feedback the reviewers received from students and faculty. The reviewers praised the work of the department in increasing flexibility and the diversity of undergraduate program content, offering courses like POL200Y1 that put western and non-western thinkers into conversation with each other. The impressive enrolment increases in recent years speak strongly. The reviewers also praised the great breadth and depth of faculty in all areas of the discipline and the lively, research-intensive intellectual climate in the department and contributing to an excellent PhD program. They also recognized meaningful assessments used in the MA Program, especially the full year course devoted to a Major Research paper. The reviewers raised some concerns with the MA Program and the competition from other professional master's programs at the University, and considerable variation in enrolment. They suggested giving careful

#### OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Sidney Smith Hall, 100 St. George Street, Suite 2005, Toronto, ON M5S 3G3 Canada

Tel: +1 416-978-3383 • Fax: +1 416-978-3887 • [officeofthedean@artsci.utoronto.ca](mailto:officeofthedean@artsci.utoronto.ca) • [www.artsci.utoronto.ca](http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca)

consideration with a preference for program redesign/restructuring. They also made several recommendations related to enhancing departmental engagement with Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility.

Each of the review 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 Acting 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 Department of Political Science will take place no later than the **2031-32** review cycle.

My office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with chairs and directors [and through the unit'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 future priorities of the Department of Political Science programs.

Sincerely,



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

cc.

Louis Pauly, Acting Chair, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Caitlin Burton, Senior Manager, Curriculum, 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

Amanda Pullan, Academic Planning & Review Officer, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science

2023-24 UTQAP Review of FAS Political Science - 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 highlighted student and faculty comments that further action is needed to continue diversifying the undergraduate curriculum, and that further support is needed for faculty who are engaged in this work. They emphasized comments that the responsibility for diversifying the curriculum should be shared by all faculty members and applied to all courses.	1	“...more needs to be done to diversify the curriculum generally and also to support faculty who are engaged in this kind of pedagogical innovation. In both the self study and in meetings with students and faculty, the argument was made that diversifying the curriculum needs to be a responsibility for all faculty members and courses, and not limited to courses specifically designated as equity/diversity learning”	<p>We acknowledge the importance of this issue. We are addressing it through a variety of strategies. New faculty appointments in Black Political Thought and Indigenous Politics will contribute to the diversification of the curriculum, but as noted here, achieving the main objective needs to be seen as the responsibility of all faculty members. Many have developed or are developing courses incorporating concerns for diversity, including a newly appointed assistant professor in liberal democratic thought. Within area groups, active discussions are underway regarding an expansion of our assessment of diversity to include issues of class stratification in democracies. This would also increase the array of courses to be identified under this rubric. We are asking area groups now to broaden the range of courses incorporating diversity themes and to put in place accountability mechanisms. This will be monitored at the departmental level.</p> <p>Implementation Plan: In stages across all area groups during the next curriculum planning cycle. Follow-up by STG Chair, Graduate Chair, and Undergraduate Director.</p>	Immediate. The Dean’s Office acknowledges the Department of Political Science’s planned initiatives that address diversifying the curriculum. The Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the Faculty of Arts & Science is available to offer guidance to the Department. The Department is further encouraged to use additional curriculum supports available from the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation and Arts & Science’s Teaching & Learning, <a href="https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/teaching/teaching-learning-resources">https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/teaching/teaching-learning-resources</a> .

<p>The reviewers noted survey results showing that undergraduate students in the Department were less likely than benchmark groups to say they would re-enroll in their program if given the choice to start over; they suggested working in conjunction with the undergraduate student society to explore why this is the case and to develop strategies for improvement.</p>	2	<p>“... the UTQAP student survey reported in the Self Study found undergrad students in political science were less likely to say they would enroll in political science at U of T again if they were to start over, compared to students in other political science departments or in other departments at U of T... The department should explore why this is the case. This could be done through focus groups in conjunction with the undergraduate student society.”</p>	<p>This finding is at odds with other indicators, including data from course evaluations, our burgeoning undergraduate awards, our extensive support of student group activities across the campus, and the enthusiastic activities of our alumni association. We suspect that a small sample size is part of the explanation. In any event, we are exploring the issue and using various outreach tools to discern reasons. The undergraduate office is also reaching out to the undergraduate student society to arrange a regular set of meetings.</p> <p>Implementation Plan: Immediate and continuing; STG Chair and UG Director to oversee.</p>	<p>Immediate. The Dean’s office recognizes that the unit has considered the recommendation and is taking steps to explore the issue.</p>
<p>The reviewers made several recommendations related to the Political Science MA, noting that the Department’s self-study identified “a major overhaul of the MA program as an urgent challenge.” Their recommendations included developing a program mission statement, eliminating the separate Political Science and Political Theory fields, considering the addition of a thesis option, and redefining program requirements.</p>	3	<p>“The MA program should be reconceived and restructured and should not continue in its current state. But this requires sufficient buy-in from the faculty.”</p>	<p>In fact, a curriculum renewal process was underway while the UTQAP review was taking place. As the review was concluding, we had decided to admit a smaller cohort of truly outstanding students (a decrease from about 40 to 20) in order to enhance the quality of the program. For the first time we assigned faculty mentors to all incoming MA students. We also introduced a new graduate-only course format. These “workshop” courses aim to teach students how to develop and present arguments, to refine their positions in the context of a challenging discussion, and to design research projects. These workshops place particular emphasis on developing analytical skills and writing abilities and provide a structure for individualized feedback on research projects. In Summer 2024 we also introduced a new experiential learning course called Politics and the Public Sphere, which received positive reviews from students and community partners alike. This course connected students with community partners to conduct research projects. Along with enhanced mentoring and paid research opportunities, these curricular changes have strengthened the quality of the MA program. The next necessary step is to evaluate the implications of the new FAS budget</p>	<p>Immediate. The Dean’s Office supports the Department’s plan to review the MA in line with this recommendation and will work with the Department leadership on any proposed curricular changes.</p>

			<p>model for the sustainability of the program as it has been reconceived.</p> <p>Implementation Plan: Immediate. MA Director, Graduate Chair, Graduate Director and STG chair.</p>	
	4	<p>“Mission statement – As a discussion starter for the faculty, we suggest “The MA program is a research oriented degree that provides training in theory, methods, and the substantive fields of political science, targeted toward students who are preparing for possible application to a PhD program and students who are interested in careers in research in government, industry, or advocacy.”</p>	<p>We support this suggestion.</p> <p>Implementation Plan: Immediate. MA Director and Graduate Chair.</p>	<p>Immediate. The Dean’s Office supports the Department in addressing this review report recommendation.</p>
	5	<p>“Define the length of the MA program – there are trade-offs between different lengths of the program. Extending it to three or four semesters would allow students who are preparing for an application to a PhD program time to develop their research skills and substantive training over the first year of the MA program, and prepare their PhD applications in the fall of their second year. However, lengthening the program would increase the cost of the program, offsetting a significant comparative advantage of the MA in Political Science degree.”</p>	<p>Our program currently has a defined length (three terms) and we have a nearly 100% on-time completion rate. Extending the length of the unfunded MA program would increase costs for students. This would make it more difficult to recruit a diverse student-body and would disadvantage less affluent students. The reviewers note there are trade-offs.</p> <p>No action necessary.</p>	<p>The Dean’s Office acknowledges that the Department has considered this review report recommendation.</p>
	6	<p>“The MA should have a thesis – at least as an option initially. This would be consistent with the renewed research focus in the MA program. A thesis could be developed and executed over a longer period of time, and supervised by an individual faculty member who shares substantive research interests with the candidate. This would broaden the faculty involvement in MA students’ research and training.”</p>	<p>The Graduate Advisory Committee is working on a proposal to approve new guidelines for the Major Research Paper component of the program requirements. Instead of a thesis, we are asking students to submit a 30-page paper or research design that is drafted in a course and revised and expanded under the supervision of the MRP course instructor and the original faculty member. This would broaden the faculty involvement in MA students’ research and training.”</p> <p>Implementation Plan: Immediate. MA Director and Graduate Chair</p>	<p>Immediate. The Vice-Dean Graduate and the Vice-Dean Academic Planning will work with the Department leadership on the proposed MA Curriculum changes.</p>

	7	“Redefine course requirements – The required formative, cohort building seminar and the optional POL2809H Politics in the Public Sphere internship credit for MA students could remain. In addition, after some foundational theory and skills building in the first semester, MA students would be expected to take a substantial amount of their substantive training in seminars with doctoral students.”	<p>Moving forward, MA students will be invited to enroll in doctoral seminars and will have access to a growing number of “workshop courses” (small thematically courses with 6-9 graduate students.)</p> <p>Completed. No action necessary.</p>	The Dean’s Office recognizes that the Department has addressed this review report recommendation.
	8	“Eliminate separate MA streams for Political Science and Political Theory – The separate streams are an historical legacy, and we could not discern any justification for their remaining separate in a reconceptualized MA program.”	<p>The political theory area group met and discussed this proposal. Colleagues felt that the current structure is better able to achieve the program learning objectives and degree level expectations, because it provides more training in the relevant normative and interpretive methods. The MA in Political Science would redirect political theory students to courses and methods that do not support their research. We plan to revisit this suggestion once the changes to the MA in Political Science have been implemented.</p> <p>Implementation: Medium term. MA Director and Graduate Chair</p>	Medium-term. The Dean’s Office recognizes that the Department has addressed this review recommendation is exploring new options.
	9	“Be selective but viable in size of program - selectivity would be important so as not to dilute the quality of doctoral seminars, but the MA program should be large enough for the viability of any required MA seminars.”	<p>The target size of the incoming MA cohort has been decreased to 20-23, and preliminary feedback suggests that faculty are happy with the improved quality of the MA cohort. The new FAS budget model, however, may force a reconsideration of this strategic move.</p> <p>Completed, but follow-up review will likely soon be necessary in light of budgetary changes. Graduate Chair, MA Director, STG Chair.</p>	Immediate to medium-term. The Dean’s Office acknowledges that the Department has begun taking action to address this issue. Under the new budget model, Dept Chairs will have greater budgetary clarity and agency to make strategic choices aligned with the academic priorities of their unit.
	10	“Provide funding– Given foreseeable resources, it is unlikely that the Department can fund all MA students. However, offering funding packages to outstanding MA applicants will help increase the quality of the applicant pool. We recognize the trade-offs (with funding for PhD students), but the Department should consider various possibilities. If	The Department of Political Science continues to support its long-standing commitment to allocate our graduate funding to the PhD program. We are by far the largest producer of PhDs in Canada and have chosen to prioritize doctoral education. We are lucky that the stellar reputation of University of Toronto ensures that we are still able to attract highly quality	The Dean recognizes that graduate funding is an ongoing priority and applauds the unit for efforts to attract quality students and their communications at recruitment events regarding external and internal funding sources.



		the PhD program were reduced in size, TAships could be taken up by some outstanding MA students to both help fund them and provide opportunities to work directly with more professors.”	<p>unfunded MA students. This year ten of our twenty full-time MA students received funding of some kind (RA or TA positions, external fellowships, or internal fellowships.) At our recruitment events, the MA Director will continue to encourage MA applicants to apply for government funding and university fellowships. We are also able to offer some TAships on a discretionary basis, and we are encouraging faculty to use the Work-Study program to hire Masters students as Research Assistants.</p> <p>Continuing. Grad Chair, MA Director.</p>	
The reviewers noted faculty concerns that PhD students do not receive sufficient training in research methods; they expressed support for the creation of a graduate-level offering in this area, highlighting current faculty expertise in both quantitative and qualitative methods.	11	“Move to create subfield in research methods but in a deliberate and thought out manner, that preserves U of T’s strength in pluralistic methods, supports equity and diversity, and keeps up with current disciplinary emphasis on multiple methods.”	<p>A proposal for a graduate field in Methods is being finalized and will be submitted to the FAS Curriculum Committee in January. We anticipate that students will be able to enroll in September 2025.</p> <p>Implementation: Immediate. Graduate Chair and Methods Area Group Convenor.</p>	Immediate. The Vice-Dean Graduate and the Vice-Dean Academic Planning will work with the Department leadership on proposed graduate curriculum changes.
The reviewers expressed concerns about the size of the PhD program, particularly regarding student funding levels and the challenges of securing academic employment for such a large cohort of students. They recommended that the Department consider the optimal program size in relation to the availability of adequate student funding and the current realities of the academic job market.	12	“...the size of the PhD program...raises concerns with respect to the academic job market and likelihood of placing so many students in academic jobs. While we recognize PhD students may go on to other careers than academia, the department should reflect on the size of the PhD program in light of providing enough financing for students in the program and the job market.”	<p>Agreed. Consultations with alumni, students, and faculty continue. The consensus thus far is that the PhD degree retains its value as a pathway to professional success outside of academy as well as within it. We typically welcome 22-24 PhD students annually. Last year, this slipped to 19—mainly because visa issues prevented a few international students from joining us. We are considering whether to aim close to this number in the years ahead, and we are currently examining the financial and programmatic effects of doing so.</p> <p>Implementation: Graduate Chair, Graduate Director, STG Chair, and Area Group Convenors.</p>	Immediate to medium-term. The Dean’s Office recognizes that the Department is addressing this review report recommendation.

	13	<p>“We recommend that the program should be reduced in size, that the per student funding levels for doctoral students be increased, and the department have greater control over how to direct that funding.”</p>	<p>The size of the incoming PhD classes declined slightly in 2024. We anticipate a class size of 20-22 students. As of 2024, the funding side of this recommendation could not be implemented because funding flowed directly from FAS to the individual students. The new budget model beginning to roll out in 2025 provides some flexibility. Again, we will be assessing the optimal cohort size in terms of class size, resources, student quality, and impact on other programs.</p> <p>Implementation: Immediate and continuing. Graduate Chair, Graduate Director, STG Chair, and Area Group Convenors.</p>	See # 12 above.
<p>The reviewers observed that assistant professors reported a lack of clarity around the role and responsibilities of the junior faculty advocate, while associate professors expressed uncertainty regarding the procedures for promotion and tenure. They broadly recommended exploring ways to provide additional mentorship for early and mid-career faculty.</p>	14	<p>“On the question of a junior faculty advisor and/or advocate, they said it did not seem to be as active a position as it once was and was somewhat unclear whether the office was designed to advise individuals on their progress or be an advocate on behalf of the junior faculty with departmental leadership.”</p>	<p>During the past few years, partly because of the success of the junior faculty “advocate” model, we have rigorously implemented a policy of assigning specific mentors to advising new assistant professors. Various avenues are now in place for special concerns to be reported to department administrators. Partly in response to the question raised by the reviewers, we have appointed a committed senior professor to serve as advisor to the entire cohort and as a resource for all mentors. We have also asked him to convene meetings, listening sessions, and workshops with all assistant professors. These started during the fall term of 2024 and are continuing during the winter/spring term. If deemed wise, department chairs and associate chairs may be invited to join. Those senior administrators have also notified all colleagues that their doors are open. Concerns may easily be raised directly or anonymously.</p> <p>Implementation: Immediate and continuing. STG Chair and Junior Faculty Advisor.</p>	Immediate. The Dean’s Office recognizes that the unit is addressing this review report recommendation.

	15	<p>“We asked the associate professors if they knew what was needed to be promoted to full professor. While there was some sense of what this meant, it was not as clear to them as what was needed for promotion to Associate and tenure. Consideration might be given by the departmental leadership on how to ensure mentorship for associate professors.”</p>	<p>The chairs began informal discussions with associate professors during the fall term of 2024. Plans are now in place for a general meeting with all associate professors within the first month of the winter/spring term. Explaining criteria and procedures for promotion will provide the focal point. Follow-up sessions will be offered, as will the opportunity to request formal mentoring.</p> <p>Implementation: Immediate and continuing. Graduate Chair and Chairs of STG, UTM, and STG.</p>	<p>Immediate to medium-term. The Dean’s Office acknowledges that the Department has identified several actions to address this recommendation, some of which have already begun.</p>
<p>The reviewers noted that faculty members’ rate of participation and rate of success in SSHRC Insight grant competitions appeared lower than the University average and recommended further exploration into potential causes. They made additional recommendations aimed at encouraging broad faculty participation in funding competitions to facilitate their own research activity and to provide financial support for PhD students.</p>	16	<p>“Because of the number of co-appointed faculty, their grants may be administered in other units. It would be useful therefore for the department to ensure they have a full account of the total funding Political Science faculty receive, regardless of the unit it is administered through, to know if this is an administrative issue or a problem to be addressed.”</p>	<p>As our self-study report notes, the number of applicants varies considerably from year to year. This, combined with the large number of cross-appointed faculty in the St. George Department who may submit their grants through another administering unit, and the prevalence of other funding opportunities, both internal and external to U of T, go a long way to explain the results. Nevertheless, in 2024 the Department ramped up efforts to further encourage and support faculty grant applications, including strongly encouraging Departmental and peer review of all Tri-Council applications. The Associate Chair-Research has made it a practice to meet one-on-one with each new faculty member in the Department to talk about research funding and award opportunities. The number of applications in 2024-25 continues to tick upwards.</p> <p>Implementation: Immediate and continuing. Associate Chair-Faculty Research and Awards, STG Chair, Department Manager.</p>	<p>Immediate. The Dean’s Office acknowledges that the Department has identified several actions to address this recommendation.</p>
	17	<p>“...it seems important for all research faculty to apply for funding as such money provides a critically important source of financial support for graduate students beyond their stipends and teaching assistantships – regardless of field or methodology. Within SSHRC grant budgets, it is possible to include stipends, research assistantships</p>	<p>Indeed, the Department business manager and Associate Chair, Research are actively encouraging faculty members to include in their grant applications stipends and RA funds for graduate student trainees as well as conference travel for PhD students. The Associate Chair has made it a practice to meet one-on-one with each new faculty member in the</p>	<p>Immediate to medium-term: The Dean’s Office acknowledges that graduate funding is an ongoing priority and concurs with the Department that the increase in the standard minimum PhD student funding package for Fall</p>

		and conference travel for PhD students. Such funding not only makes initial offers more competitive but will offset the higher cost of living and support students' research activities."	<p>Department to talk about research funding and best practices in supporting graduate student trainees and undergraduate RAs.</p> <p>The reviewers also recommended that PhD students be provided with funding packages <i>"compatible with the cost of living."</i> They stated that the <i>"University needs to provide adequate funds and flexibility to allow department more control on how to direct funding and increase amount per student even if the PhD program is reduced in size."</i> And they recommended just such a reduction. Like all other departments, we will be following up with SGS and FAS on these matters. The recently announced increase in the typical PhD student finding package is good news, but some of the increase will come from enhanced efforts by faculty to seek research grants and to build student participation into them. As the new budget model rolls out, we will have to confront more directly the trade-offs noted by the reviewers.</p> <p>Implementation: Continuing. All faculty, under guidance and oversight from the Graduate Chair, STG chair, and Associate Chair-Research.</p>	2025 is one initiative that addresses this recommendation.
	18	"Set a target for Tri-Agency funding, specifically Insight Grants in POL across all three campuses to exceed national average in political science and at least match U of T.	<p>Agreed. Tracking granting council success across the three campuses will be helpful over the longer term as well as tracking funding success for awards administered through other units.</p> <p>Implementation: Immediate and continuing. Associate Chair-Research, Department Manager.</p>	Immediate. The Dean's Office acknowledges that the Department is addressing this review report recommendation.
	19	"Increase number and diversity of research award nominations for national and international awards"	Agreed. The Department is committed to diversity in research award nominations for national and international awards. The Department maintains a comprehensive list of all internal and external research and teaching awards for which Political Science faculty are eligible. The Chair and Associate Chair, Faculty Research and Awards (with the support of the awards committee in the fall and PTR committee in the spring) carefully reviews each	See # 18 above.

			<p>faculty member's file as annual awards deadlines are announced in order to "match" the award to a list of potential applicants and encourage those faculty to apply. The Department Chair and/or Associate Chair, Faculty Research and Awards, also works diligently to encourage all faculty to apply for awards for which they deem themselves to be eligible and to bring those opportunities to the Department to support those applications, as staff time permits. Those administrative services include offering Departmental administrative supports, including securing external referees and nominators, reading draft applications, and ensuring all parts of the application are completed and submitted on time.</p> <p>Implementation: Immediate and continuing. STG Chair, Associate Chair-Research, Executive Assistant to the STG Chair.</p>	
<p>The reviewers highlighted concerns and "unrealized opportunities" related to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Department, noting an impression that "EDI still gathers at the edges of the core community." They made several recommendations related to enhancing departmental engagement with EDIA, and strengthening efforts to recruit and retain a diverse faculty complement and student body.</p>	20	<p>"We recommend going beyond internal processes and bringing in external resources to evaluate and consult with the faculty to improve hiring, promotion and retention with respect to BIPOC faculty."</p>	<p>Agreed. As the current review was underway, we were in the midst of a major effort to recruit an eminent Indigenous scholar then employed by UBC. Together with the Munk School, we were able to structure a tenured joint appointment (51% PS), with the guarantee that we would establish a Global Indigenous Observatory in the Munk School.</p> <p>This new appointment will combine with others across the University's three PS departments. At the urging of Indigenous colleagues currently in residence, we have begun discussions on creating a new Area Group in Indigenous Studies. We expect more growth and student interest in this field during the next decade.</p> <p>But more needs to be done. As discussed in our self-study, over the past few years we began rethinking EDI categories in a more nuanced manner. Appendix XI, the drafting of which was led by one of our faculty members, discussed our approach in detail. We have</p>	<p>Immediate to medium-term. The Faculty of Arts &amp; Science is deeply committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion, and the Dean's Office supports the Department in making the consideration of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in the Department a priority.</p> <p>The Dean's Office encourages the Department to regularly communicate the resources available across the university for students and faculty in these areas of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility.</p> <p>The Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at the Faculty of Arts &amp; Science is also available to advise the department on how to best implement EDI initiatives at the department level.</p>

			<p>also recruited other faculty members with diverse backgrounds and identities. As a matter of policy, we have tried not to burden them with heavy service obligations before they are tenured and promoted to associate professorships.</p> <p>Implementation: Immediate and continuing. STG Chair, Graduate Chair, EDI committees.</p>	
	21	<p>“Incorporate EDI voices in leadership and governance – Include a faculty member from the EDI committee on the PTR committee and hiring committees, in order to provide BIPOC faculty agency in representation. Over time, increase departmental capacity for this form of inclusion– as current faculty advance through PTR and earn tenure, weave their voices into the fabric of departmental leadership in a structured and substantive way.”</p>	<p>There is no disagreement. Indigenous, Black, and Racialized voices and EDI perspectives are being incorporated into department leadership, including on the 2024 PTR committee. The practice will be maintained in 2025 and beyond. Four faculty members who identify as Black, Indigenous, and Racialized Persons are playing particularly prominent roles—as associate chair, EDI committee leaders, advisors to the chair, and STG PTR committee members. Being carefully not to overburden them, during 2024 and 2025 we brought assistant professors who identify as Indigenous, Black and Racialized onto faculty hiring committees in Canadian Politics, Black Political Thought, and Liberal Democratic Theory.</p> <p>Implementation: Department chairs to follow up.</p>	See # 20 above
	22	<p>“Distribute the EDI workload – Be cognizant of who is doing the work of diversifying the practices and norms of the department. Too often, departments offload this work on BIPOC faculty, even if it is in the interest of empowerment. Have conversations about who will do the work that the department agrees needs to be done.”</p>	<p>Nevertheless, we are aware of pressures, especially on colleagues who identify as Indigenous, Black and Racialized to serve on committees inside the Department and elsewhere across the university, as well as to mentor new recruits. The reviewers recommended that we work even harder to <i>distribute the EDI workload</i> more equitably. Aside from the tension posed with regard to the first</p>	See #20 above.

			<p>recommendation, we agree. We are, for example, bringing new Indigenous, Black and Racialized and 2SLGBTQ+ colleagues into our search committees and PTR committee, where their voices and views are particularly important for shaping the Department of the future. We are asking other colleagues, especially those more senior, to handle more of the time-consuming details involved in serving on those committees. Of course, more can be done. The current Department leadership team is focused on the challenge.</p> <p>Implementation: immediate and continuing. STG Chair and Graduate Chair.</p>	
	23	<p>“Consider collecting and voicing the concerns and ideas of faculty with disabilities on how to ensure a more accessible workplace.”</p>	<p>Agreed. The reviewers recommended that we increase <i>accessibility for faculty with disabilities</i>. We are aware that disabilities are not always manifest, and we remain open to hearing from colleagues on the subject.</p> <p>Implementation: Immediate and continuing. STG Chair and Graduate Chair.</p>	<p>Immediate: The Dean’s Office encourages the Department to strengthen the communication of supports available across the university for faculty in the area of Accessibility including: <a href="https://people.utoronto.ca/inclusion/accessibility">https://people.utoronto.ca/inclusion/accessibility</a> Several new University of Toronto central initiatives have just been announced: <a href="https://people.utoronto.ca/news/new-initiatives-to-enhance-accessibility-and-belonging/">https://people.utoronto.ca/news/new-initiatives-to-enhance-accessibility-and-belonging/</a> that address these challenges at the institutional level. U of T is developing an updated Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, which will serve as a five-year roadmap as we work to create accessible and inclusive environments where all members of the community can participate fully. The newly created AODA Commitments website outlines institutional progress related to the AODA standards, Finally, the U</p>

				<p>of T is launching the Employees with Disabilities Community Network, a tri-campus affinity group where employees with disabilities, or who identify as disabled, can foster a sense of belonging and connection. This group aims to provide a community of support and opportunities for mentorship and professional development, while contributing to building a culture of belonging across the campuses. Arts &amp; Science will work closely with central administration and actively leverage these new resources and initiatives.</p> <p>Immediate term: The Administrative HR, Academic HR and EDI offices have struck a working group that will assess current A&amp;S recruitment and hiring practices to address any systemic barriers and make enhancements to our practices.</p>
	24	<p>“We recommend that the department bring in external expertise on EDI, particularly racial inequality, to help the faculty initiate a series of conversations around the various dimensions of the practice of academia in a way that feels open and safe, particularly for minority faculty.”</p>	<p>We were also urged to <i>improve EDI discourse and practices facilitated by external experts/resources</i>. We recognize the challenge and are moving to meet it. Our search for a new colleague in the field of Black Political Thought recently gave us an extra impetus in this regard. In preparation for the work of the (quite diverse) search committee and for the campus visits of candidates, on October 11 we invited the University’s Executive Director of EDI, to lead an open and tri-campus session on best practices. Some 25 colleagues attended; the dialogue was positive and deeply constructive. Follow-up sessions, preferably in-person but on-line if necessary, are being planned. They will include a session on sexual diversity and the avoidance of misunderstandings.</p>	<p>Immediate. The Dean’s Office supports the Department in prioritizing this review recommendation and acknowledges that the Department has identified several actions to address this recommendation, some of which have already occurred.</p>



			Implementation: immediate and continuing. STG Chair and Graduate Chair.	
	25	“Recognition of achievements and nominations for awards, including senior or career awards, needs to have a central dimension focusing on equity, diversity and inclusion.”	<p>There is broad agreement within the department on this point. The Associate Chair-Research is already engaged. Opportunities for recognition are not being missed, and special opportunities for nominations for new awards are being sought.</p> <p>Implementation: STG chair and grad chair to follow closely, in consultation with the Associate Chair-Faculty Research and Awards.</p>	See # 20 above.
	26	“Improve Resources for Junior Faculty and Students – The department should call upon the EDI committee to identify and prioritize resources that would assist racialized, BIPOC faculty and graduate students.”	<p>Agreed. This is being done, not only on a tri-campus basis but also more intensively through local EDI committees at STG, UTM, and UTSC. The graduate chair provides a focal point for coordination.</p> <p>Implementation: Immediate. EDI committees, Graduate Chair, and STG, UTM, and UTSC Chairs.</p>	See # 20 above.
	27	“Integrate new voices broadly – EDI is a way to diversify excellence in teaching, research, and service. Take advantage of that excellence across all dimensions of the work done by the department. As the department continues to build its EDI infrastructure and faculty, take advantage of these new voices to re-energize the core curriculum, the daily practices in the department, and the crafting of the department’s community.”	<p>Again, there is no dispute on this point. The need to build related research and sensibilities into courses are both undergrad and grad levels is now emphasized in every faculty meeting devoted to curricular matters, including the detailed planning meetings of area groups. Discussions over breadth and integration are also central to the question of whether to establish and Indigenous Politics area group. Indigenous colleagues are leading these discussions. Striking the right balance between continuing to deepen and widen appreciation of EDI perspectives and establishing new administrative frameworks is not a simple matter. It is, however, vitally important.</p> <p>Implementation: STG Chair and Grad Chair to follow up, both directly and informally with BIPOC colleagues and formally at department meetings.</p>	See #20 above.

	28	<p>“Focus on Repair, Grace and Renewal... we recommend embracing these goals with enthusiasm and grace. As we mentioned above, this is no easy set of challenges for anyone, and most of us have little to no training in dealing authentically with implicit biases as barriers to change. Our best advice is to proceed with a daily commitment to crafting a working and learning environment where everyone feels welcome and supported, where they feel safe to learn and to work, and where they feel that their voices have value.”</p>	<p>There is no dissent in the Department on the remaining EDI issues noted in the review. We agree that resources need to be significantly enhanced for junior faculty and students, that new voices need to be integrated more fully in all departmental deliberations, and that a focus on repair, grace, and renewal should be top-of-mind as our community recovers from the exogenous shocks of the past few years.</p> <p>Again, face-to-face engagement is key, and we have already begun restoring regular faculty and graduate-student seminars, many of which involve bringing in a diverse range of visitors from other universities. Bringing in-person participation rates back up to pre-pandemic levels remains a challenge. A commute that used to take 45 minutes now routinely take 60-90 minutes. And on-line technologies offer too-convenient alternatives. But we are committed to meeting the challenge.</p> <p>Immediate: All faculty, with continuing encouragement from department leadership.</p>	See # 20 above
Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response	29	<p>“One area for improvement noted in the self-study is the concerning finding that 25% of Ph.D. students rate relations between graduate students and faculty as fair or poor. The self-study is appropriately cautious about this finding; it is not necessarily evidence of a problem in advising or supervision. It could reflect continuing effects of</p>	<p>The department is indeed taking this issue seriously. The trade-off between excessively tight supervisory practices and excessively loose ones is well known and much discussed. Some faculty members are quite attached to their traditional practices and resist suggestions for change. Doctoral students, moreover, are free to change their supervisors and restructure</p>	Immediate. The Dean’s Office supports the Department in monitoring the area of relations between faculty and students. While oversight of graduate supervision largely rests within SGS, the Vice-Dean Graduate has been working on an initiative that will make

		<p>COVID, or very likely the financial stress faced by graduate students, or any number of other things. But it invites serious further inquiry... The department seems to be taking the concern appropriately seriously and should continue to do so.”</p>	<p>their committees at any time. But the overall context is about to change. The new budget model looks set to levy financial penalties on departments in relation to PhD students beyond the funded cohort. General as well as individual faculty meetings will be required. Expediting student progress will be more important than ever. How this influences the quality of relations between faculty and students remains to be seen. It will be carefully monitored.</p> <p>The fact that the Provost and SGS recently announced plans to enhance the typical PhD student funding package from \$30K to \$40K should help.</p> <p>Implementation: Immediate and continuing. STG Chair and Graduate Chair to follow up.</p>	<p>data on time-to-completion (TTC) per supervisor available to chairs in ways that are more legible, to support unit-specific decision-making in this area. Data on TTC by supervisor allows chairs to observe completion rates more closely. This is currently under development. This initiative follows the recommendation of a recent working group on doctoral student success surfaced in a recent internal report on this subject and our office continues to implement the recommendations of doctoral student success.</p> <p>Under the new budget model, unit budgets will be determined primarily by their activity - such as net revenue from their own graduate enrolments and undergraduate teaching. Revenue from student enrolments consists of government grant funding and tuition. Doctoral students beyond the funded cohort have no grant revenue and little tuition revenue. The model provides Units with transparency and much greater budgetary clarity, which will enable them to more effectively pursue their own academic priorities and goals.</p>
	30	<p>“we recommend the department... Use all three international rankings in comparing itself internationally with an understanding of the different information each provides.”</p>	<p>While praising our relative performance in the most prominent and well-regarded research rankings, the reviewers urged us to seek out new comparators. They pointed out “that there is a third generally recognized international ranking by subject which was not included in the self report – Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) which also has subject specific rankings.” In 2023, that ranking listed us as 41st in the world and 2nd in Canada. We considered that anomalous when we drafted our</p>	<p>Immediate. The Dean’s Office acknowledges that the Department is addressing this review report recommendation.</p>

			<p>report, and indeed it turned out to be just that. In November 2024, the Shanghai rankings restored us to a top 20 position. In fact, we ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the world, just behind Cornell and just ahead of Yale.</p> <p>The point of such ranking reports, though, is to provide collective incentives to do better and achieve more. Being satisfied with a conventional #1 ranking among Canadian universities and high-level performance relative to others in the world is not enough. Our reviews advised that we should always shoot for the top and not rest on our laurels. We agree wholeheartedly.</p> <p>Implementation: All relevant ranking reports are being followed. Department Manager.</p>	
	31	<p>“We also heard that the whole department does not meet as a group very often, perhaps once a term which seems to be a norm that most faculty support. With this model the department might want to think about how it ensures that it hears, on a regular basis, from its members, particularly those who have less power (junior faculty, and faculty from historically marginalized groups).”</p>	<p>There is broad agreement on this point. Over the past few months, ad hoc meetings have been called to consider EDI issues, issues related to sexual harassment and its avoidance, and changes in the graduate curriculum. Each political science department, at STG, UTM, and UTSC, moreover, have established their own EDI committees to complement and localize the work pioneered by the tri-campus EDI committee. The three undergrad department chairs, together with the grad chair, now meet regularly in-person or via Zoom. As discussed above, the junior faculty advisor role has been given a higher profile, with the expectation that issues of concern be brought rapidly to the attention of the chairs. Regular meetings with GASPS and UPSS are also to be ensured.</p> <p>Implementation: The STG Chair and Grad Chair will follow up to assess how more can be done to improve communications across the department.</p>	<p>Immediate to medium-term. The Dean’s Office acknowledges that the Department has identified several actions to address this recommendation.</p>
	32	<p>“Thought should be given by the Dean and the administration as to how to remunerate</p>	<p>There is broad agreement on this point across the department. The underlying issues are complicated,</p>	<p>Immediate to medium-term. The new budget model ensures that Units will</p>

		<p>departments shouldering disproportionately large administrative loads. Currently, secondments are offset with teaching stipends for courses not taught but the overall net loss to the department is much larger than simply classes.”</p>	<p>but they rest on the general success of the Munk School and a reasonably broadly shared sense that the mutual benefits of harmonious relations in the future will and should outweigh the administrative burdens. But misunderstandings and disincentives to future cooperation need to be prompted. With many shared faculty appointments, implicitly shared research grants (as noted above), post-docs and graduate students moving back and forth between the School and the department, administrative and management challenges are mounting. Who gets credit for what? Who is accountable for what performance? How should revenues and expenses be shared? These and many other questions are now answered informally and on an ad hoc basis, if at all. Given the leadership transition soon to be underway at the Munk School, it would seem timely for the relevant deans to convene a small working group to consider such matters and recommend managerial arrangements for the period ahead. The new budget model of FAS may well provide yet another incentive for doing so.</p> <p>Implementation: STG Chair and Graduate Chair to follow up the Deans of FAS and SGS.</p>	<p>retain budgetary resources to manage teaching (and other work) shortages created by secondments and other sources of academic HR fluctuations. The Dean’s Office is executing a comprehensive communication plan, which includes multiple individual meetings with Units, to ensure that Chairs and Directors, faculty and staff understand the new budget model. These interactions will continue with new leadership, such as in Munk.</p>
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### 3 Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

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*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

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The reviewers praised recent revisions to the undergraduate curriculum, noting the added flexibility in first-year course options and a more diverse and inclusive range of course content. They highlighted the excellent PhD program for its “lively research-intensive intellectual climate,” created and supported by the large student cohort and the breadth and depth of faculty expertise in all areas of the discipline. They also applauded the recent development of tutorial-style workshops for PhD students to focus on small-group work as a very promising enhancement to the program. They commended the impressive number and breadth of faculty awards, including the recent appointments of faculty members to the College of New Scholars and the Order of Canada. Finally, the reviewers noted positive relationships and a sense of community between students, staff, and faculty in the Department.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: continuing to diversify the undergraduate curriculum, and providing support for faculty who are engaged in this work; working in conjunction with the undergraduate student society to explore and address survey results showing that undergraduate students in the Department were less likely than benchmark groups to say they would re-enroll in their program if given the choice to start over; pursuing enhancements to the MA program; creating a graduate-level offering in research methodology; considering the optimal size for the PhD program in relation to student funding availability and the realities of the academic job market; exploring ways to provide additional advising or mentorship for early and mid-career faculty; assessing and addressing faculty rates of participation and success funding competitions; and enhancing departmental engagement with EDIA and strengthening efforts to recruit and retain a diverse faculty complement and student body.

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

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The Arts & Science Dean’s office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with chairs and directors and through regular governance and curricular oversight.

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than midway between the April 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2031-32 to report on the status of the implementation plans.

The next review will be commissioned no later than the 2031-32 review cycle.

## 6 Distribution

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On July 15<sup>th</sup> 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

<b>Program(s) Reviewed:</b>	Civil Engineering, BASc Lassonde Mineral Engineering, BASc Civil Engineering, MASc, MEng, PhD Cities Engineering & Management, MEngCEM
<b>Unit Reviewed:</b>	Department of Civil & Mineral Engineering
<b>Commissioning Officer:</b>	Dean, Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering
<b>Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. W. Scott Dunbar, Professor of Mining Engineering, Department of Mining Engineering, University of British Columbia</li> <li>• Dr. Mohamed Meguid, Professor and Chair, Department of Civil Engineering, McGill University</li> <li>• Dr. Junko Munakata Marr, Professor and Department Head, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Colorado School of Mines</li> </ul>
<b>Date of Review Visit:</b>	November 2-3, 2023
<b>Review Report Received by VPAP:</b>	September 20, 2024
<b>Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:</b>	March 20, 2025
<b>Date Reported to AP&amp;P:</b>	April 10, 2025



## Previous UTQAP Review

**Date:** March 14-15, 2018

### Summary of Findings and Recommendations

#### Significant Program Strengths

- High quality of students and impressive gender diversity of the student body
- Strong level of faculty research funding, which has doubled over the last five years
- Department is deserving of its reputation as the top civil and mineral engineering department in Canada

#### Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Developing an overarching departmental strategic plan, possibly including an overall mission statement
- Addressing undergraduate and doctoral enrolment
- Identifying international peer institutions
- Addressing variances in the quality and quantity of faculty and student space
- Improving communication about decisions regarding space
- Developing a strategic space plan
- Formalizing administrative processes and improving communications surrounding staff job expectations and performance review
- Conducting a review of needs, gaps, and workload within the staffing structure, especially in the areas of IT and lab support staff
- Addressing gaps in mentorship and feedback surrounding faculty promotion
- Improving the documentation and communications for tenure expectations, and prioritizing untenured faculty space, resources and feedback
- Conducting a curriculum review to identify curricular overlap and to address student workload
- Continuing to recruit students from traditionally underrepresented groups
- Reviewing promotion and enrollment for the MEng in Cities Engineering and Management, and evaluating the overall future direction for the program
- Expanding the department's research portfolio by exploring more industry-sponsored research for students
- Identifying ways to support undergraduate research engagement
- Increasing alumni and external engagement in advisory boards and improving outreach activities to these groups

## Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

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### Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Terms of reference; self-study, including faculty curricula vitae; previous review report (2017-2018), including the administrative response; department strategic plan; department presentations regarding undergraduate, graduate and research programs; recommendations from previous Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB) review (2019); access to all graduate and undergraduate course descriptions (e.g., academic calendars); Faculty academic plan, annual impact reports, and Dean's presentation on the Faculty; and University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP).

### Consultation Process

Faculty, students, administrative staff and senior program administrators in the Department of Civil & Mineral Engineering, as well as members of relevant cognate units as determined by the commissioning officer. Also consulted were engineers enrolled in the department's professional (MEng and MEng CEM) programs.

## Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

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### 1. Undergraduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - Programs excel through the exceptional quality of professors and students, maintaining sufficient numbers of professors in each section, and offering unique opportunities for students to engage in interdisciplinary coursework and important research
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - Varied minors and certificate programs provide unique and useful options for students
  - Impactful Professional Experience Year (PEY) program has “impressive levels of participation” even as a strong job market leads some students to opt not to participate
- Innovation
  - Programs feature unique academic innovations including courses on sustainability, business, and data science
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - Curriculum visualization platform is an innovative approach to undergraduate advising

- ▶ Field camp and trips provide valuable experiential learning
- ▶ Students noted no significant concerns regarding workload in year 3

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Students expressed a desire for more electives distributed across different program years, rather than being concentrated in year 4
  - ▶ Path to graduation becomes very challenging if an undergraduate student fails a course due to some courses being offered only once per year
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Students expressed a desire for more guidance on field camp and trip activities
  - ▶ Recruitment to CivMin disciplines, particularly Mining, faces challenges due to public perceptions and difficulty reaching high school students and parents

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Objectives
  - ▶ Align changes to the Lassonde Mineral Engineering program with rapid changes in the global mining industry, incorporating new technologies and evolving societal relationships with metals and materials; ensure that graduates are equipped with a unique breadth of knowledge, including business strategy, finance, community engagement, and public policy, and that they are prepared for involvement in developing Canada's critical minerals strategy
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Increase the distribution of electives across different program years, rather than concentrating them in year 4
  - ▶ Explore the possibility of developing elective courses into a stream or course grouping; research themes or innovation clusters could serve as a starting point for discussion
  - ▶ Enhance program flexibility, including by offering courses more frequently, to support more flexible paths to graduation
  - ▶ Schedule 500-level courses to improve access for senior undergraduate students
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Explore different methods and styles for recruiting Track One students to enhance outreach and recruitment
  - ▶ Consider inviting PEY students or recent program graduates to speak in TrackOne introductory seminar course, to enhance CivMin program outreach

## 2. Graduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality

- ▶ Programs excel through the exceptional quality of professors and students, maintaining sufficient numbers of professors in each section, and offering unique opportunities for students to engage in interdisciplinary coursework and important research

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

- Quality indicators – graduate students
  - ▶ PhD students' time-to-completion rate is higher than disciplinary average, but may be strongly affected by outliers
- Student funding
  - ▶ Pre-tenure assistant professors experience difficulty attracting strong PhD students in some cases, due to high living cost in Toronto compared to typical student funding packages
  - ▶ Minimum graduate student stipend "is too low to be competitive"

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Objectives
  - ▶ Consider the fragmented nature of the market for MEng programs (e.g., differences in students' experience level, academic background, and country of origin) when developing program changes
  - ▶ Explore offering diploma programs, with consideration of the resources required to ensure quality
  - ▶ Revisit the purpose of comprehensive exams; align exams with consistent, well-defined learning outcomes to help students understand their importance and value
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Explore ways to enhance internship and career development opportunities for graduate students, including opportunities through centralized MITACS
  - ▶ Communicate clearly with departments regarding availability of central FASE staff to assist with MITACS internship opportunities
  - ▶ Annual progress tracking for PhD students can help both students and supervisors identify and address issues as they arise, and may also improve time-to-completion rates
- Student funding
  - ▶ Explore mechanisms for providing additional financial support for PhD students

### 3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Faculty
  - ▶ Pre-tenure faculty value extensive support for grant preparation

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

- Faculty
  - ▶ Opportunities for faculty mentorship do not appear to be based on an underlying mentorship model
  - ▶ Once “instrumental” practice of assigning teaching mentors appears to have fallen out of use
  - ▶ Annual faculty evaluation processes have provided limited feedback on progress toward promotion and tenure

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
  - ▶ Reinstate assignment of teaching mentors
  - ▶ Develop a structured mentorship model
  - ▶ Provide enhanced feedback on progress toward promotion and tenure during annual evaluation process
  - ▶ Hold more frequent meetings between department Chair and pre-tenure faculty, to provide consistent guidance on promotion and tenure, monitor mentoring, and address any other issues

#### 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
  - ▶ Department is supported by a dedicated cadre of administrative and technical staff
  - ▶ Notable collegiality across all sectors of the department
  - ▶ There is a desire for more social and team-building opportunities among academic staff
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Transparent funding model has resulted in improved decision-making and increased staff confidence
  - ▶ Finance is perceived as a positive attribute in the Department
  - ▶ Use of the shared research and teaching laboratory spaces has been a successful strategy
- Long-range planning and overall assessment

- ▶ Department is currently working to clarify outcomes and career pathways for Lassonde Mineral program graduates
- International comparators
  - ▶ Basic elements of CivMin programs are aligned with top programs in Canada and North America

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

- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Academic, technical, and administrative staff commented on a need for better communication venues between the Department/Faculty and the staff
  - ▶ Financial and HR system appears outdated, leading to slower business processes
  - ▶ Equipment and laptops are outdated, causing incompatibility issues and inefficiencies
  - ▶ Budget constraints limit initiatives, as noted by lab staff
  - ▶ Space allocation, as well as cost and time required for renovations, remain ongoing concerns
  - ▶ Drive to increase MEng enrollment appears to be driven by the budget model
  - ▶ Reviewers note concerns regarding the appointment of a pre-tenure professor as Associate Chair overseeing professional programs, particularly as such service does not appear to be accounted for in tenure processes

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ Establish a formalized conflict resolution mechanism for graduate students and supervisors, and ensure it is clearly communicated and accessible to both students and faculty
  - ▶ Consider ways to enhance communication within the department, including annual all-staff retreats and encouraging Associate Chairs to keep their staff informed about ongoing activities
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Revisit the budget-driven approach to increasing MEng enrolment, and consider ways to distribute MEng funds equitably across programs
  - ▶ “Any focused effort on recruiting students into and sustaining professional programs is more appropriately taken on by a committee led by a more senior professor”
  - ▶ Develop a succession plan for technical support staff
  - ▶ Continue to seek opportunities to collaborate across departments to optimize use of space
  - ▶ Pursue funds to improve and grow laboratory space, which is closely tied to program quality
- Long-range planning and overall assessment

- ▶ Revisit the departmental strategic plan through a professionally facilitated, inclusive process involving all stakeholders to raise awareness, gain stakeholder buy-in, and promote community/team building
- ▶ Departmental strategic plan should articulate a clear vision and goals with global impact, and identify unique interdisciplinary research and program initiatives based on the department's exceptional strengths



### UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

March 19, 2025

Professor Nicholas Rule  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
University of Toronto  
27 King's College Circle

Dear Professor Rule,

I write in response to your letter of November 25, 2025 regarding the 2023-2024 external review of the Department of Civil & Mineral Engineering and its undergraduate and graduate programs.

On behalf of the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering, I would first like to thank the reviewers, Professors W. Scott Dunbar, University of British Columbia; Mohamed Meguid, McGill University; and Junko Munakata Marr, Colorado School of Mines, for their very comprehensive review of the department. I would also like to thank the Civil & Mineral Engineering chair, faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study, as well as the many staff, students, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided thoughtful feedback.

The external review process is a valuable exercise that affords us the opportunity to take stock of the state of our academic units and of the Faculty as a whole. We are extremely pleased with the reviewers' favourable comments on the quality of the department's professors and students, unique opportunities for students to engage in interdisciplinary coursework and research, interesting academic innovations in the undergraduate program, dedicated administrative and technical staff, and the collegial culture that pervades the department.

The quality of the unit and its program notwithstanding, the review report raises a number of issues and challenges. These have been addressed in the attached table, which was developed in consultation with the chair of Civil & Mineral Engineering. For each area addressed, an implementation plan is provided that identifies actions to be accomplished in the short (six months), medium (one to two years) and longer (three to five years) terms, and who will take the lead in each area.

Comments on the draft *Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan* (summary) were provided by my office on March 6, 2025.



I anticipate the next review of the Department of Civil & Mineral Engineering will be commissioned in 2026-2027 with a visit to be scheduled for 2027-2028. This will coincide with the end of the chair's term.

Chairs and directors in FASE are required to submit to me a written update on progress made toward the goals in their implementation plans on an annual basis. I will provide you with an interim report on the status of the department's implementation plans no later than 2025-2026, the mid-point between the department's last and next reviews.

I will attend the April 10, 2025 meeting of the Committee on Academic Policy & Programs along with Professor Marianne Hatzopoulos, department chair, to answer any questions that may arise regarding this review.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to respond to the report of the external review team. Their comments and recommendations will help inform the vision and future priorities for the Department of Civil & Mineral Engineering.

Sincerely,



Chris Yip  
Dean

cc:

Prof. Marianne Hatzopoulos, Chair, Department of Civil & Mineral Engineering  
Caroline Ziegler, FASE Governance & Programs Officer  
Lachmi Singh, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance  
David Lock, Academic Reviews & Planning Specialist  
Emma del Junco, Academic Reviews & Planning Specialist

Attachment

## 2023-24 UTQAP Review of FASE Civil & Mineral Engineering - Review Recommendations

Appended to March 19, 2025 letter from FASE Dean Chris Yip to Vice-Provost, Academic Policy & Programs, Nicholas Rule.

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/six months, medium/1-2 years, long/3-5 years) 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 (February 2025)	Dean’s Response (March 2025)
The reviewers made several observations related to inflexibility in undergraduate program curricula: they observed that once-per-year course offerings create a “very challenging path to graduation” for students who fail a course and noted undergraduate students’ desire for elective courses to be distributed more evenly across their years of study.	1	“The path to graduation becomes very challenging if an undergraduate student fails a course, with courses being offered once per year; more flexibility or more frequent offerings will improve time to graduation.”	Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department is gathering evidence on the extent of the problem (how many students delay their graduation because of a failed course that they could not repeat)</li> <li>• This option already exists in 1<sup>st</sup> year, through the T program. In first year, students have an opportunity to retake a course in the same academic year.</li> </ul> Medium-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are exploring the possibility of retaking a failed course by enrolling in an equivalent course at another university in the summer and obtaining a transfer credit</li> <li>• Beyond 1<sup>st</sup> year, if a student is failing a course, we do not believe that it is in their best interest to overload</li> </ul>	CivMin is measuring the extent of delayed graduation because of failed courses and is investigating ways in which students can obtain the credit without coursework overload. It is encouraged to work with the VD-Undergraduate to explore strategies employed in other units to address similar issues.
	2	“Greater flexibility is desired in the curriculum to include more electives	Long-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CivMin Undergraduate Studies Committee has embarked on an initiative to develop</li> </ul>	The Department is encouraged to work closely with the Dean’s Advisor on Innovations in Undergraduate Education

<b>Request Prompt</b> <i>verbatim from the request</i>	<b>Rec. #</b>	<b>Recommendations from Review Report</b> <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	<b>Unit Response</b> (February 2025)	<b>Dean's Response</b> (March 2025)
		distributed across different years (rather than concentrated in year 4)"	<p>streams in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year of the Civ program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This will entail a major modification of the existing BASc in CivMin but we believe it is much needed given the diversity of focus areas in Civil.</li> <li>The streams will include infrastructure, environment, and geotechnical/mining</li> <li>This flexibility already exists at the undergraduate level within other FASE departments such as MIE and ECE.</li> </ul>	and the Vice-Dean, Undergraduate to these initiatives. It is also encouraged to reach out to the Curriculum Development Specialist in the Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education for support in any curriculum mapping exercises. The Dean's Office will work closely with the Department as it develops proposals for new streams in years 3 and 4 of the Civ curriculum.
	3	"...scheduling 500 level courses such that senior undergraduate students can better access them will provide more options for them."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is already done</li> </ul>	The Department has increased access to 500-level courses for senior undergraduate students.
The reviewers observed that student recruitment challenges are common in Civil and Mineral Engineering programs and recommended exploring ways to engage students currently enrolled in FASE's Track One program.	4	"APS191H1: Introduction to Engineering, a course in the Track One curriculum, is a series of seminars that introduces students to the major areas of engineering. Of course, this is where programs can attract students from Track One. If it has not been done already, have students who have done PEY describe what they did during their work term. Another idea is to invite a recent graduate who has an interesting work experience story."	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CivMin already offers a lecture in APS191 which provides a solid overview of the program, of PEY opportunities, with examples of career paths for recent graduates</li> <li>In addition, CivMin has introduced CIV191 and MIN191, two first year courses that feature weekly guest lectures from engaging alumni and industry partners</li> </ul>	<p>CivMin engages Track One students for recruitment (among other) purposes by offering a lecture in APS191 and featuring weekly guest lectures from alumni and industry partners in two new first-year courses.</p> <p>There has already been a marked improvement in recruitment into Civil and especially Mineral Engineering as a consequence of new leadership and strategies. The Department is encouraged to continue to work proactively in this regard.</p>
The reviewers recommended that future developments in the Lassonde Mineral Engineering program account for rapid changes in the global mining industry, the skills that graduates will need to succeed in the industry, and "the changing relationships between society and the metals and materials it uses."	5	"Any changes to the Lassonde Mineral Engineering program should take account of the rapid changes in the global mining industry if it is to be a distinctive and popular program. These changes certainly include new technologies, but they also revolve around the changing relationships between society and the metals and materials it uses.	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department recently instituted new recruitment strategies for the Lassonde Mineral Engineering (LME) program. As a result, the first-year intake in September 2024 saw the largest cohort with over 50 new students accepting offers into the program</li> </ul>	I commend the success of the Department's new recruitment strategies for the LME program, which has led to its largest cohort. CivMin is encouraged in its efforts to support more hands-on and experiential learning for MIN students, including

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Unit Response (February 2025)	Dean's Response (March 2025)
		Graduates will require a unique breadth of knowledge, ranging from the basic and practical to business strategy, finance, community engagement, and public policy."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum changes were made to MIN201 and MIN400 to support more hands-on and experiential learning</li> <li>All LME students attend the largest Mining conference in Canada, PDAC (Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada), as part of a course</li> </ul> <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will be introducing optional bootcamps and industry-led short courses on software and new tools</li> </ul>	opportunities it has created for them to further engage with industry.
The reviewers observed that financial considerations appear to be driving recent increases in MEng enrolments and recommended exploring ways to distribute MEng funds equitably across programs.	6	"The drive to increase MEng enrollment appears to be driven by the budget model. This could be revisited with a view to distributing MEng funds equitably across programs"	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part of the tuition revenue from MEng flows to the Department through the budget model. This revenue goes into the main departmental operating budget and the Chair has currently allocated a budget for continuous MEng improvement (new courses, hiring industry leaders as sessional instructors, organizing field trips). The remaining revenue supports departmental operating expenses.</li> </ul> <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department is revising all MEng emphases and setting up Emphasis Coordinators who provide mentorship to MEng students and facilitate career-oriented activities. This is part of our continuous improvement to the MEng and helps with our recruitment efforts. This initiative will be supported by MEng revenue.</li> </ul> <p>Long-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department will be initiating a new MEng in Mining supported by industry. This program is currently being explored in close partnership with the mining industry.</li> </ul>	The Department is encouraged to work closely with the Faculty CFO and the other departments as to how to strategically use and manage MEng revenues, building on their experiences in managing these and related post-graduate programs.
The reviewers recommended that the Department assess and clarify the purpose of	7	"The purpose of the comprehensive exams should be revisited and linked to consistent,	Short-term	CivMin is taking steps to assess and clarify the purpose of its PhD

<b>Request Prompt</b> <i>verbatim from the request</i>	<b>Rec. #</b>	<b>Recommendations from Review Report</b> <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	<b>Unit Response</b> (February 2025)	<b>Dean's Response</b> (March 2025)
the PhD comprehensive examination and ensure that the exam is linked with a set of consistent, well-defined learning outcomes.		well-defined learning outcomes. This will help students appreciate the need for and value of such exams.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department is currently revising the comprehensive exam structure and procedures. These revisions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring a consistent purpose and well-defined criteria for pass/fail</li> <li>Testing of foundational knowledge and research skills</li> <li>Mandating that the students submit a document, in advance of the exam (3 weeks), by the student, which guides the student and the professors with the questioning (proposal or problem statement and direction of the research)</li> <li>Holding the exam within 18 months of program start date (no later)</li> <li>We are developing an evaluation rubric for the comprehensive exam, included in an exam report form</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	comprehensive exam. It is encouraged to reach out to the Curriculum Development Specialist in the Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education for support in linking the PhD exam to consistent, well-defined learning outcomes. It is also encouraged to discuss with other departments in Engineering as to how they leverage the PhD comprehensive exam.
The reviewers observed that PhD students' average time to completion is higher than at other similar institutions and recommended annual progress tracking to help students and supervisors identify and resolve issues as they arise.	8	“Annual progress tracking for PhD students can be helpful for both the students and the supervisors in identifying issues and resolving them as they arise. This should also help to reduce the time to graduation for PhD students.”	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department is currently setting up expectations for the supervisory committee meetings (SCM) on a yearly basis (what is expected in year 1 vs year 2, etc.)</li> <li>In addition to the outcome of the SCM, capturing whether a student is making sufficient progress, we propose to add another field “on-track to finishing in 4 years” yes/no with a comment box</li> </ul> <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce semester goals for PhD students and a “formative” yearly SCM which only goal is to provide advice on research progress</li> </ul> <p>Long-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examining the value of the departmental thesis defense and whether it could be replaced by the last SCM</li> </ul>	The Department is encouraged to leverage the support mechanisms and offerings of the School of Graduate Studies and the Faculty's Office of the Vice-Dean, Graduate Studies regarding graduate student progression strategies. This includes resources and best practices being developed by the OVDGS to help reduce PhD time to completion, such as time management training and guidelines for graduate students, timeline for first-year graduate students with milestones, high-level benchmarks for the four years, and a handbook for students and supervisors. Additionally, plans are in motion in the Faculty to create new tools to better track the academic progress of graduate students

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				through the creation of Faculty-funded IT positions.
The reviewers noted that the cost of living in Toronto can create challenges for pre-tenure faculty in attracting high-quality PhD students, observing that “the graduate student minimum stipend is too low to be competitive.” They recommended considering ways to augment financial support for PhD students including the possibility of internships through Mitacs programs.	9	“Some untenured assistant professors are having difficulty attracting good PhD students because living costs in Toronto are high compared to the typical funding that students receive. The graduate student minimum stipend is too low to be competitive.”	Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department is committed to the new 40K minimum and is setting aside a pool of funds to support untenured assistant professors in meeting this minimum</li> </ul>	CivMin is encouraged to work with Advancement and explore opportunities such as MITACS to provide additional support for graduate students. It is also encouraged to work proactively with the Partnerships Office to help new faculty identify and develop supports for their students.
	10	“Consider mechanisms to support larger PhD stipends. Mitacs is one possibility.”	Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department has developed a mechanism to top-up graduate students who earn scholarships, enabling them to exceed the 40K stipend</li> </ul>	
	11	“Graduate students are interested in internship and career development opportunities. The Department expressed interest in centralized Mitacs as a good way to increase opportunities for internships for grad students. FASE has some dedicated staff for this and should make sure departments are aware.”	Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department will not be pursuing a centralized MITACS at this stage, but many of our faculty currently hold MITACS grants</li> <li>Professors are building internships within industry-funded contracts or Alliance grants</li> </ul> Medium-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the MEng level, the Department is part of a Coop proposal for MEng, led by FASE and supported by the Engineering Career Center (ECC)</li> <li>The Department will be supporting many talks and presentations by Industry geared to our MEng students</li> <li>The Department will be supporting career fairs organized by student clubs/ industry-student mixer events</li> </ul>	In February 2025, Faculty Council approved the creation of an MEng Extended Full-time Plus Co-op Option that offers a formal for-credit pathway for MEng students to develop a career strategy and workplace skills, make industry contacts, and obtain significant professional experience prior to graduation. The Faculty has also re-invested in co-funded MITACS business development officers to help build these programs and provide more focused support.

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			Long-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are exploring the feasibility of structurally supporting internships for doctoral stream students while balancing the implications for funding and time to completion</li> </ul>	
The reviewers recommended that a formalized conflict resolution mechanism be developed for graduate students and supervisors and clearly communicated to both groups (in developing your response, you are encouraged to work with the School of Graduate Studies).	12	“A formalized conflict resolution mechanism regarding student supervision is needed at the Department level. This mechanism must be clearly communicated and accessible to both students and professors, as needed.”	Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a process that the Department follows for conflict resolution and efforts are currently being made to document it (referring to SGS guidelines on conflict resolution)</li> </ul> Medium-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are making efforts to improve communication with students, and will explain the process of conflict resolution at our Graduate Orientation Days</li> <li>We will invite speakers from the Center for Graduate Mentorship and Supervision (CGMS) to present at Graduate Orientation Days and at other points during the year through lunch and learn and other speaker events that the Department organizes for the benefit of graduate students.</li> <li>SCM are tracked more diligently, must take place annually</li> </ul> Long-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new initiative is being explored, which involves an informal mentorship model that entails assigning a non-supervisory mentor to every graduate student who opts into the program</li> </ul>	I encourage the Department to continue its efforts to develop a formalized conflict resolution mechanism for graduate students and supervisors, and recommend it consult with the School of Graduate Studies as needed. It is also encouraged to consult with other FASE graduate units regarding best practices they may have developed.
The reviewers made several recommendations related to strengthening mentoring and guidance for junior faculty, including: reinstating the practice of assigning teaching mentors, developing a mentorship	13	“Reinstate the practice of assigning teaching mentors. Develop a mentorship model and provide more feedback during annual evaluations regarding progress toward promotion and tenure.”	Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department will continue to assign a teaching mentor and will better communicate that access to teaching mentors is available</li> </ul>	The Department assigns teaching mentors and is taking steps to ensure its faculty are aware of this resource. It is encouraged to work with the other departments to identify best practices

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model, and holding more frequent meetings between the Chair and pre-tenure faculty to provide guidance on processes and expectations around promotion and tenure.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will retain CTSI resources for teaching observation and feedback</li> <li>We encourage new professors to listen-in on courses delivered by colleagues</li> </ul> <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We propose to develop an informal community of practice within the Department, organizing events where professors can share lessons learned in various types of course delivery</li> </ul>	for teaching and mentoring. Faculty should also be encouraged to participate in the offerings of CTSI and other initiatives.
	14	“The Chair should meet more frequently with pre-tenure academic staff to provide consistent, general guidance on expectations for and progress toward promotion and tenure, check in on mentoring and resolve issues as they arise.”	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over the past year, the Chair has met at least 3 times in a one-on-one format with untenured professors: once to discuss the outcomes of PTR, another time to discuss course evaluations and experience with teaching, a third time to discuss research. This practice will continue and has proven very useful to early career faculty.</li> <li>The Chair also organizes a yearly meeting with all new professors and walks them through the PTR form, offering guidance on how to fill the form and relate their achievements in an effective manner.</li> <li>New faculty are currently receiving mentorship in the preparation of grant proposals.</li> </ul>	<p>The CivMin chair meets several times a year with untenured professors to discuss PTR and mentoring (see also recommendation 13 above).</p> <p>The Faculty has created procedures and guidelines to help clarify promotion to continuing status for teaching-stream faculty. Examples include the <i>FASE Guidelines for the Assessment of Effectiveness of Teaching in Tenure, Continuing Status and Promotion Decision</i> and the <i>FASE Best Practices for Assessing Teaching Effectiveness in PTR Decisions</i>.</p>
The reviewers noted comments from academic, technical, and administrative staff regarding the need for better avenues of communication with the Department; they suggested annual retreats for all staff as a possibility.	15	“Both academic and technical/admin staff expressed a need for better communication venues between the Department/Faculty and the staff... Annual retreats that involve all staff would be an effective communication venue.”	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department has changed the culture of departmental meetings whereby staff are now invited to all departmental meetings</li> <li>The Chair has instituted common meetings with both Associate Chairs and Directors of the three offices (Business, Student Services, IT and Technical Operations)</li> </ul>	To help promote communications between the Faculty and administrative and technical staff, the Dean's Office will proactively welcome staff to attend the four meetings of Faculty Council each year.



<b>Request Prompt</b> <i>verbatim from the request</i>	<b>Rec. #</b>	<b>Recommendations from Review Report</b> <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	<b>Unit Response</b> (February 2025)	<b>Dean's Response</b> (March 2025)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are now given space at departmental meetings to present their priorities and seek input from faculty</li> <li>A departmental retreat will be planned in 2025</li> </ul>	
The reviewers noted challenges regarding departmental space allocation and the cost and time required for renovations; they recommended that the Department explore opportunities for cross-departmental collaboration to optimize use of space and pursue funds to improve and grow laboratory space.	16	"The Department and higher administration should continue to seek opportunities to collaborate across departments to (1) optimize use of space and (2) pursue funds to improve and grow laboratory space, which is closely tied to program quality."	Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is occurring through the FASE Facilities Masterplan (FMP)</li> <li>The Department is supporting the FMP and participating in the consultation process</li> </ul>	The Faculty is undergoing an update of its Facility Master Plan, with recommendations expected in 2024-2025.
The reviewers recommended undertaking a strategic planning process, with input from all stakeholder groups, to develop and clarify the Department's vision, goals, and unique interdisciplinary research and program initiatives.	17	"Revisit the departmental strategic plan through a professionally facilitated, inclusive process with all stakeholders to raise awareness, get stakeholder buy-in, and promote community/team building. Generate a plan with a vision and goals that can have global impact and provide unique interdisciplinary research and program initiatives, built on the exceptional departmental strengths."	Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A strategic plan will be initiated in a departmental retreat to be held in 2025</li> </ul> Medium-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department will revise and update its strategic plan including a strong focus on cross-cutting themes in CivMin which include climate resilient infrastructure, sustainable cities, and health communities</li> </ul>	I look forward to discussing the outcomes of the Department's strategic planning exercise, once conducted, and its new strategic plan. The Department is encouraged to consult with our vice-deans in both these stages, in particular the Vice-Dean, Strategy. It is also encouraged to consider EDI as a core component of its new strategic plan.  It is expected that the Faculty's next academic plan will be completed in 2024-2025.
Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response	18	"Field camp and field trips are valuable experiential learning, though students expressed a desire for more guidance regarding activities."	Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department has conducted a major overhaul of field courses including CAMP, CIV201 and MIN201, as well as MIN 400</li> <li>These courses now include more structure and guided activities</li> <li>Through ISTEP support, a strong communications component has been introduced</li> </ul>	CivMin has provided additional guidance to students regarding field camp and field trip activities.

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Unit Response (February 2025)	Dean’s Response (March 2025)
	19	“Succession planning for technical support staff is needed.”	Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering is supporting many initiatives for shared services and the Department is moving towards centralizing some of the technical support like IT and technical operations</li></ul> Medium-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Other lab technician positions may no longer be renewed given the difficulties in supporting the salaries of research-based lab technicians</li></ul> Long-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Department is transitioning from a model where many lab technicians supporting research are paid from the Department’s operating account to a model where lab support staff are supported by PI funds while staff responsible for lab-based teaching are hired by the Department</li></ul>	The Faculty’s Chief Administrative Officer, Director of Information Technology, and Human Resources Office are available to provide advice and guidance with staffing and job descriptions for technical support staff.  CivMin is encouraged to continue to work with these resources to ensure they maintain the proper staffing levels and fully utilize Dean’s Office shared services to maximize efficiencies within the Department.

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

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*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

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The reviewers praised the “exceptional quality” of the department’s professors and students and observed that the programs provide unique opportunities for students to engage in interdisciplinary coursework and important research. They highlighted the department’s course offerings in sustainability, business, and data science, as well as the impactful Professional Experience Year program. Overall, the reviewers found that the department’s programs aligned closely with the foundational elements found in top programs across Canada and North America. Finally, they applauded the dedicated administrative and technical staff, and the department’s “notably collegial culture.”

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: addressing inflexibility in undergraduate program curricula, challenging paths to graduation for students who fail a course, and undergraduate students’ desire for elective courses to be distributed more evenly across their years of study; exploring ways to enhance program outreach and recruitment, including by engaging students currently enrolled in FASE’s Track One program; ensuring that future developments in the Lassonde Mineral Engineering program account for rapid changes in the global mining industry, the skills that graduates will need to succeed in the industry, and society’s changing relationships with metals and materials; exploring ways to distribute MEng funds equitably across programs; assessing and clarifying the purpose of the PhD comprehensive examination and ensuring that the exam is linked with a set of consistent, well-defined learning outcomes; implementing annual progress tracking to help PhD students and supervisors identify and resolve issues as they arise; considering ways to augment financial support for PhD students including the possibility of internships through Mitacs programs; developing a formalized conflict resolution mechanism for graduate students and supervisors; strengthening mentoring and guidance for junior faculty including reinstating the practice of assigning teaching mentors, developing a mentorship model, and holding more frequent meetings with the Chair to provide guidance on processes and expectations around promotion and tenure; improving communications between department leadership and academic, technical, and administrative staff; exploring opportunities for cross-departmental collaboration to optimize use of space and pursuing funds to improve and grow laboratory space; and undertaking a strategic planning process, with input from all stakeholder groups, to develop and clarify the Department’s vision, goals, and unique interdisciplinary research and program initiatives.

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

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Chairs and directors are required to submit a written update on progress made toward the goals in their implementation plans to the Dean each year. The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs on the status of the implementation plans midway between the 2023-2024 review and the year of the next site visit.

The next review will be commissioned in 2026-2027 with a visit to be scheduled for 2027-2028.

## 6 Distribution

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On July 15<sup>th</sup> 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 Engineering and Applied 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

<b>Program(s) Reviewed:</b>	Bachelor of Applied Science in Engineering Science, with majors in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aerospace Engineering</li> <li>• Biomedical Systems Engineering</li> <li>• Electrical &amp; Computer Engineering</li> <li>• Energy Systems Engineering</li> <li>• Engineering Mathematics, Statistics and Finance</li> <li>• Engineering Physics</li> <li>• Machine Intelligence</li> <li>• Robotics Engineering</li> </ul>
<b>Division/Unit Reviewed OR Division/Unit Offering Program(s):</b>	Division of Engineering Science
<b>Commissioning Officer:</b>	Dean, Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering
<b>Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Rosalind Archer, Professor and Head, School of Engineering and Built Environment, Griffith University</li> <li>• Dr. Scott Moura, Associate Professor and Chair, Engineering Science, University of California, Berkeley</li> <li>• Dr. James Olson, Professor and Dean, Faculty of Applied Science, University of British Columbia</li> <li>• Dr. Bill Rosehart, Professor and Dean, Schulich School of Engineering, University of Calgary</li> </ul>
<b>Date of Review Visit:</b>	October 16-17, 2023
<b>Review Report Received by VPAP:</b>	July 31, 2024
<b>Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:</b>	March 20, 2025
<b>Date Reported to AP&amp;P:</b>	April 10, 2025

## Previous UTQAP Review

Date:

### Summary of Findings and Recommendations

#### Significant Program Strengths

- Flagship program that is challenging, rigorous and attractive to highly qualified students
- Program structure, with a broad base in engineering during the first two Foundation years, creates engineers with interdisciplinary understanding
- Excellent outcomes for graduates • Supportive and enthusiastic leadership, associated faculty, and staff
- Valuable ties to alumni and the involvement of a strong Advisory Board have led to enhanced opportunities for student mentorship and employment

#### Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Adding a hands-on design course to the third year to enable the continuous development of design skills and capability
- Engaging with the Department of Mathematics in the Faculty of Arts & Science to ensure ongoing support for the program
- Monitoring students' stress levels given the challenging nature of the program
- Reflecting on how recruitment strategies might be broadened to attract a distinctive incoming cohort beyond high grades as indicators of achievement
- Pursuing new philanthropic opportunities and continuing to strengthen ties with alumni to build on program strengths

## Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

### Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Terms of reference; self-study, including faculty curricula vitae; previous review report (2015-2016), including the administrative response; recommendations from previous Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB) review (2019); access to undergraduate course descriptions (e.g., academic calendar); Faculty academic plan, annual impact reports, and Dean's presentation on the Faculty; and University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP).

### Consultation Process

Faculty with teaching and/or administrative responsibilities in the Division of Engineering Science; Engineering Science students, administrative staff and senior program administrators; and members of relevant cognate units as determined by the commissioning officer.

# Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

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## 1. Undergraduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ Engineering Science (EngSci) is a flagship undergraduate program at the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering
  - ▶ One of U of T's largest undergraduate engineering programs
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ EngSci's reputation [attracts] some of the strongest high school students from across Canada and beyond
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ The broad introduction to fundamentals of engineering science and math in the first and second years of the program is a notable strength
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ EngSci students form a tight knit and supportive community, and also often pursue leadership and co-curricular activities
  - ▶ "The Engineering Science Research Opportunities Program is outstanding"

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Due to the curriculum's fixed structure, there are very few pathways for students to complete requirements in years one and two
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Students report finding the number of courses, and intensity of individual courses quite challenging, both academically and personally

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Some reflection on the simultaneous depth of topics covered in the first and second years of the program should be considered; revise and reduce materials and/or courses where appropriate
  - ▶ Consider replacing mandatory courses with a limited selection of elective options in the program's second year
  - ▶ Enhance program flexibility, particularly in the first and second years: "Alternative options, such as spring/summer offerings, can help alleviate pressure. Explore broader use of course equivalents in spring / summer terms."

- ▶ Explore opportunities to add engineering disciplinary components in first and second year courses, with an eye to encouraging greater student engagement
- ▶ Explore establishing criteria for when an EngSci major might be considered for transition to a 'CORE-8' program; reviewers note this might be considered when the breadth or depth of foundational materials may not be achievable, given the learning outcomes of the other majors
- ▶ Consider developing more formal mechanisms to enable students to transfer from EngSci to 'CORE-8' programs after Year 2, to increase program flexibility
- ▶ Consider increasing the rotation of instructors assigned to teach EngSci courses (while remaining mindful of potential risks if the rotation is too rapid)
- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▶ Consider monitoring the performance of students from a range of equity-deserving groups, such as first-generation university students
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Conduct a detailed analysis of EngSci student retention, and explore approaches for improvements
  - ▶ Consider adding evening student advising opportunities
  - ▶ Explore approaches to help students better understand potential EngSci majors and options earlier in their programs
  - ▶ Explore increasing opportunities for upper year EngSci Students to connect with potential 4th year thesis supervisors
  - ▶ "Explicitly encourage and facilitate student mobility through international exchange Programs"
- Student funding
  - Consider increasing funding for students accepted into international experiences

## 2. Graduate Program(s) – n/a

## 3. Faculty/Research

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

- Faculty
  - ▶ The diversity of teaching staff delivering the program appears somewhat limited; for example, while the student cohort is approximately 40% female, they see very few women lecturers in the program

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
  - ▶ Work to increase the diversity of the teaching staff contributing to program delivery



## 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
  - ▶ Faculty and leadership from across FASE spoke very positively about the Engineering Science program and division
  - ▶ EngSci's connections to the various FASE units and the Department of Physics are noted as a program strength
  - ▶ Staff are outstanding, and faculty and students speak very highly of their work
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ FASE units and institutes are incentivized to participate in teaching Engineering Science courses via the activity-based budget model
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ EngSci is an outstanding program overall, that enjoys strong support from the Dean and other FASE and U of T constituents
  - ▶ "FASE should be proud of the many great components of Engineering Science at the University of Toronto"
  - ▶ "The Engineering Science Division and the Engineering Science program is excellent. The program has a strong history, with outstanding graduates, academic leaders, faculty, staff and current students."
- International comparators
  - ▶ Students, faculty and leadership consistently regard EngSci as one of the most distinguished engineering programs nationally and internationally
  - ▶ EngSci helps to differentiate U of T Engineering from other engineering schools

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ Develop mechanisms to grow a broader sense of community around the EngSci program; reviewers suggest considering approaches such as allowing faculty (including those in Physics and Math) to affiliate with the program as courtesy 0% appointments
  - ▶ A stronger EngSci community and enhanced communications would help instructors to learn about connections across the entire Engineering Science curriculum
  - ▶ Develop mechanisms for the Division Director to be more directly engaged with department and institute chairs who contribute to Engineering Science
  - ▶ Continue divisional efforts to ensure that the culture in Engineering Science is inclusive

- ▶ Enhance internal communications to allow staff to engage regularly with the division's strategy and operations
- ▶ Include students in governance processes at the highest possible levels, such as curriculum committees for the major options, to ensure that the student voice is encouraged and valued
- ▶ Establish an Industry and Alumni Advisory Committee for Engineering Science
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Reviewers echo faculty and staff assertions that Engineering Science should not be converted into a department, noting that it provides a special role in the Faculty of uniting community members around high quality students and curricular innovations
  - ▶ Reviewers recommend further defining the roles of the option/major chairs, including developing appointment processes for these positions, exploring approaches to enhancing their governance roles related to curriculum, and ensuring recognition for these roles in the faculty member's home departments
  - ▶ Consider developing academic curriculum committees for each of the Engineering Science majors, and committees for Years 1 and 2; members of these committees could gain useful experience for potential future leadership roles in the division
  - ▶ Review and clarify governance, committee structures and processes within the division and the majors
  - ▶ Conduct a review of job descriptions and workload expectations for EngSci staff members; outcomes might include increasing the size of the staff team, or reducing the scope of current duties as appropriate
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ "The Division and FASE should embrace opportunities to further enhance the program, Division structure and student experience, leveraging the knowledge and experience across FASE in engineering education and student wellness."
  - ▶ Develop a strategic academic plan for the EngSci division that brings together the 'CORE-8' and partners from across FASE, and ensures a common understanding of and vision for the program
  - ▶ Explore the possibility of each of the FASE departments and academic units developing a major within EngSci, if one does not already exist



### UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

March 18, 2025

Professor Nicholas Rule  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
University of Toronto  
27 King's College Circle

Dear Professor Rule,

I write in response to your letter of November 19, 2025 regarding the October 2023 external review of the Division of Engineering Science and its undergraduate program.

On behalf of the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering, I would first like to thank the reviewers, Professors Rosalind Archer, Griffith University; Scott Moura, University of California, Berkeley; James Olson, University of British Columbia; and Bill Rosehart, University of Calgary for their very comprehensive review of the division. I would also like to thank the Engineering Science director, faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study, as well as the many staff, students, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided thoughtful feedback.

The external review process is a valuable exercise that affords us the opportunity to take stock of the state of our academic units and of the Faculty as a whole. We are extremely pleased with the reviewers' favourable comments on the division's distinguished and internationally-recognized program, and its exceptional and engaged students, outstanding staff, and strong connections with units within and outside the Faculty.

The quality of the unit and its program notwithstanding, the review report raises a number of issues and challenges. These have been addressed in the attached table, which was developed in consultation with the director of Engineering Science. For each area addressed, an implementation plan is provided that identifies actions to be accomplished in the short (six months), medium (one to two years) and longer (three to five years) terms, and who will take the lead in each area.

Comments on the draft *Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan* (summary) were provided by my office on March 11, 2025.

I anticipate the next review of the Division of Engineering Science will be commissioned in 2026-2027 with a visit to be scheduled for 2027-2028. This will coincide with the end of the director's term.

Chairs and directors in FASE are required to submit to me a written update on progress made toward the goals in their implementation plans on an annual basis. I will provide you with an interim report on the status of the division's implementation plans no later than 2025-2026, the mid-point between the division's last and next reviews.

I will attend the April 10, 2025 meeting of the Committee on Academic Policy & Programs along with Professor Natalie Enright Jerger, division director, to answer any questions that may arise regarding this review.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to respond to the report of the external review team. Their comments and recommendations will help inform the vision and future priorities for the Division of Engineering Science.

Sincerely,



Chris Yip  
Dean

cc:

Prof. Natalie Enright Jerger, Director, Division of Engineering Science

Caroline Ziegler, FASE Governance & Programs Officer

Lachmi Singh, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance

David Lock, Academic Reviews & Planning Specialist

Emma del Junco, Academic Reviews & Planning Specialist

Attachment

2023-24 UTQAP Review of the FASE Division of Engineering Science - Review Recommendations

Appended to March 18, 2025 letter from FASE Dean Chris Yip to Vice-Provost, Academic Policy & Programs, Nicholas Rule.

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 (February 2025)	Dean’s Response (March 2025)
The reviewers noted concerns that the fixed structure of the EngSci curriculum results in very few pathways for students to complete first and second year requirements, and that many students report significant academic and personal challenges with the number and intensity of EngSci courses. They made several recommendations related to addressing student workload and increasing program flexibility, particularly in the first and second years; and strengthening supports for student wellness.	1.	“The broad introduction to engineering science and math fundamentals over years 1 and 2 is a strong strength of the program, although some reflection in the simultaneous depth of the different topics covered should be considered.”	<p><b>Short Term:</b> Work with Foundation Year instructors to help them understand the entirety of the curriculum such that they can leverage material taught in other courses to remove any significant overlap and take advantage of possible synergies to increase efficiency of teaching material.</p> <p><b>Long/Medium Term:</b> Do a complete review of Foundation years using a broad range of data from CEAB, University curriculum management process, surveys, etc. to determine the required depth and breadth of the foundation curriculum to meet the needs of the majors. Once this has been established, an improved curriculum that minimizes extraneous material, reduces overlap, optimizes the number and types of assessments (i.e., exams, labs, problem sets, etc.) across the required courses and distributes them equally throughout the term can be developed.</p>	<p>The Faculty recognizes that this has been a long-standing issue with the Division and its programming and encourages the Division to proactively address these concerns through appropriate consideration of workload and balance.</p> <p>The Division is taking steps to determine the required depth and breadth of the foundation curriculum to meet the needs of the majors and will address any gaps and is encouraged to reach out to the Curriculum Development Specialist in the Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education for support in any curriculum mapping exercises.</p>

	2.	“The Division and FASE should embrace opportunities to further enhance the program, Division structure and student experience, leveraging the knowledge and experience across FASE in engineering education and student wellness.”	<p><b>Medium Term:</b> Work with the First Year Office, Registrar’s Office, the Engineering Career Centre, the Faculty’s Institute for Studies in Transdisciplinary Engineering Education and Practice (ISTEP) as well as student groups to create a map of existing points of and opportunities for future curricular and co-curricular integration, particularly for learning supports.</p> <p><b>Long Term:</b> Establish and act on key priorities for improving student experience, emphasizing student development and wellness.</p>	The Faculty is committed to fostering a culture of care and support and strives to embed these principles into the ways we administer our programs and services. Through our <a href="#">Academic Plan</a> we have made a commitment to leverage and create resources, and develop policies and procedures to support mental wellness, assist students in need and promote healthy lifestyles.
	3.	“Revise and reduce the material and/or courses taught in year 1 and year 2.”	See 1 above.	See 1 above.
	4.	“Consider replacing some compulsory courses with a choice of specific courses in year 2 (e.g., choose 2 classes from a list of 3).”	<b>Medium/Long Term:</b> Explore how flexibility might be accomplished without creating new challenges for Years 3 and 4. As students choose their Major at the end of Year 2, we do not want to create barriers to students that may prevent them from being able to select any major (such as not taking a particular course choice in the Year 2 curriculum).	<p>The Division is encouraged to consider how its foundation year curricula map to current and anticipated future majors, especially with respect to the expectations of the majors regarding preparation.</p> <p>As stated in 1 above, the Division is encouraged to reach out to the Curriculum Development Specialist in the Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education for support in any curriculum mapping exercises.</p>
	5.	“Offer some flexibility, particularly in the first and second years. Due to the fixed structure of the required curriculum, there a very few pathways for students to complete the core curriculum in Years 1 and 2. Alternative options, such as spring/summer offerings, can help alleviate pressure. Explore broader use of course equivalents in spring / summer terms.	EngSci courses are specifically tailored to our program creating challenges with finding equivalent courses. Resources to offer additional courses as make-ups in other semesters are limited. Our academic advisors work closely with individual students to find course equivalents or develop modified plans to ensure smooth progression through the program.	<p>The Faculty broadly is exploring alternative course scheduling opportunities including around spring and summer term as there is a broader opportunity for all programs.</p> <p>EngSci is encouraged to continue working with individual students to ensure smooth progression through the program.</p>

			<p><b>Medium Term:</b> We will explore additional scheduling flexibility for the mandatory Engineering Economics course by potentially offering it in multiple semesters and by potentially creating an asynchronous/hybrid offering of the course.</p>	<p>The Dean's Office will work with the Division to develop proposals for any modifications to its program.</p>
	6.	<p>"Do a detailed analysis of retention of students in Engineering Science and consider ways to improve."</p>	<p><b>Short Term:</b> Work with the First Year Office (FYO) to amend transfer form to collect information on why students are transferring out of EngSci.</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> Use collected data to identify opportunities for improvement.</p>	<p>EngSci will put measures in place to analyze and address student retention.</p> <p>Retention is also a consequence of the recruitment to EngSci and broadly to Engineering. The Faculty will work with EngSci and the Engineering Recruitment and Outreach offices to ensure that our collective recruitment messages are appropriate and timely.</p>
	7.	<p>"Consider finding opportunities to add engineering disciplinary components/examples in Years 1 and 2 courses. While the program focuses on setting a strong foundational knowledge, student engagement may increase when seeing potential engineering applications."</p>	<p><b>Short Term:</b> We have organized cross-course integration workshops for foundation year instructors with the aim of providing an opportunity for instructors to learn about other courses and integrate concepts/topics from other courses. We had one workshop in Fall 2024 semester, and plan to repeat the workshops at least once per semester. Moving forward, we will be more explicit on guiding the conversations towards finding opportunities to add engineering examples/applications.</p>	<p>The Division is encouraging foundation year instructors to integrate concepts and topics from other courses and will encourage instructors to add engineering examples and applications to their courses.</p> <p>The Faculty has appointed a Decanal Advisor on Innovations in Undergraduate Education who has been tasked with reviewing these issues across all programs in Engineering.</p>
	8.	<p>"Consider developing a more formal mechanism to allow students to transfer from EngSci to Core-8 programs after year 2 (effectively extending the program flexibility allowed for Eng Science students a second year)."</p>	<p>Currently, students can transfer at 3 different points in first year. Beyond first year, there are mechanisms to transfer; however, because curriculums do not match up, students will have to repeat a year of study.</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> Work on messaging different transfer options to students so they understand pros and cons of different choices. The most popular programs (e.g., MEC/ECE) may not have space to accept</p>	<p>Because the curriculums in EngSci and the Core 8 programs don't align, and because there may not be space in some popular Core 8 programs, transfers for EngSci students may be limited. The Division will work with its first-year students to ensure they are making well-informed choices about transferring out of EngSci.</p>

			students who transfer after 2 <sup>nd</sup> year. We will work with these programs to provide increased opportunities for students.	
	9.	“Consider adding evening student advising opportunities in the evening (likely virtual advising).	<p>We do not believe there is a significant need for this. Currently, there are various programming and resources available on campus after hours with some services offered 24/7 by telephone and on-line including health and wellness supports. Faculty members may choose to offer evening office hours or asynchronous support to students. The Division runs both academic and non-academic activities in the evening and/or weekend including GEARS (Guided Engineering Academics Review Sessions).</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> Survey students to understand gaps in advising support.</p>	<p>EngSci believes its students are well served by the existing advising hours but will survey students to identify any gaps in advising support.</p> <p>The Faculty will work with EngSci to ensure that appropriate levels of student support are in place, including access to divisional level support in addition to what is provided at the unit level.</p>
	10.	“Find ways for students to understand potential Engineering Science major/options earlier in their programs. This could include introduction to different majors and even CORE-8 programs within Engineering Science courses in first and second year.	<p><b>Medium Term:</b> We are currently identifying the best approaches to provide more information about the majors earlier in the program, specifically in Year 1. (Presently, we offer major selection info sessions in Winter of Year 2).</p> <p>Approaches under consideration include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A first-year seminar course</li> <li>2. Online modules</li> <li>3. Panels by major chairs and/or guest speakers and year 3-4 students.</li> </ol>	EngSci is considering additional ways in which to provide more information about its majors to first-year students. It is encouraged to work with the Vice-Dean, First Year to look at best practices as they are applied to the Track One program students who face similar challenges when they select from the Core 8 offerings.
The reviewers recommended reviewing and clarifying governance and committee structures and processes within the unit and the majors and considering further defining the roles of the option/major chairs. They also recommended exploring approaches to encouraging greater student involvement in the	11.	“Further define and develop the role of the option/major chairs – appointment process for chairs, governance role around curriculum, recognition for the role in their home Departments.”	<p>Recognition of the major chair role in home department is already covered under a MOU between EngSci and Core 8 departments.</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> Work with department chairs to clarify the appointment process. We will work with major chairs to create governance documents around curriculum (see item 12 below).</p>	<p>The Division – and Faculty – recognizes and values the contributions of teaching staff who serve as EngSci major chairs. We encourage EngSci to further define and develop these roles, in particular, to clarify the appointment process with department chairs.</p> <p>EngSci is encouraged to look to the Core 8 programs as to how they strategically and</p>



unit's governance processes (e.g., as curriculum committee members), to ensure that their voices are heard and valued.				proactively engage undergraduate students in curriculum development.
	12.	"Develop a mechanism for the Division Director to be more directly engaged with department and institute chairs on who is assigned to teaching Engineering Science courses, serving as major/option chairs, etc."	<p>The existing MOU covers role and selection of Major Chairs. We will continue to work with other departments as Major Chair vacancies arise.</p> <p><b>Short/Medium Term:</b> Outreach by the Director to newly hired faculty across FASE to introduce them to EngSci and encourage them to want to teach for EngSci. Work with department chairs for courses that have been challenging in the past to identify appropriate new instructors. It is impractical for the Director to play a role in the assignment of 100+ courses that are highly decentralized across multiple Departments, Institutes, and Faculties. We will focus on engaging directly with Chairs and Directors on core courses.</p>	The Division will continue to work with department chairs in filling major chair vacancies and in identifying new instructors for EngSci core courses. We encourage the Division to consider being involved in the faculty search process within the Core 8 programs so that candidates are made aware of EngSci and how it is positioned and resourced within the Faculty.
	13.	"Launch academic curriculum committees for each of the engineering science majors, in addition to a committee for Years 1 and 2, which make recommendations to Engineering Science Curriculum Committee. Members of these committees could be potential future academic leaders within the Division."	<p>We believe curriculum committees for each major create redundancy and too much overhead. Our current EngSci Curriculum Committee is composed of each of the eight Major Chairs, the Associate Director, Curriculum (who chairs the committee), the Associate Director for Years 1 and 2, the Director, and two-four student representatives. Staff including our academic advisors, our curriculum development officer and our program and student experience officer also sit on the committee as non-voting members.</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> Develop guidance and governance documents on how major chairs should develop and approach curriculum changes within their major.</p>	<p>It is impractical for EngSci to create curriculum committees for each of its eight majors, especially since its Division-level Curriculum Committee includes representation from the majors and, more broadly, from years 1 and 2, and from students and staff.</p> <p>The Division is encouraged to ensure that student representation on its curriculum committee is representative of the student cohort in terms of major and also stage in program (i.e. Y1, Y2, Y3, Y4).</p> <p>See also recommendations 1 and 4 regarding reviewing and updating EngSci's curriculum.</p>

			<b>Long Term:</b> Form a working group on revisions to the Years 1 and 2 curriculum committee. This will not be a permanent committee but will be established periodically as needed to refresh the curriculum.	
	14.	“Review and clarify the governance, committee structures and processes within the division and the majors.”	<b>Short Term:</b> This process is already underway and should be completed by Sept 2025. The Associate Director, Curriculum has been working with the Leadership Team on clarifying and formalizing the governance of EngSci. To date, a document formalizing the EngSci Curriculum Committee (EngSci CC) has been developed and a document formalizing the major chairs is under development.	The Faculty encourages EngSci in its efforts to review and clarify its governance, including the EngSci Curriculum Committee.
	15.	“Include students in governance processes at the highest possible levels, e.g., curriculum committees for major options, to ensure the student voice is valued.	Students are currently included in the EngSci Curriculum Committee, which is the first committee that any curriculum changes will be brought forth to. Currently 2-4 students sit on the committee, rather than a student from each major. Four reasons for this are: (1) the committee is already large so including more students would make meetings and decisions more difficult to achieve; (2) the students on the committee are tasked with liaising with the student representatives from each major; (3) the Major Chair, the Years 3 and 4 Academic Advisor, and the Curriculum and Research Officer meet with students once per term grouped by Major where students can bring curriculum matters forward; (4) student leadership meet biannually with the Director to voice any concerns about their experiences in the program.	The Faculty’s Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, a standing committee of Council, includes representation from undergraduate students. Student appointments to this (and all) Faculty Council committee are made by the Engineering Society and often includes those in Engineering Science. Likewise, there is undergraduate student representation on other standing committees that focus on academic appeals, EDI, teaching methods and resources, admissions, assessments, and scholarships and awards. Undergraduate students are also represented on FASE Council.
	16.	“Establish an Industry and Alumni Advisory Committee for Engineering Science.	<b>Short Term:</b> Develop terms of reference for board, identify and invite members to join External Advisory Board.	The Faculty encourages the Division to consult with other departments and institutes regarding best practices on their External Advisory Boards.

			<b>Medium Term:</b> Board will meet semi-annually to advise the Division on curriculum, industry engagement and advancement opportunities.	
The reviewers recommended developing mechanisms to grow a stronger sense of community around the EngSci program, and exploring approaches that could permit faculty, including members in relevant FAS units, to affiliate with the program more formally.	17.	“Develop mechanisms to grow a broader sense of community around the program. For example, the Division might consider allowing faculty members to affiliate with Engineering Science as 0%/courtesy appointments, to help facilitate community. An approach like this should be extended to faculty members in Physics and Math. Additionally, deeper community and communication would assist with providing instructors knowledge about the connections across the entire Engineering Science curriculum.”	<p><b>Short Term:</b> Workshops with faculty to increase knowledge of our curriculum and learning objectives/academic goals. Faculty will be invited to an annual Divisional Meeting to be updated on the state of EngSci.</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> Create a mechanism for faculty to receive non-budgetary cross-appointments to recognize their commitment to EngSci and their work within the Division. Creating opportunities for faculty to engage with the Division through meetings and cross-appointments will also help the Division identify candidates for future leadership roles, which can be challenging due to the limited number of faculty within the Division.</p>	<p>The Faculty supports the Division’s plans to engage with faculty through meetings and cross-appointments, particularly with regard to succession planning.</p> <p>The Dean’s Office can investigate mechanisms for creating non-budgetary cross-appointments that recognize faculty engagement with the Division.</p>
The reviewers urged EngSci to continue and strengthen efforts related to Equity Diversity and Inclusion, including exploring ways to increase the diversity of teaching staff contributing to program delivery; monitoring the experience of students from equity-deserving groups; and continuing efforts to encourage and ensure an inclusive environment and culture across the unit.	18.	“Ensure greater diversity in staff lecturing in the program. For example, the student cohort are approximately 40% female, but they see few female lecturing staff in class.”	Understanding how students are represented in faculty and guest speakers who deliver content in our program is already a priority for Engineering Science; however, as EngSci draws its teaching faculty from across FASE and FAS, we have limited direct control over the diversity in teaching assignments. The percentage of female faculty in FASE has been relatively constant over the last decade at 20-22% which makes it challenging to offer a significant number of classes with female lecturers. All units would like to have diverse faculty in first year courses and there are simply not enough available. Against this backdrop, in the 2024-25 Academic year, students in the Foundation Years were taught by approximately 30 lecturers, of which 10 identify as female. More specifically, in the 2F semester in recent years, 4 out of 6 courses	<p>EngSci is to be applauded for its efforts to promote greater diversity in teaching staff who lecture in the program, particularly their idea to market teaching opportunities in EngSci to female faculty.</p> <p>The Division is encouraged to proactively work with the Core 8 programs during their faculty searches increase the diversity of the teaching staff and their engagement with EngSci.</p>

			<p>are taught by female faculty members. Female students have provided positive feedback to the Division on representation in second year courses.</p> <p><b>Short Term:</b> In ESC301, a mandatory third-year Seminar course for all students, which features guest speakers invited from each of the eight Majors, a new survey instrument is being implemented this academic year (April 2025) to understand how students from each Major are represented in guest speakers.</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> We plan to market teaching opportunities in EngSci to female faculty particularly those who have joined recently and may be less familiar with EngSci. In addition, should we go forward with plans for a Year 1 seminar course (see item 9 above), we will use this forum to ensure good diversity across many dimensions including gender, race and ethnicity.</p>	
	19.	<p>“The Division should consider monitoring the performance of students from a range of equity groups e.g., first-generation college students.”</p>	<p><b>Short Term:</b> Investigate opportunities to use newly available UofT Student Equity Census data to monitor pathways and success of students through the program. A current project is underway to collect data on EngSci student success in PEY-Coop. Based on this data collection exercise, we will expand to collect data on other aspects of student experience.</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> A larger-scale initiative proposes to leverage existing demographic and academic success data available through diverse channels at the university to create individual de-identified student “profiles” which capture both academic factors (e.g., grades, participation in summer research or</p>	<p>EngSci will leverage existing demographic and academic success data within the university to better understand trends in individual pathways through its program. It will also investigate ways to leverage UofT Student Equity Census data, and data collected through the PEY Co-op Program, to monitor the performance of students across equity groups. This is also part of the Faculty’s broader initiatives around student progress and supports</p>

			internships, etc.) as well as extra-curricular factors (participation in clubs and teams, arts or community involvement, etc.) along with demographic factors to understand trends in individual pathways through our program. Creating anonymized ‘profiles’ for students with similar outcomes may help to illuminate gaps in supports available to students from equity-seeking groups, or common barriers to full participation in our program.	
	20.	“Continue the efforts being made by the division to ensure that the culture in the division is an inclusive environment.”	<p><b>Short/Medium Term:</b> EngSci continues to run an EDI Working Group, in which the majority of the faculty and staff in the Division are engaged. Current initiatives from within this group include the aforementioned larger-scale demographic data initiative, as well as drafting a public statement on inclusive behaviour within community spaces to signal our commitment to creating a culture of belonging in our program. We are also actively seeking stronger ties to the EngSci Club, a discipline-based student club, to ensure that we can address issues of inclusivity within the student body as they arise.</p> <p>EngSci faculty and staff recently participated (July 2024) in a Responding to Disclosures training session offered by UofT’s Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Centre. This was a positive learning opportunity for faculty and staff. Based on this experience, we will continue to encourage and facilitate faculty and staff participation in EDI training and open discussion of issues. We will also maintain our focus on diverse community representation in student-facing communications, such as profiling on our</p>	<p>The Faculty is committed to fostering an environment in which each member of our community can excel, contribute and benefit from different perspectives. Attracting students, staff, and faculty from a wide range of backgrounds, we leverage all forms of diversity to promote inclusivity and create opportunities to experience working collaboratively across cultures.</p> <p>Committees, groups and offices at the Faculty level that promote EDI include the Inclusivity, Diversity &amp; Equity Advisory Committee (a standing committee of Council); the Black Inclusion Steering Committee; the Eagles Longhouse Indigenous Initiatives Steering Committee, the Engineering Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Group; and the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Professionalism.</p>

			communication channels a diverse group of students who have participated in summer research opportunities.	
The reviewers broadly recommended that the Division of Engineering Science engage in a strategic planning process and develop an academic plan that unites the 'Core-8' Engineering programs and partners from across FASE to ensure a common understanding of the mission of and vision for the EngSci program. In considering potential future directions for the unit, they echoed faculty and staff assertions that EngSci should maintain its status as an extra-departmental unit; they also urged unit and Faculty leadership to engage in strategic assessment and planning related to the structure of the Engineering Science majors.	21.	"Develop an academic strategic plan for the Eng Sci division that brings together the CORE-8 and Institutional partners across FASE to ensure a common understanding and vision for the program."	<p><b>Short Term:</b> Consultations with other FASE Chairs and Directors are underway. We are discussing their current level of engagement with EngSci and opportunities for future engagement.</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> Based on consultations with Chairs and Directors and our External Advisory Board (see item 15 above) coupled with the current FASE Academic Planning exercise that is underway, we will develop an academic strategic plan to guide EngSci over the next 5 years.</p>	It is expected that the Faculty's next academic plan will be completed in 2024-2025. The Division is encouraged to consult with our Vice-Dean, Strategy as they embark on academic strategic planning.
	22.	"Plan an ongoing internal communications process to allow a wide community of staff to engage regularly with the division's strategy and operations."	<p><b>Short Term/complete:</b> Create an MS Team "EngSci Instructor Hub" for all faculty and staff involved in the program (launched summer 2024); post timely info, best practices, program updates, etc. in the hub (ongoing); in late summer host annual "academic year kickoff" event open to all instructors (launched Aug 2024); host/facilitate focused discussions once per semester on topics of interest to instructors (launched fall 2024 with workshop on cross-course integration in foundation years); provide all new instructors with "onboarding" document to introduce them to our unique program (launched summer 2024); build community through periodic social events for instructors (launched Dec 2024).</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> Create an annually updated EngSci Instructor Handbook (draft almost final); implement a detailed communication plan through the hub (draft in progress); host biennial seminar for new U of T Engineering</p>	The Division is encouraged to look at the Core 8 programs to see how to best manage and optimize the impact of international communications efforts.

			<p>faculty members to explain our program and create interest in being an instructor in it; facilitate training sessions for EngSci instructors on topics like responding to disclosures of sexual violence.</p> <p><b>Long Term:</b> Leverage community building and communications to create a succession plan for leadership including identifying new Major Chairs and new Associate Directors.</p>	
	23.	<p>“Should Engineering Science be converted into a department? In our assessment, no. This conclusion is shared by the faculty members and staff. Engineering Science provides a special role of uniting the Faculty around high quality students and innovations in curriculum. Moreover, departments and institutes are incentivized to participate in teaching Engineering Science courses via the activity-based budget model.”</p>	<p>No action needed. We will continue to operate under our current EDU:B designation.</p>	<p>We support the recommendation of both the external reviewers and EngSci that it should not be converted into a department. It does have a unique model; however, that model does need some refinement to reflect current trends and opportunities.</p>
	24.	<p>“Consider setting criteria when an Engineering Science Major may be considered for [transition] to a CORE-8 program (example: Biomedical Engineering). This could include when the breath/depth of foundation material may not be [reasonably] possible to achieve given the learning outcome of the other majors.”</p>	<p>Related to item 20 above.</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> Establishing a shared vision for EngSci among other FASE departments and institutes will help establish criteria for when to transition a Major into a Core 8 program or when to morph a major into a FASE minor.</p> <p><b>Long Term:</b> Determine the long-term viability of the Biomedical Systems Engineering Major when juxtaposed against the theoretical core BME undergraduate program that is being considered. Work with ECE to determine if maintaining EngSci ECE is an appropriate use of resources alongside Core 8 ECE. Distinctive offerings for EngSci students are a hallmark of our program.</p>	<p>EngSci’s majors are intended to be flexible offerings that respond to accelerated, discipline-specific learning and evolve to keep pace with emerging technologies and engineering research areas.</p> <p>With input from other academic units in FASE, the Division will establish criteria for when to transition a major into a Core 8 program, or when to transition a major into a FASE minor.</p>
	25.	<p>“Try to ensure each of the FASE departments and academic units have a major within Engineering Science.”</p>	<p>It is not necessarily the goal of EngSci to have a major for each FASE department.</p>	<p>EngSci is exploring ways in which other FASE units can participate in existing majors</p>

			<p><b>Medium Term:</b> Identify additional ways for FASE departments to get involved in existing majors including updating course offerings. For example, courses across the Faculty in Machine Learning have grown, and expertise beyond ECE and MIE should be brought into the Machine Intelligence (MI) Major. A curriculum review of the MI Major is underway with recommendations expected in the next 2 months. These recommendations will be acted upon in the next 12 months based on current governance cycles. Our next major to be reviewed is Energy Systems; we want to ensure that broad efforts around Energy and Sustainability across FASE are being captured in the curriculum and learning objectives of the Major.</p> <p>Finally, a proposal for a new major in Transportation Systems Engineering is under development. Led by the Department of Civil and Mineral Engineering (CivMin); this will boost the involvement of CivMin in EngSci which dwindled when the Infrastructure Major was closed.</p> <p><b>Long Term:</b> Establish a shared vision for EngSci among FASE departments. See item 20.</p>	<p>through course offerings. The Division also develops new majors in collaboration with other departments, such as the proposed Transportation Systems Engineering major (with CivMin), which is targeted for a September 2026 launch.</p> <p>The Division is encouraged to work closely and proactively with the Cross-Disciplinary Programs office as there are parallels and complementarities that could be leveraged especially with respect to EngSci majors that do not necessarily fit within a single department. Ensuring that all departments in FASE are engaged in Engineering Science initiatives will be key. It would be useful for EngSci to develop a curricular map / infographic that illustrates how each department contributes to the different majors and also to the foundation year programs.</p>
The reviewers recommended conducting a review of job profiles and workload for Engineering Science administrative staff, to ensure that the unit and its staff are appropriately resourced and supported.	26.	“Conduct a review of the job profiles and workload expectations for Engineering Science staff members. This could potentially include increasing the size of the staff teams or reducing the scope of current overall duties for the team.”	<p><b>Short Term:</b> Review job descriptions for all EngSci staff with FASE HR. The goals are to streamline work processes, ensure job descriptions are up-to-date and reflective of staff’s current responsibilities and duties, and continue to provide relevant skills training and professional development activities to staff members.</p>	The Faculty’s Chief Administrative Officer and its Human Resources Office are available to provide advice and guidance with staffing requirements and job descriptions. EngSci is encouraged to work with the CAO and Human Resources to ensure they maintain the proper staffing levels and fully utilize



			<p><b>Medium Term:</b> Re-align job responsibilities to ensure efficient use of resources and identify needs to grow our staff such as in upper-year advising. Ensure that we are properly leveraging shared services through the Dean's office and from the University's central services to maximize the efficiency of the EngSci team.</p>	Dean's Office shared services to maximize efficiencies within the Faculty.
Other recommendations:	27.	"The Engineering Science Research Opportunities Program is outstanding. Consider increasing the relative funds provided to students accepted to an international experience."	<p>We recognize that the level of funding for international placements has not kept up with the rising costs of travel and living expenses.</p> <p><b>Short Term:</b> We are increasing the level of funding from \$3500 to \$4500 this year.</p> <p><b>Long Term:</b> We are working to seek external funding support for ESROP Global. We now work with Mitacs for an additional \$4000 per placement for eligible countries. We are working with Advancement for more sustainable long-term funding for ESROP Global, targeting 50 placements per year.</p>	<p>The Faculty has broadly been focused on bring in support for international experiences and this will hopefully increase engagement of our students in these programs.</p> <p>EngSci is encouraged to continue to work with the Faculty's Office of Engineering Advancement regarding sustainable long-term funding for students accepted to an international experience. The Division is also encouraged to work with MITACS to develop a focused MOU that describes a multi-year commitment of funding for Globalink Research Awards, both in-bound and out-bound.</p>
	28.	"Explicitly encourage and facilitate student mobility through international exchange programs."	<p>Student mobility during the academic year remains a challenge. As our curriculum and majors do not map well to traditional engineering departments and curriculum, it can be difficult for students to find appropriate course substitutions when going abroad. A term abroad can often mean a student must extend their time to degree.</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> Identify key academic partner institutions that offer course pathways sufficient for exchange. We will message and market these opportunities to students.</p>	The Faculty has appointed a Decanal Advisor on Innovations in Undergraduate Education. A key element of their portfolio is working with international partners to develop focused offerings that address curricular challenges across all of FASE's offerings.

	29.	“Consider increasing opportunities for upper year Engineering Science Students to connect with potential 4th year thesis supervisors.”	<p>We continue to enhance our process for encouraging, soliciting, and promoting thesis research opportunities from teaching and research stream professors throughout the University of Toronto.</p> <p><b>Short Term:</b> Calls for research opportunities are published strategically throughout the year, and their publication aligns with key points in the student's thesis project search. Faculty course coordinators will be available year-round to support students in their search.</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> While existing videos guide students on engaging potential supervisors, we aim to create a broader asynchronous resource that outlines how to start early and provides a typical timeline for securing supervision. As noted in item 11 above, we will be doing outreach to new FASE faculty to share EngSci opportunities with them. This will include making them aware of EngSci thesis opportunities and the process for getting involved.</p>	EngSci is enhancing its processes regarding research opportunities. This includes encouraging, soliciting, and promoting thesis research opportunities from teaching and research stream professors; making faculty course coordinators available to students year-round; and creating a broad asynchronous resource that outlines how to start early and provides a typical timeline for securing supervision. EngSci will also share EngSci opportunities with new FASE faculty and make them aware of thesis opportunities.
	30.	“Increase rotation in who is assigned to teach engineering science courses; however, this needs to be balanced with some risk if the rotation is too rapid.”	<p><b>Short Term:</b> On-going discussions with departments who staff our courses to identify opportunities for new instructors to teach for EngSci. Work with Joint Area Committees that oversee Inter-Divisional Teaching to ensure teaching needs and rotation are being properly considered.</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> Identify courses that could benefit from a rotation of instructors to avoid having instructors stay long-term in a single course.</p>	EngSci is taking steps to increase rotation in teaching assignments, from both within and outside of the Faculty. The Faculty recognizes the benefit in rotating teaching assignments and opportunities across all programs and departments.

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

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*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

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The reviewers praised Engineering Science (EngSci) as a flagship undergraduate program at the Faculty, and one of the most distinguished engineering programs both nationally and internationally. The program's reputation attracts exceptional students from Canada and beyond; its tight-knit community of students often pursue leadership and co-curricular activities; and the Engineering Science Research Opportunities Program is noted as exceptional. FASE community members and leadership speak very highly of the program and unit, and the Faculty's departments and institutes are incentivized to participate in delivering EngSci courses via the activity-based budget model. Finally, EngSci's connections to various FASE units as well as the FAS Department of Physics are highlighted as a considerable program strength; and faculty and students praise the contributions of unit staff as outstanding.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: addressing student workload and increasing program flexibility, particularly in the first and second years; and strengthening supports for student wellness; reviewing and clarifying governance and committee structures and processes within the unit and the majors, and considering further defining the roles of the option/major chairs; exploring approaches to encouraging greater student involvement in the unit's governance processes; continuing and strengthening efforts related to Equity Diversity and Inclusion; developing mechanisms to grow a stronger sense of community around the EngSci program, and exploring approaches that could permit faculty to more formally affiliate with the program; engaging in a strategic planning process and develop an academic plan that unites the 'Core-8' Engineering programs and partners from across FASE to ensure a common understanding of the mission and vision for the EngSci program; and conducting a review of job profiles and workload for Engineering Science administrative staff.

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

### 5 Monitoring and Date of Next Review

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Chairs and directors are required to submit a written update on progress made toward the goals in their implementation plans to the Dean each year. The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs on the status of the implementation plans midway between the 2023-2024 review and the year of the next site visit.

The next review will be commissioned in 2026-2027 with a visit to be scheduled for 2027-2028.

## **6 Distribution**

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On July 15<sup>th</sup> 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 Applied Science and Engineering, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to division leadership.

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

## 1 Review Summary

<b>Program(s) Reviewed:</b>	Graduate Diploma in Health Research (GDipHR) Medical Science: MSc, PhD • <i>Fields:</i> Bioethics; Biomedical Science; Clinical Science; Health Professions Education; Population Health/Health Sciences; Radiation Oncology
<b>Unit Reviewed:</b>	Institute of Medical Science (IMS)
<b>Commissioning Officer:</b>	Dean, Temerty Faculty of Medicine
<b>Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Tara Beattie, Vice Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Calgary</li> <li>• Dr. Anne-Marie Lauzon, Professor, Dept. of Medicine, McGill University</li> <li>• Dr. Rosalind (Roz) Segal, Dean for Graduate Education, Harvard Medical School</li> </ul>
<b>Date of Review Visit:</b>	April 11-12, 2024
<b>Review Report Received by VPAP:</b>	October 17, 2024
<b>Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:</b>	March 17, 2025
<b>Date Reported to AP&amp;P:</b>	April 10, 2025

## Previous UTQAP Review

Date: October 15, 2018

### Summary of Findings and Recommendations

#### Significant Program Strengths

- High energy and intellect among graduate students
- Impressive MHSc curriculum design and clearly articulated program objectives; program is receptive to student feedback and expectations
- Very promising new professional development initiatives could serve as a model for other programs
- Overall, the reviewers were extremely complimentary of all programs and of IMS, indicating they are deserving of their top international ranking.

#### Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Address faculty and staff resources and space available to support the MHSc in Translational Research program, given its growth
- Improve programs' curricula, including differentiating the objectives for the MSc and PhD programs
- Refresh core courses
- Increase access to statistical data analysis courses
- Use curriculum mapping to help clarify program outcomes and support PhD enrolment in the context of the changing landscape of doctoral studies
- Enhance the student learning experience through providing adequate professional development opportunities and a range of support services
- Engage all stakeholders in a renewal of the strategic plan, including a review of decision-making and committee structures
- Consider forming research streams
- Improve communications among all stakeholders

## Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

### Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Confirmation/agreement Letter; terms of reference; self-study report; faculty CVs; course descriptions; schedule; 2018-19 UTQAP review documents (reviewers' report and Director's and Dean's responses), FAR-IP and Interim Report; Dean's Report 2023; Temerty Faculty of Medicine's Strategic Plan (2018-23); University of Toronto Towards 2030; University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process.

## Consultation Process

### Temerty Faculty of Medicine

1. Vice Dean, Research & Health Science Education
2. Vice Dean, Clinical & Faculty Affairs and Associate Vice Provost, Relations with Health Care Institutions
3. Director, Clinical Research & Translation
4. Cognate Department Chairs: Radiation Oncology, Medicine, Physiology, Molecular Genetics, Paediatrics, Laboratory Medicine & Pathobiology, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Psychiatry, Anesthesiology & Pain Medicine, Pharmacology & Toxicology

### Institute of Medical Science

5. Director
6. Executive Committee (including Associate Director, Graduate Coordinators, Curriculum Director)
7. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee (including faculty, staff, students)
8. Faculty – Research
9. Faculty – Curriculum Committee
10. Admissions Committee
11. Graduate Professional Development Members
12. Student, Staff, Alumni & Faculty Engagement Committee
13. Summer Undergraduate Research Program & Recruitment Committee
14. Supervisors, Graduate Diploma in Health Research
15. Students – MSc, PhD, MD-PhD, Graduate Diploma in Health Research, IMS Student Association Co-Presidents
16. Administrative Staff

## Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

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### 1. Undergraduate Program(s) N/A

### 2. Graduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - IMS is distinctive among the many Masters and PhD programs at U of T for its inclusion of basic, translational and clinical faculty from the University and across affiliated hospitals
- Objectives
  - Programs are globally recognized for their high-quality training in clinical and translational research, offering an impressive diversity of research topics

- ▶ GDipHR is distinctive in its mission to introduce medical students to research; the program provides students a framework for learning research ethics, experimental design, and statistical analysis, while allowing them to conduct their own summer research projects and earn a Diploma degree
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Continuity between programs favors student retention, with pathways that attract both local and out of province students to the master's degree, encourage transfers from the master's to the PhD, and provide early research exposure through GDipHR
  - ▶ Presenting the IMS program to U of T undergraduate classes has been identified as an effective recruitment strategy and helps address challenge of recruitment being tied to students' familiarity with faculty
  - ▶ Admissions committee is experienced, diverse, and efficiently evaluates applications on a rolling basis
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Summer research program serves as an effective pipeline for well-trained students to enter IMS by attracting students from across the country, providing early research experience, and fostering connections to overcome recruitment challenges related to supervisor familiarity
- Quality indicators – graduate students
  - ▶ Professional development program has increased the number of master's students transferring to the PhD program by facilitating industry and biotech connections for experiential learning opportunities; commendable program provides students with a strong alternative career path outside academia while supporting research

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

- Overall quality
  - ▶ Early GDipHR students lacked in-person laboratory experience due to COVID, and low student participation in the review meeting made it difficult for reviewers to assess the program's effectiveness
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Student recruitment for MSc/PhD programs has remained stable despite efforts to increase it, leaving faculty needs unmet
  - ▶ Reviewers note that 20-30% of accepted MSc students struggle to find a supervisor
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Emphasis on research over coursework in MSc/PhD program has resulted in very few core courses within the program
  - ▶ IMS is not able to offer all necessary courses due to its broad and interdisciplinary nature, limiting students' access to relevant coursework
  - ▶ Lack of clear communication about available courses and their scheduling makes it difficult for students to take advantage of offerings from other programs
  - ▶ Students face challenges when cross-registering for courses in other programs, limiting access to a broader range of coursework
  - ▶ Difficulty finding faculty willing and able to teach MSc/PhD courses limits course availability for students



- ▶ MSc/PhD students find course planning difficult as some courses listed in IMS calendar and course catalog are reportedly no longer offered
- ▶ Goal of keeping GDipHR to a relatively condensed offering format limits the time students have available for course work and research
- ▶ Students early in their medical training may be overwhelmed by additional workload from the GDipHR program
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Rules and expectations for MSc/PhD students, such as qualifying exam requirements, PAC meeting frequency, and committee composition, are unclear to both students and faculty
- Student funding
  - ▶ Reviewers note a major concern that students in the Summer Undergraduate Research Program cannot support themselves in Toronto on the current stipend, making financial sustainability a challenge

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Objectives
  - ▶ Dedicated review of GDipHR recommended, to evaluate its impact on medical students and determine whether it is meeting its goals
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Prioritize recruiting undergraduate students into the MSc, to strengthen PhD student enrolment pipeline
  - ▶ Broaden outreach efforts by targeting recruitment at conferences, such as Canadian Neuroscience Meeting and Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minoritized Scientists (ABRCMS); such efforts may also help enhance the diversity of the student body
  - ▶ Implement clear support mechanisms to help MSc/PhD students find supervisors, including additional guidance for MSc applicants
  - ▶ Provide potential supervisors with access to student application files to facilitate recruitment and matching
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Expand MSc/PhD course offerings based on curriculum survey results, ensuring that the “Good Study Design” course remains available while adding new courses in topics such as Bioinformatics, Biostatistics, AI, and Language Processing
  - ▶ Address faculty shortages through joint course offerings with other programs; courses could cover subjects with broad application for many graduate programs
  - ▶ Remove MSc/PhD courses from IMS catalog that are no longer offered to increase transparency and make course planning easier for applicants and students
  - ▶ Facilitate student access to courses in other programs to improve training; doing so may require hiring additional TAs or financial support from IMS
  - ▶ Clear communication about available courses and scheduling will enable students to utilize broader university offerings; course cross-listing could increase the departmental course offerings

- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Clearly define and communicate rules and expectations (e.g., qualifying exams requirements, PAC meeting frequencies, committee composition) for MSc/PhD students and faculty by creating an online student handbook; ensure that students, supervisors, and committee members are provided with this information
  - ▶ Provide additional opportunities for faculty to interact with undergraduates at other Canadian institutions, which could help with recruitment and program awareness
  - ▶ Consider facilitation of course evaluations
- Student funding
  - ▶ Explore ways to provide additional supports for students in the summer research program, including stipend increases or allowing part-time research work as an additional income source; additional support may enhance access and enable a more diverse range of students to participate

### 3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
- IMS excels at recruiting faculty from affiliated preclinical, clinical, and hospital-based research settings across U of T, including SickKids and Princess Margaret Hospital

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

- Faculty
  - ▶ Many of faculty members lack training in student supervision, which can lead to challenges for both faculty and students
  - ▶ IMS does not currently have a system to for evaluating the quality of student supervision; concerns about anonymity of evaluations prevent data from being accessible to administration and faculty

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
  - ▶ Require training for junior faculty members in student supervision, along with mentorship oversight in their early years, to support supervision quality and prevent future conflicts
  - ▶ Expedite development of strategies to evaluate faculty supervision, ensuring data is accessible while maintaining anonymity

## 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
  - ▶ IMS serves as the home for clinician scientists and of translational research at U of T, fostering great interactions among faculty and students across multiple hospital affiliates
  - ▶ High appreciation expressed by unit stakeholders for the current IMS Director
  - ▶ “Empowerment” is a defining characteristic of current leadership, as recognized by students, administrators, and faculty
  - ▶ Recognition of contributions is highly valued, and changes have improved course offerings and strengthened sense of community
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Addition of program coordinators working alongside administrators has been indispensable in providing effective support for students
  - ▶ “Extremely strong” IMS administrative team is knowledgeable, efficient, proactive, and highly motivated
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Many recommendations from previous review have been implemented; IMS is currently functioning effectively
  - ▶ Strategic planning recommended in previous review, which involved major changes described by the Director as “disruptive innovation,” has been successfully implemented; both students and faculty are pleased with the new approaches
  - ▶ IMS has implemented key changes from previous review recommendations, including a strategic retreat, enhanced Executive Committee input, increased transparency in processes, and curriculum, all of which have been well received by the community and enhanced student experience and training
  - ▶ IMS is the largest translational program of its kind in Canada and a recognized international leader in graduate education, with a diverse range of degrees that support recruitment and retention

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

- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Issues from previous review that remain a concern include student challenges enrolling in courses from other programs, difficulties increasing recruitment and diversity, and insufficient communication of degree rules and expectations
  - ▶ EDI committee lacks access to race and ethnicity data, as the University does not easily allow for its collection and sharing

- ▶ EDI committee reports that implicit bias, and the exclusion of diverse backgrounds and perspectives in recruitment and admissions processes, present significant challenges
- ▶ Reviewers note that efforts to recruit or support Indigenous students and address issues pertaining to the Indigenous community were not addressed

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Next IMS Director will need to be able to unite the community, empower both students and faculty, and navigate the complex University structure
  - ▶ Consider additional support for hybrid working arrangements
  - ▶ Update job descriptions to recognize the major contributions of the administrative team
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Consider strategies for attracting scientists from other disciplines, such as engineering, to foster interdisciplinary collaborations
  - ▶ Expand partnerships with other faculties to enhance research opportunities, program growth, and new program development
  - ▶ Create associate memberships for faculty from other disciplines to strengthen cross-campus research interactions
  - ▶ Explore ways to support data collection efforts to strategically enhance diversity among students and faculty and improve access to training opportunities for Indigenous people
  - ▶ Leverage existing full-time and part-time summer research internships as a strategy to enhance future diversity of the student body
  - ▶ Use recruitment through the summer research program, including part-time positions, as a strategy to promote EDI
  - ▶ EDI committee would benefit from enhanced support and resources for student outreach, and for efforts to strengthen recruitment and admissions processes to ensure that they “value the differences and the positive aspects that diversity brings to the university”
  - ▶ Develop and report on efforts to recruit and support Indigenous students
  - ▶ Develop strategies for addressing issues pertaining to the Indigenous community, ensuring that EDI and Indigenous initiatives are treated as distinct efforts
  - ▶ Expand existing course offerings, strengthen EDI initiatives, and enhance pilot programs for recruiting clinical scientists to maintain IMS’s position as a leading clinical and translational graduate program worldwide

## 2 Administrative Response & Implementation Plan

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TEMERTY FACULTY OF MEDICINE  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Temerty  
Medicine

Office of the Dean

March 17, 2025

Professor Nicholas Rule  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
Division of the Vice-President & Provost  
University of Toronto

Dear Professor Rule,

### UTQAP Review of the Institute of Medical Science | Dean's Cover Letter

On behalf of the Temerty Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto, we would first like to thank the external reviewers—Dr. Tara Beattie, Dr. Anne-Marie Lauzon, Dr. Rosalind Segal—for their comprehensive review of the Institute of Medical Science (IMS) last spring (April 11-12, 2024). We would also like to thank Dr. Mingyao Liu, IMS Director, the administrative staff and all those who contributed to the preparation of the outstanding self-study report. We also wish to thank the many staff, students and faculty who met with the external reviewers and provided thoughtful feedback. The reviewers noted that *“nationally, IMS is the largest translational program of its kind and is certainly an international leader in graduate education...at the top of the clinical and translational graduate programs worldwide.”*

The thorough report of the reviewers serves as a fruitful guide for program enrichments and future strategic directions at IMS. The reviewers identified areas for enhancement, including course offerings and evaluations, communications, interdisciplinary collaboration, inclusive recruitment and pairing of students with supervisors; and they recommended a distinct focussed review of the Graduate Diploma in Health Research. Priorities identified by your office have been addressed in the accompanying table's Unit Response column and in the Director's Cover Letter. We are in full agreement with Prof. Liu's response, on behalf of IMS, and offer additional comments in the Deans' Response column of the table.

We are proud of the calibre and scope of IMS's medical research and its exemplary position in Canada for bringing students into clinical settings. We congratulate Prof. Liu and his leadership team for building upon IMS's successes during his term as Director: *“world renowned”* training and the *“impressive diversity of research topics”* it offers. We look forward to working with the next Director and members of IMS in support of its continued growth and attainment of strategic and operational aspirations.

The next UTQAP review of IMS is planned for 2028-29. In 2026-27 we will follow up with the Director on the implementation of the external reviewers' recommendations and, upon request, provide you with an interim monitoring report.

Sincerely,

Lisa A. Robinson, MD, FRCPC, FASN, FCAHS  
Dean, Temerty Faculty of Medicine  
Vice Provost, Relations with Health Care Institutions

cc: Justin Nodwell – Vice Dean, Research & Health Science Education  
Anastasia Meletopoulos – Academic Affairs Manager, Office of the Dean  
Lachmi Singh – Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice Provost, Academic Programs  
Mingyao Liu – Director, Institute of Medical Science  
Lucy Osborne – Associate Director, Institute of Medical Science

## 2023-24 UTQAP Review of MED Institute of Medical Science - 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
<b>The reviewers raised a number of concerns regarding IMS course offerings and student course enrolment. They noted challenges finding appropriate faculty to teach IMS courses and highlighted the limited range of courses available to students due to the small number of IMS core course offerings and difficulty registering in courses offered by other units. They recommended improving communication regarding the Institute's course inventory and timing of course offerings and working with other units to facilitate enrolment in non-IMS courses.</b>	1.	<i>"Because the IMS is purposefully a broad and interdisciplinary program, it is impossible for IMS to offer all the courses that would benefit the students. Therefore, facilitating access to courses that have been developed by other programs is needed to improve the training; this may require hiring additional TAs or other financial commitment by IMS. Clear communication about available courses, and when they are offered will enable students to make use of the broader university community. Course cross-listing could increase the departmental offerings."</i>	We continue to strive to build additional content for our students through new courses inside of IMS and collaborations with other departments. We have ongoing negotiations with the Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy to build capacity for training in qualitative research (6-12 months) and are exploring strategies to augment the integration of artificial intelligence and data-driven approaches in medicine into IMS programming (e.g., with a new Collaborative Specialization (1-2 years). We are committed to expanding curricular opportunities for our students and are happy to provide TA support or other financial commitment where needed to allow access to course hosted by other graduate units.	IMS has been proactive about sharing courses they have created with other academic units. For example, they implemented a novel approach whereby other departments can pay the salary of a 0.5 TA so that their students can take part in their course offerings. This has generated considerable good will and it is anticipated that the collaborations will lead to increased opportunities for learners over the next few years.
	2.	<i>"Finding the appropriate faculty willing and able to teach these courses is a challenge. Potentially these could be offered jointly by IMS and other programs, as these subjects are needed for many graduate programs."</i>	IMS has been leading activities across the Office of the Vice-Dean, Research & Health Science Education to 'share' content amongst the graduate programs under the RHSE umbrella. Our first foray was to open our	There is an ongoing commitment to sharing courses amongst graduate courses across Temerty Medicine and there will be a continued commitment to creative approaches. Continued innovation in this

		<i>Additional efforts for cross-program course work would be likely to benefit IMS and other programs as well.”</i>	‘Learning From Data’ course to students from any of the programs. This was the first initiative of its kind in RHSE and serves as a jumping off point for additional opportunities. We believe this will be a fruitful strategy to increase access to content and reduce administrative burden on departments and students.	area is likely a short term and continuing long-term objective.
	3.	<i>“An administrative issue that makes course planning difficult for students is that some courses have been on the IMS calendar and in the course catalog for several years but are reportedly not offered. If courses have not been offered over a three-year period, perhaps they can be removed from the catalog to increase transparency for applicants and students.”</i>	Due to the specificity of some IMS courses, they are only offered every 2-3 years. While this is the case in a select few cases, IMS notes this suggestion and will work diligently to ensure that student-facing information is accurate and up to date.	This is a common practise across our graduate units. Indeed, many graduate courses do not attract sufficient numbers to be run annually. Having said that, the <a href="#">Office of the Vice Dean, Research &amp; Health Science Education</a> will work with IMS to ensure that their students have sufficient course offerings in their discipline year over year.
<b>The reviewers noted ongoing challenges related to recruiting enough MSc and PhD students to meet the needs of program faculty members; they made several recommendations for broadening outreach efforts to increase the applicant pool and suggested that IMS discuss future strategies related to recruitment and program size.</b>	4.	<i>“One of the issues raised by the previous review is that there are not enough students recruited for the needs of the program faculty. While efforts have been made in that direction, the total number of students has been maintained at a constant level. A discussion of Canada and Toronto’s need for well-trained scientists might provide a goal for future program size.”</i>	After the previous review, IMS created a Recruitment Committee that has made intentional efforts to increase outreach and boost student applicant numbers and geographic spread. Our intake numbers have held steady, in contrast to many other graduate departments, and recent application numbers for January and September 2025 suggest they are now increasing. We are not aware of any faculty in recent years who have expressed interest in taking a student but have not found one.	This is true across the board in the Temerty Faculty of Medicine, in spite of efforts to the contrary. For example, the Office of the Vice Dean, Research & Health Science Education has implemented geo-targeted, age-directed advertisements for programs aimed at attracting students in undergraduate programs at Canadian universities. The net effect, however, has been modest. Furthermore, stagnant grant funding from federal funding agencies limits the number of students programs can take; Temerty Medicine operates on a harmonized stipend agreement that is the highest in Canada. This limits the number of students we can take.
	5.	<i>“As many of the top master’s students transfer to the PhD program, or apply and are admitted after completing the master’s, a focus on recruiting undergraduates to enroll in the master’s program seems like a beneficial strategy.”</i>	Undergraduate recruitment into the doctoral-stream program at the MSc level is our main recruitment strategy.	This is a common approach at Temerty Medicine.



	6.	<i>“Other approaches to broaden the outreach might include targeted recruitment at conferences in areas such as neuroscience (ie Canadian Neuroscience meeting), and at conferences such as ABRCMS. These approaches might also enhance the diversity of the student body.”</i>	We appreciate the suggestions for broadening student diversity. Representation at conferences such as ABRCMS may be very fruitful, although we think this would be appropriate at the RHSE level to showcase all Temerty Medicine graduate programs.	Faculty-wide initiatives aim to address this. Efforts include targeting potential students through Instagram and other online platforms, as well as holding a Faculty-wide Graduate Recruitment Fair every autumn.
<b>The reviewers reported hearing that many students in the Summer Research program struggle to financially support themselves in Toronto on the current program stipend. They recommended exploring options for providing additional support for students and opined that this could potentially enable a more diverse range of students to participate in the program.</b>	7.	<i>“A major concern is that students are not able to support themselves in Toronto on the current stipend. The two potential solutions are to increase the funds per student, or to allow part time summer research work so students could have additional sources of income.”</i>	SURP is an important gateway for prospective graduate students to connect with IMS programs and faculty and affordability has been an ongoing concern for the program’s leadership. This year Temerty Medicine has introduced a <a href="#">minimum summer student stipend</a> equivalent to the the current minimum wage for Ontario and in line with stipends offered by affiliated hospital research institute summer programs.	Temerty Medicine has recently harmonized stipends, based on minimum wage and benefits, for summer undergraduate research programs across departments. This will significantly increase funds for students. Given federal funding, IMS is not able to increase the funds appreciably at this time.
	8.	<i>“Summer research internships, both full and part time, could be used as a vehicle for enhancing the future diversity of the student body.”</i>	This year we have offered part-time summer research opportunities to students who are Indigenous, members of visible minorities or of lower socioeconomic status, in partnership with the Research Application Support Initiative.	Efforts through Temerty Medicine’s <a href="#">Office of Inclusion &amp; Diversity</a> , working in tandem with academic units, address this concern. The School of Graduate Studies demographics dashboard indicates that Temerty Medicine’s student body is diverse, representing all demographics in Ontario. As in many programs, however, students from Black and Indigenous backgrounds remain significantly under-represented. Specific, targeted efforts at Temerty Medicine are striving to redress this. The <a href="#">Office of Access &amp; Outreach</a> and the <a href="#">Office of Indigenous Health</a> have developed new outreach programs in which undergraduate students complete summer research electives with PIs across Temerty Medicine. These programs also include longitudinal programs throughout the school year.
<b>The reviewers observed several concerns related to graduate student supervision, noting that a significant proportion of MSc</b>	9.	<i>“Putting in place clear mechanisms that provide additional help and advice for master’s applicants and students so that they can more easily connect with potential</i>	Student-supervisor matching is a challenge. We have a <a href="#">dedicated web page</a> where we post a regularly updated list of faculty looking for students (with brief project descriptions),	The approach taken by IMS is comparable to other programs that do not have graduate rotation mechanisms. A review of recruitment, application and enrollment is



<p><b>and PhD students experience challenges finding a supervisor and that many faculty members do not receive specific training in supervision. They recommended considering additional supports to help applicants and students connect more easily with potential supervisors, and to help faculty members regarding the expectations and requirements for student supervision.</b></p>		<p><i>supervisors would be very beneficial for the program. Giving faculty members access to student application files could also facilitate the recruitment.”</i></p>	<p>tips and a recorded workshop to help students through the process. We also introduced two new Student Ambassadors who are available to answer questions from applicants as well as current students. We have discussed opening up applicant files to interested faculty; however they would only be able to access these secure files via their UTORid, which most do not use or even know, since they are off-site.</p>	<p>anticipated for 2025-26, again, at the Faculty level.</p>
	10.	<p><i>“The rules and expectations for the students in the various programs are not clear to all the students or all the faculty. These include the requirements for qualifying exam, frequency of PAC meetings, number of members, etc. These issues need to be clearly defined in a student handbook available online and made clear to faculty when they accept a student.”</i></p>	<p>The IMS requirements are provided to students through an <a href="#">orientation session</a>; all the details for successful completion of their academic program are available to both students and faculty through a comprehensive on-line <a href="#">Student Handbook</a>. IMS has also developed a comprehensive <a href="#">International Student Welcome Guide</a> and a New Faculty Welcome Guide that outlines the responsibilities for new IMS members, with a <a href="#">Quick Guide to Supervision</a> also available online.</p>	<p>IMS is well known as a popular destination for talented students in the biomedical field, in large part due to recruitment mechanisms including the Graduate Recruitment Fair organized by the Office of the Vice Dean, Research &amp; Health Science Education.</p>
	11.	<p><i>“Training for junior faculty members should be a requirement along with supervision of these mentors for the first years. This would help prevent disagreements and student challenges that are difficult to deal with after the fact.”</i></p>	<p>IMS has identified a need for mentorship and is currently developing a ‘College of Mentors’ that will allow new members to reach out to a cadre of IMS faculty with graduate supervisory experience for advice. The ‘staged’ membership progression from ‘Associate Member Restricted to PACs’ to ‘Associate Member’ to ‘Full Member’ also provides individual faculty engagement with students with appropriate levels of responsibility and the opportunity to become familiar with IMS requirements.</p>	<p>This is a laudable objective and we recommend implementation over the next 6-12 months.</p>
	12.	<p><i>“Expediting the strategies for evaluation of faculty supervision would also be helpful across the University.”</i></p>	<p>We agree with this and welcome suggestions about such evaluations from the wider University community.</p>	<p>There is an existing mechanism at Temerty Medicine. The <a href="#">Graduate Supervisory Experience Survey</a> has been in place for 5 years. Overall, IMS scores very well and there have been no red flags or issues identified related to faculty supervision.</p>

<p><b>The reviewers recommended that IMS explore strategies to strengthen its connections with a broader range of University divisions so as to foster interdisciplinary collaborations and expand opportunities for future program growth.</b></p>	13.	<p><i>“It would be helpful if the new leadership could develop a new program to attract other types of scientists such as engineers, for example, to favor collaborations. Because there is a critical mass of neuroscientists at IMS, courses, facilities, and collaborations have been developed for imaging, statistical analysis and epidemiological studies oriented towards neuroscience. Collaborations with other faculties, such as engineering, could increase interactions with researchers across campus and thereby greatly enhance opportunities for program growth and/or new program development. These collaborations could be made stronger by creating associate membership for these other professors.”</i></p>	<p>IMS is cognizant of the benefits of attracting faculty from other disciplines into the unit as supervisors and advisory committee members to provide different opportunities for our students. IMS has recently joined two Collaborative Specializations: <a href="#">Neuromodulation</a> (in collaboration with five Engineering departments) and <a href="#">Psychology, Psychiatry and Engineering</a> (in collaboration with four departments in the Faculty of Applied Science &amp; Engineering and the Dept. of Psychology). Although these both include neuroscience content, they encompass many courses and faculty from the hosting Faculty of Applied Science &amp; Engineering. As indicated above, we are also planning another CS that will involve the Dept. of Computer Science.</p>	<p>Interdisciplinary research and training are a priority at Temerty Medicine; the graduate scope of IMS lends itself well to interdisciplinary collaboration.</p>
<p><b>The reviewers highlighted EDI committee concerns regarding perceived bias in admissions processes; they recommended providing additional support for the committee to work with the IMS recruitment and admissions committee to ensure that diverse backgrounds and perspectives are considered. The reviewers further recommended additional support for the EDI committee to enhance student and faculty outreach initiatives.</b></p>	14.	<p><i>“The EDI committee reports that one of their biggest problems is implicit bias, and the exclusion that occurs because faculty do not always value diverse backgrounds and perspectives. Thus, the EDI committee needs more support for their outreach to students and for their work with the recruitment and admissions committee to value the differences and the positive aspects that diversity brings to the university.”</i></p>	<p>We acknowledge that implicit bias remains a challenge and recognize the importance of fostering an institutional culture where diverse backgrounds and perspectives are valued. We are implementing structured student-focused initiatives, including mentorship programs, digital engagement tools and targeted recruitment strategies in collaboration with the Student Recruitment and Admissions committees. EDIIA awareness will be incorporated into the faculty appointment renewal process, providing structured opportunities for engagement.</p>	<p>Medium term (1-2 years). Excellence Through Equity is one of the three pillars in Temerty Medicine’s strategic academic plan. <a href="#">Implicit bias training and other educational resources</a> have been in place at Temerty Medicine for several years. As we head into a new round of strategic planning, we will continue to ensure that efforts to address implicit bias are aligned across departments and programs.</p>
	15.	<p><i>“Building on to the currently existing courses to increase the offering, on the current efforts to further favor EDI, and on the pilot programs to further recruit clinical scientists, will continue to place IMS at the top of the clinical and translational graduate programs worldwide.”</i></p>	<p>We remain committed to strengthening course offerings by embedding EDIIA principles into curriculum development, student engagement and academic programming. Our EDIIA Strategic Plan outlines a phased approach that includes pilot workshops, interdisciplinary collaborations and increased mentorship opportunities for underrepresented students.</p>	<p>Medium term (1-2 years). This is a Faculty-wide objective.</p>

			Additionally, we are implementing internal structural adjustments to facilitate faculty involvement in EDIIA mentorship initiatives, reinforcing their role in fostering an inclusive academic experience	
<b>The reviewers noted that there may be opportunities to enhance efforts related to recruitment and support for Indigenous students, emphasizing the distinction between EDI efforts and supports specific to Indigenous communities.</b>	16.	<i>“The reviewers noticed that there was no report on efforts to include/recruit Indigenous students and/or addressed any issues pertaining to the Indigenous community. The reviewers want to emphasize that EDI and Indigenous community should not be seen as the same.”</i>	Recognizing the distinct needs of Indigenous students and the importance of accessibility, we are undertaking a structural transition from the EDI Committee to the EDIIA Committee. We are establishing Indigenous-focused recruitment strategies, mentorship programs and community engagement initiatives, alongside targeted efforts to remove barriers related to accessibility and disability inclusion.	Medium term (1-3 years). Temerty Medicine’s <a href="#">Office of Indigenous Health</a> is dedicated to recruiting Indigenous students into our various program. While Indigenous representation across clinical medicine and medical science remains low across the country, Temerty Medicine is committed to addressing the gaps through its expanded Office of Indigenous Health, which is distinct from the Office of Inclusion & Diversity.
<b>The reviewers recommended conducting a focused review of the Graduate Diploma in Health Research, to evaluate its impact on students and assess whether it is fulfilling its intended purpose.</b>	17.	<i>“A separate evaluation of the Graduate Diploma is needed to make sure that this program is accomplishing its purpose. Given the issues with COVID and the lack of student participation in this review, we cannot assess the success of this pilot.”</i>	IMS has discussed this with the GDipHR Director; we agree that a separate review of the program should be carried out.	Medium term (1-2 years). The <a href="#">GDipHR</a> , jointly offered between the MD Program and IMS, is an exclusive opportunity for first-year students in the MD Program to participate in the continuum of research through a consecutive 20-month program.
<b>Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response</b>	18.	<i>“Evaluation of courses should also be facilitated.”</i>	IMS currently carries out evaluation of each of our courses on an annual basis, but often only a small number of students provide feedback. We will explore ways of improving student participation in course evaluation.	This is a Faculty-wide challenge.
	19.	<i>“University wide efforts at data collection would enable a more thoughtful approach to enhancing diversity among the students and faculty and enabling greater access to training for Indigenous people. This is likely to require additional administrative support.”</i>	We agree that this is an effort that is best managed at a Faculty or University level.	There is an existing demographics dashboard in the School of Graduate Studies, which meets our current needs.

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

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*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

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The reviewers praised IMS as the largest translational program of its kind in Canada, providing world-renowned training and offering an impressive diversity of research topics. They applauded the Institute's responses to recommendations from the previous UTQAP review, which included curriculum modifications and increased transparency of processes, noting that the changes have been well received by the community and have enhanced the experience and training for students. They commended the Graduate Diploma program's unique mission of equipping medical students with skills in research methods, statistical analysis, and research ethics. The reviewers also highlighted the Institute's strength in its diverse faculty, which includes University preclinical and clinical faculty as well as those based in local research hospitals. Finally, they praised the strong, positive relationships between students, faculty, and staff at IMS, emphasizing the culture of empowerment fostered by the Director and current leadership.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: exploring ways to address challenges finding appropriate faculty to teach IMS courses, improving communication regarding the Institute's course inventory and timing of course offerings, and working with other units to facilitate enrolment in non-IMS courses; broadening outreach efforts to increase the applicant pool and discussing future strategies related to recruitment and program size; exploring options to increase financial support for students in the Summer Undergraduate Research program and enhancing the diversity of participating students; implementing additional supports to help applicants and students connect more easily with potential supervisors and assisting faculty in understanding expectations and requirements for student supervision; exploring strategies to strengthen connections with a broader range of University divisions and units, to foster interdisciplinary collaborations and expand opportunities for future program growth; providing additional support for the EDI committee to enhance student and faculty outreach initiatives; ensuring diverse backgrounds and perspectives are considered in recruitment and admissions processes; enhancing efforts to recruit and provide support for Indigenous students; and conducting a focused assessment of the Graduate Diploma in Health Research to evaluate its impact on students and assessing whether it is fulfilling its intended purpose.

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

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In 2026-27, the Dean will follow up with the Director of the Institute of Medical Science on the implementation of the external reviewers' recommendations and will provide an interim report upon request from Vice-Provost, Academic Programs on the status of the implementation plans. The next UTQAP review of IMS will be commissioned in 2028-29.

## 6 Distribution

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On July 15<sup>th</sup> 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 Temerty Faculty of Medicine, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to unit/program leadership.

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

## 1 Review Summary

<b>Program(s) Reviewed:</b>	Health Studies – Health Policy (HBA): Major, Major Co-op Health Studies – Population Health (HBSc): Major, Major Co-op Health Humanities Minor (Arts) Health Studies Minor (Arts) ( <i>suspended</i> )
<b>Unit Reviewed:</b>	Department of Health and Society
<b>Commissioning Officer:</b>	Vice-Principal Academic and Dean, University of Toronto Scarborough
<b>Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tania Bubela, Professor and Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University</li> <li>• Michelle M. Garrison, Professor, Department of Public Health, Purdue University</li> <li>• Lili Liu, Professor and Dean, Faculty of Health, University of Waterloo</li> </ul>
<b>Date of Review Visit:</b>	March 20-21, 2024
<b>Review Report Received by VPAP:</b>	June 21, 2024
<b>Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:</b>	March 11, 2025
<b>Date Reported to AP&amp;P:</b>	April 10, 2025

## Previous UTQAP Review

**Date:** May 31 - June 1, 2016

### Summary of Findings and Recommendations

#### Significant Program Strengths

- Notable commitment of the faculty, staff, students, and administration to the success of the program and enabling it to realize its full potential
- Program fills a unique and exciting niche in health studies and is at the leading edge in Canada for health humanities
- Immensely popular with students, who appreciate the quality of the educational experience provided by the Health Sciences faculty
- Excellent advising and support staff
- Opportunity to become a leader in training the next generation of workers and scholars in this field

#### Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Creating an appropriate academic home for Health Studies, which would provide a base for content knowledge, research activity, and program delivery
- Reconsidering the programs' curricular pathways to facilitate student learning and highlight the programs' interdisciplinary strengths
- Reviewing the faculty complement size and structure to ensure balance and adequate support for the academic programs
- Better distributing and more appropriately supporting administrative duties

## Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

### Documentation Provided to Reviewers

External Review Material: Terms of reference; Self-study and supporting data and appendices; Review report template; Site visit schedule; Previous review report including the administrative response(s); Access to all course descriptions and syllabi; Access to the curricula vitae of faculty.

Supplemental Material from Site Visit Meetings: Departmental budget/OTO data; Presentation decks from the Department of Health and Society, the UTSC Arts & Science Co-op Office, and the UTSC Office of the Registrar.

### Consultation Process

Decanal group, faculty, students, administrative staff and senior program administrators as well as members of relevant cognate units, including the UTSC Library, the Office of the Registrar, the Arts & Science Co-op Office, and the Office of the Vice-Principal Research & Innovation.



# Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

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## 1. Undergraduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ DHS programs are in high demand, especially Population Health
- Objectives
  - ▶ Students emphasized the strength of DHS educational programming in meeting its objective of foregrounding social determinants of health and health equity across courses
  - ▶ Clear and effective progress towards improving the first-year core course sequence to ensure that students have the opportunity to develop a shared vocabulary together for subsequent coursework; to acquire adequate exposure to different domain areas within health studies to make informed choices about future course selection; and to begin developing the skills to seek, evaluate, and discuss social determinants of health equity locally, nationally, and globally
  - ▶ Wide breadth of knowledge covered in required, selective, and elective courses; students develop a knowledge set to draw on in subsequent depth and/or application focused courses, and to identify areas of interest for further undergraduate or graduate study
  - ▶ Strong opportunities for students to develop depth of knowledge in areas related to health equity and social determinants of health; these areas are well-aligned with faculty expertise, student interests, and workforce needs
  - ▶ Students develop adequate methodological knowledge to consider new information in the context of its methodological origins, and to take this into account in considering the validity and generalizability of conclusions
  - ▶ Students in upper-year courses have multiple engaging ways to apply their knowledge and experience, through both traditionally academic exercises and in the context of experiential learning opportunities
  - ▶ Curriculum structure and the faculty appear to do an excellent job helping students learn to consider the external and internal validity of information
  - ▶ DHS programs help students learn to listen and read critically and with intellectual curiosity; upper-year courses especially provide opportunities for students to develop written and oral skills in communicating for academic audiences
  - ▶ Students “consistently showed themselves to be informed, creative thinkers who had learned to ask brave questions, strategically seek out answers individually and working together, and to already be considering how they will continue this process post-graduation”



- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Unique and highly valuable course offerings approach health from biological science, public health, and medical humanities perspectives, providing graduates with a more holistic view of health and society and a broader lens on future career opportunities
  - ▶ Commendable opportunities for experiential learning include service-based learning, internships, undergraduate research experiences, and co-op programs
  - ▶ Programs and courses appear to use effective and appropriate models of learning delivery, including a mix of lecture, discussion, case-based learning, and experiential service-based learning
  - ▶ Department's decision-making process for revising, merging, or discontinuing courses appears to involve thoughtful deliberation by the curriculum committee
- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▶ Adoption of universal design principles and proactive disability-related accommodations noted as a strength in DHS; adoption of these approaches by the co-op programs noted as "especially impressive given that this is an area that often lags behind classroom-based teaching"
  - ▶ Greater flexibility afforded by smaller class sizes in upper-level courses has enabled adoption of universal design approaches and made implementation of accommodations more seamless and effective
  - ▶ "Black Student Excellence Award" given to three undergraduate students each year who identify as Black; recipients are selected via an application process detailing academic excellence as well as leadership and/or community engagement
  - ▶ DHS offers an annual essay award for students' work in Black Health studies
- Assessment of learning
  - ▶ Assessment of student learning is achieved through appropriate and effective methods, especially in upper-level courses
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Students expressed appreciation for the quality of instruction, the availability and flexibility of most faculty to accommodate student needs, and the creation of safe learning environments in which students bring their diverse lived experience to discussions of complex health and social issues
  - ▶ Students commented that the DHS Health Studies programs are "increasingly preferred by some students as a pathway to the health professions or graduate studies, instead of degree programs that exclusively focus on the biomedical sciences"
  - ▶ Course syllabi, discussions with faculty, and comments by students indicate that faculty care deeply about student learning experience and outcomes
  - ▶ Strong camaraderie among students, particularly within the DHS student organization
  - ▶ Students report that they feel valued by faculty and staff, and safe in integrating their lived experience into classroom learning
  - ▶ Students report a positive learning environment in which genuine intellectual curiosity and intellectual risk-taking is encouraged

- ▶ “Get Finished” initiative, providing funding to students with up to 2.5 credits remaining in their degree, is an innovative benefit for those who may otherwise struggle to complete their program
- ▶ Some students reported enrolling in DHS programs due to the warmth and inclusion they experienced within DHS classes
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - ▶ Steadily increasing annual enrolments in Health Studies over the past 7 years

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

- Objectives
  - ▶ Students and faculty identified subject areas such as epidemiology in which opportunities to develop depth of knowledge could be strengthened
  - ▶ Reviewers note issues including teaching capacity and access to research/experiential learning opportunities that may limit DHS’s ability to promise all students knowledge application opportunities that align with UTSC’s institutional strengths and strategic goals
  - ▶ Developing skills to communicate with non-academic audiences appears to be less intentionally woven across the curriculum and more dependent on individual instructor decisions
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Adding a high school math requirement to address issues with numerical literacy may run counter to other UTSC priorities, such as equitable access to post-secondary education for students from the area
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Usage of library liaison assistance in support of course development, while widely adopted, appears to occur in a largely ad hoc manner with potential for gaps
  - ▶ Teaching capacity barriers appear to inhibit consistent and predictable availability of course-based experiential learning, which is typically more time-intensive for instructors than traditional classroom-based teaching
  - ▶ Inadequate research space for dry labs limits the ability of faculty to meaningfully and sustainably engage all interested undergraduates in their research
  - ▶ As noted in the previous review, the administrative, teaching, and advising burdens of offering separate programs in Population Health and Health Policy appear to outweigh the benefits
  - ▶ Breadth of skills developed in courses does not appear to match the breadth of content areas covered; students noted some repetition in skills taught, as well as insufficient opportunity to develop specific skills or knowledge for success in graduate programs
  - ▶ Health Policy major does not appear to cover the full range of skills and content typically covered in similar programs, due to the limited number of departmental faculty with expertise in this area
  - ▶ Total number of courses offered each year in addition to required core courses appears unsustainable given existing faculty complement, resulting in consistently high reliance on sessional instructors for delivery of core courses

- ▶ Students shared experiences of disappointment upon finding that many desired courses are offered infrequently or not at all
- ▶ Decision-making around course revision or discontinuation appears to be based on ad hoc proposals when a course has low enrolment no available instructor, rather than a strategic, systematic process based on program-wide goals
- ▶ In some cases, faculty teaching effort has been focused on courses with lower enrolments, resulting in imbalances in teaching workload
- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▶ Limited faculty teaching capacity, particularly in larger introductory courses, appears to afford fewer opportunities to implement universal design approaches and accommodations at more than a superficial level
  - ▶ Students report institutional challenges to effective accommodations, including inconsistent approaches taken by faculty in the interpretation and implementation of accommodations, as well as cultural and documentation barriers to requesting accommodations
  - ▶ Extent to which Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in DHS programs have access to UTSC's Indigenous initiatives is unclear
- Assessment of learning
  - ▶ Students raised concerns regarding the inability to receive feedback on final papers for courses, noting that without such feedback it is difficult to gauge the extent to which they have achieved course learning objectives
  - ▶ Reliance on quizzes and exams in lower-level courses may not equally evaluate the depth of understanding and skills across all student populations, and can exacerbate pre-existing inequities in education
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ High school students may be less aware of DHS programs when applying to U of T, potentially due to low awareness of the programs among counselors, as well as inconsistent information about DHS programs on University websites
  - ▶ Incorrect or missing information about the two majors on University websites highlights how the separate programs create confusion for institutional administrators and prospective students
  - ▶ Co-op program growth may be limited by student barriers to entry, including cost and the required number of work terms
  - ▶ Goal for co-op students complete their programs within four years may be a barrier in the form of a stigma for students wishing to take longer
  - ▶ "We note that the review team did not meet alone with students"
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - ▶ Reviewers note slight decline in Health Policy enrolments in past 5 years
  - ▶ Available data on general student retention and graduation do not necessarily reflect whether program quality is sufficient to meet program objectives and to facilitate student success in achieving program learning outcomes

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Objectives
  - ▶ Subject area breadth can help set the program apart from peers, if it is well communicated
  - ▶ Promising plans to increase knowledge depth through increased laddering of content across the curriculum require focused hiring to expand faculty expertise within focused cluster areas
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Numerical literacy, particularly in the Population Health program, may need to be addressed through enhancing educational supports or the addition of a numeracy-skills-focused course specific to population health
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Combine the Population Health and Health Policy programs into a single program with both HBA and HBSc degree options
  - ▶ Proposed Specialist program would enable DHS to take advantage of existing required courses and allow students to choose from clusters of electives representing fundamental health studies domains; a unified Major program could potentially use the same general approach
  - ▶ Reduced student to faculty ratio would allow more flexibility to select most effective course delivery modes based on content rather than class size
  - ▶ Consider developing greater intentionality at the program level regarding scaffolding of skills across courses in foundational disciplinary skill domains
  - ▶ Students voiced support for more work-integrated learning opportunities that could combine classroom experiences with community engagement
  - ▶ Discontinuation of courses could benefit from a more proactive approach, with potential to significantly improve student, faculty, and staff experience with DHS programs
  - ▶ Right-size course offerings based on programmatic strategic goals, to a set of courses which can be consistently taught by core faculty with priority for required courses over under-enrolled and/or elective courses
- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▶ The UTSC hosts several Indigenous initiatives (e.g., Indigenous House, Indigenous Garden, Indigenous Place Making, Global Field School: Indigenous Costa Rica, Indigenous Entrepreneurship, Indigenous Knowledges and Resources), but most of these seem to be associated with the Sociology program.
  - ▶ Consider ways for DHS students to engage in Indigenous initiatives through their academic curricula
  - ▶ Monitor rates of recruitment, retention, and graduation of Indigenous students, and explore whether these students may disproportionately experience barriers to participating in co-op, undergraduate research experience, and/or access to mentorship
  - ▶ As equity data become available, develop metrics to illustrate effectiveness of DHS's approaches to removing barriers and increasing retention rates for Black students

- ▶ Explore ways to effectively gather information on barriers to equity, diversity, and inclusion experienced by students, possibly through de-identified administrative data, surveys, or focus groups conducted by experienced facilitators from outside the department
- Assessment of learning
  - ▶ Seek guidance from Dean's office on providing students with feedback on final papers for courses; consider developing standardized language to use in course syllabi on this issue
  - ▶ Consult with the Centre for Teaching and Learning regarding innovation in learning assessment and pedagogical research, to explore opportunities for employing alternate forms of assessment in courses
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Engage external co-op program stakeholders (e.g., co-op placement site supervisors, employers, graduate programs) to consult on program quality and identify gaps in needed skills and workforce capacity that could be targeted within courses

## 2. Graduate Program(s) n/a

## 3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Research
  - ▶ DHS focuses its multi-disciplinary research areas on Research in Life Course and the Life Cycle; Social Hierarchies and Marginality; Cultures of Health and Illness; and Environment and Health
  - ▶ Faculty members' funding and scholarly profile, with respect to total funding received and participation in Tri-Agency funding, is consistent with expectations in health domains
  - ▶ Centre for Global Disability Studies has the potential to catalyze strengths in unique research and undergraduate and graduate training strength; DHS is well positioned to contribute with significant interdisciplinary hires in the topic area
- Faculty
  - ▶ Exceptional recent recruitment of tenure and teaching-stream faculty, forming a solid base for expanding to meet demand from students, employers, and research organizations for health-related programming
  - ▶ Indigenous health and wellbeing is a focus of some DHS faculty members
  - ▶ DHS has made meaningful investments and progress in the assessment of teaching, including routine peer teaching evaluations of sessional instructors
  - ▶ Impressive recent faculty hires, with the majority from internationally recognized institutions; recent hires with health/social workforce experience bring sound practical knowledge and community partnership strengths
  - ▶ Several faculty members have received high profile awards for their scholarship, including many internal awards as well as a Canada Research Chair

- ▶ Number (12) and diversity of units in which graduate faculty are cross-appointed indicates their interdisciplinary breadth, and strengthens research relationships for faculty and graduate students
- ▶ Teaching faculty have a high degree of content expertise and are fully engaged with research and enhanced skills development in teaching and learning
- ▶ Well-organized mentorship program for incoming faculty
- ▶ Several faculty mentioned strong appreciation of departmental support to engage in the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity's Faculty Success Program

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

- Research
  - ▶ Uneven funding success and levels among faculty suggest greater support is required for pre- and post- grant support
- Faculty
  - ▶ Assessment of teaching does not appear to be consistently occurring for core faculty
  - ▶ Significant proportion of Black students appear to be drawn to the mentorship of Black faculty, which may result in disproportionate mentoring workloads; similar patterns may exist for faculty sharing other minoritized identities with students
  - ▶ Reviewers did not identify clear mechanisms in place to increase the sustainability of informal mentorship
  - ▶ Current faculty complement is insufficient to sustain the number of courses across the four undergraduate and two co-op programs for 1200+ undergraduate students
  - ▶ Faculty complement counts appear to overestimate the number who are available to contribute annually to teaching and service in DHS, due to leaves, teaching releases, and undertaking department and faculty administrative positions
  - ▶ Faculty workload policy was created prior to departmentalization and has never been ratified, leading to disparities across faculty in teaching workloads
  - ▶ Small number of active tenure-stream faculty limits access to research opportunities for undergraduate students
  - ▶ Due to the limited number of senior faculty dedicated to DHS, junior faculty are required to perform considerable service duties in addition to teaching, graduate program and external service commitments; reviewers note potential negative impacts on junior faculty workload, career progression, and retention
  - ▶ Diversity of graduate cross-appointments indicates interdisciplinarity but may also indicate a lack of consolidation around core research thematic areas
  - ▶ DHS is too small to address all the sub-topics within its four broadly specified areas
  - ▶ Without an improved student/faculty ratio, DHS cannot contemplate starting its own graduate program or make sustainable progress towards many goals related to undergraduate programs

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
  - ▶ Additional pre- and post-grant supports will be needed if the unit is to reach its full research potential
  - ▶ Consider additional hires in disability studies to strengthen capacity in this area and to make the unit more distinctive and competitive
  - ▶ Align research priorities with a strategic plan, mission, and values statement to strengthen interdisciplinary priority clusters and to develop areas of uniqueness
- Faculty
  - ▶ Internal awards are an appropriate mechanism to build the profile of early-career researchers and educators towards nationally significant awards
  - ▶ Strategically identify departmental and program goals in teaching growth; utilize peer evaluation processes to help advance these goals
  - ▶ Having core courses taught by core faculty is in the best interests of the students and leads to best outcomes in programs with well-thought-out curricular priorities
  - ▶ Faculty hiring, including of senior faculty who can assume larger workloads including mentorship responsibilities, can mitigate impacts of high service requirements for junior faculty and help ensure they are successfully promoted
  - ▶ Conduct future hiring in accordance with a well-thought out strategic research plan that builds strengths around core health and social challenges
  - ▶ Focus faculty hires in areas of obvious emergent strength and regional significance, such as health equity, disability studies, Indigenous health and environmental health
  - ▶ “Commit to at least doubling the current faculty complement in the coming five years, balanced across rank and tenure-track/teaching streams, with additional faculty hires as needed to compensate for faculty in administrative leadership roles”
  - ▶ Develop and ratify a teaching equity policy that considers an equitable balance of core and elective courses, class size, and reasons for teaching release

## 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 and faculty feel able to share lived experience, engage in challenging conversations, and centre health equity in the DHS learning environment
  - ▶ Faculty feel well supported by colleagues and staff in navigating teaching and research expectations
  - ▶ DHS operates with a small and committed staff complement

- ▶ Creation of the Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health (SAMIH), and the inclusion of DHS, has potential to enhance the profile and impact of DHS research through increased linkages with health care practitioners and community partners
- ▶ Morale among faculty, students and staff appears reasonable, albeit with caveats for the unit size relative to teaching, service, and research expectations
- ▶ Strong support for the current Chair, and a sense that DHS was moving in the right direction with respect to work culture and relationships
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Current leadership brings increased and welcomed stability to DHS, which will be essential to meet future ambitions of the unit and UTSC
  - ▶ University's library infrastructure, especially online resources, are world-leading;
  - ▶ Students and faculty have access to a research librarian with expertise in health
  - ▶ Library staff contribute to training in strategies, evidence synthesis, and scoping reviews
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Commendable progress by UTSC leadership and DHS faculty and staff in advancing recommendations from the previous UTQAP review, including significant and meaningful improvements in curricular quality, alignment, and teaching capacity
  - ▶ UTSC and DHS attract a highly diverse student body and faculty complement, reflective of the needs of underserved populations in the Scarborough region
  - ▶ DHS has great potential to be a national leader in interdisciplinary health sciences education and to contribute its expertise across science, social science, and humanities domains to SAMIH
  - ▶ DHS has the potential to meet student demand for health-relevant undergraduate programming
  - ▶ DHS research priorities align with local and global challenges
  - ▶ DHS is poised to make significant contributions to Canadian challenges of an aging population, health equity, including ableism, Indigenous health, and structural and institutional racism in the health and social sectors
  - ▶ DHS faculty and students are well-positioned to meet the complex challenges of the diverse populations of the Scarborough region, including instantiating the principles of the Scarborough Charter to address anti-Black racism and promote Black inclusion in Canadian higher education through its faculty, research and teaching

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

- Relationships
  - ▶ Students, faculty, and staff commented on the need for additional opportunities for community building and support; staff expressed a desire to provide such opportunities and resources but reported that current workload capacity prevents them from taking on these additional tasks
  - ▶ Morale is threatened by uncertainty over the move to SAMIH, combined with high service burden for junior faculty and the general under-resourcing of staff



- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Considerable concern that DHS has not had faculty and staff capacity to develop and implement strategic plans to ensure that their degree programs are the best fit for student and departmental needs
  - ▶ Ability of staff to strategically advance DHS interests is limited by shared staffing arrangements across multiple UTSC units; all staff agreed that they would need to be dedicated to one unit to perform at their full capacity
  - ▶ Staff support is insufficient for planned expansions in student programming, such as diplomas and certificates
  - ▶ Plans for move to SAMIH building have not been adequately communicated to DHS staff and faculty, resulting in some anxiety in the unit
  - ▶ Shared staffing model raises concerns with the planned move to a new building when DHS relocates to SAMIH
  - ▶ Concerns whether access to the dedicated health librarian will continue after moving to SAMIH
  - ▶ DHS has outgrown its current space allocation; unit houses current faculty and staff complement and has access to wet-laboratory space for environmental health research, but virtually no dry- laboratory research space
  - ▶ Office space allocated for postdoctoral fellows does is not aligned with research team operations
  - ▶ Tri-campus graduate program structure tends to focus graduate student activities on the St. George campus
  - ▶ Lack of access to research space limits undergraduate students' research opportunities
  - ▶ DHS governance structure for committee work conducive to strategic thinking across research and teaching priorities seems underdeveloped
  - ▶ Students are not formally included in DHS committees, a missed opportunity to engage students who are future alumni and leaders
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Without a clear strategic plan for DHS is challenging to understand how the unit aligns with the UTSC's strategic plan
  - ▶ Without a Vision, Mission, Values and signature or key strategic initiatives, DHS lacks a road map to direct its path and growth into the future
  - ▶ Resources available to DHS are insufficient to meet current operations and limit capacity for future growth and expansion
  - ▶ Leadership in DHS do not have training in advancement or direct access to advancement professionals

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ Explore ways to provide additional resources at the department or program level to cultivate a culture of caring and a sense of belonging, especially among minoritized and first-generation university students

- ▶ Develop and maintain stronger relationships with community partners and alumni, to enhance experiential learning opportunities and access to program outcome data
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Communicate clearly regarding the Chair's authority to assign teaching to address high-enrolment and core priorities
  - ▶ Faculty and staff complement will need to be strengthened to leverage the opportunities generated by SAMIH
  - ▶ Increase dedicated DHS staff positions to allow adequate capacity for strategic planning, student support, research and financial management, and community engagement
  - ▶ Include library resources in SAMIH planning, to facilitate interactions with faculty and students in DHS
  - ▶ Provide equitable access to research space for "dry lab" researchers and their teams to foster collaboration and research-related experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate students
  - ▶ Consult with DHS faculty regarding space requirements for planned move to SAMIH
  - ▶ Conduct inclusive discussions with stakeholders regarding research and office space planning
  - ▶ Consider how departmental governance structures can be optimized to distribute the burden between strategy development and operational decision making
  - ▶ Develop clear terms of reference, membership criteria, and a more equitable distribution of service burdens, for departmental governance committees
  - ▶ Build consistent discretionary funding into the department budget to use for evolving departmental priorities, including undergraduate research assistantships
  - ▶ Provide DHS leadership with regular meetings with UTSC leadership to transparently discuss budget and enrolment planning
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Opportunities for DHS arise from the creation of SAMIH and associated infrastructure, including a new building
  - ▶ DHS has an opportunity prior to the opening of SAMIH to clearly articulate its role as a leader in the field of integrated health
  - ▶ Provide training for DHS leadership in advancement, and access to University advancement professionals, to develop and implement an integrated alumni relations and advancement strategy for DHS
  - ▶ Explore ways to support DHS programming through philanthropy
  - ▶ Work with University Development and Alumni Relations offices to obtain information on former students' satisfaction with the program and the impact of the co-op experience on future career successes; data "would need to be aligned and collected with respect to objectives and learning outcomes, all of which would be contained in a strategic plan specific to the DHS"
  - ▶ Prospectively collect equity-related data and provide to all departments in a de-identified manner to allow monitoring and intervention for barriers to access and success within departmental programs

- ▶ Develop a strategic plan, mission, and values statement to use in making decisions regarding program and course offerings, faculty hiring, research cluster strengthening, departmental policies, etc.; students and external partners, especially community partners in the region, should be consulted in developing the plan
- ▶ Refresh strategic plan at least every 5 years with consideration of institutional strategic plans
- ▶ Carefully consider the development of new programs considering current workload and capacity to deliver; “We recommend consolidation at this point in time, rather than expansion”



March 11, 2025

Professor Nicholas Rule  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
Division of the Vice-President & Provost  
University of Toronto

**Dean's Administrative Response: External Review of the Department of Health and Society, University of Toronto Scarborough**

Dear Professor Rule,

Thank you for your letter of November 25, 2024, requesting my administrative response to the March 2024 external review of the Department of Health and Society. I want to extend my gratitude to the review team—Tania Bubela, Professor and Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University; Michelle M. Garrison, Professor, Department of Public Health, Purdue University; and Lili Liu, Professor and Dean, Faculty of Health, University of Waterloo—for their consultation with the Department during the site visit from March 20-21, 2024, and for their report, which was finalized on June 18, 2024, and shared with the Department.

We deeply appreciate the reviewers' assessment of the Department's course offerings that examine health from multiple perspectives, as well as their commendation of the Department's commitment to inclusive pedagogies, with the goal of enabling students to share their lived experiences in safe and holistic learning environments. In addition to praising the Department's programs and the opportunities for experiential learning offered to students, the reviewers also commended the teaching faculty's content expertise and engagement with research and skills development in teaching and learning.

The report from the review team identifies a number of areas for enhancement and development, including strategically considering the future directions of the Population Health and Health Policy programs; systematizing and streamlining processes for revising or discontinuing courses; taking a more intentional approach to the scaffolding of skills across courses; prioritizing an expansion of the faculty complement when opportunities permit; offering additional opportunities for community building and support for students, staff, and faculty; and creating a strategic research and academic plan aligned with institutional strategy and goals. With this letter, I have included a table summarizing the responses to the specific recommendations of the reviewers and anticipated timelines for implementation, where appropriate.

Once again, I thank the review team for their insightful and valuable review of the Department and its programs. I look forward to supporting the Department in implementing the recommendations of this report. The Dean's Office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the Chair of the Department of Health and Society. An interim report to the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs will be prepared in **Fall 2028**. The next external review of the Department will take place **no later than the 2031-32 academic year**.

Sincerely,

Professor Karin Ruhlandt  
Vice-Principal Academic & Dean

## 2023-24 UTQAP Review of UTSC Department of Health & Society- 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 made recommendations related to the configuration and consolidation of the Department’s program offerings, commenting in general that DHS should carefully consider whether new program development is appropriate in light of current workload and capacity to deliver; they recommended strategic consideration of future directions for the Population Health and Health Policy programs, including potential integration.	1	“Carefully consider the development of new programs considering current workload and capacity to deliver. We recommend consolidation at this point in time, rather than expansion.”	<p>There is a strong desire to maintain two programs given that the two fields (Health Policy BA and Population Health BSc) best reflect the interdisciplinary nature of our unit, the diversity of student interests, and our future strategic plans. The Department of Health and Society also remains committed to offering these two programs instead of consolidating because each program plays a pivotal role in preparing graduates to meet the different challenges of healthcare in today’s landscape. The BA program provides foundation in health policy and social determinants of health while the BSc program offers training in body systems and scientific inquiry. As we look towards SAMIH (Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health), these programs as they currently stand will attract diverse and engaged students with, the goal of continuing to grow interdisciplinary health education and training.</p> <p><b>Short term and ongoing:</b></p>	My office appreciates the department’s desire to maintain its two existing programs in Population Health and Health Policy as-is. At UTSC, we are keen on pursuing interdisciplinarity, recognizing our strengths in both arts and sciences in existing programs. My team and I will continue to work with the department to address issues around current workload in relation to student enrolment. We will also partner with the department to plan future program offerings in ways that strengthen DHS while also situating the department as a vital part of cross-disciplinary conversations related to the health sciences at UTSC as SAMIH is established.

			<p>We appreciate the reviewers’ concerns regarding our current workload and capacity to deliver, these concerns are valid given our faculty complement and student numbers. We aim to work with the Dean’s Office in the short term to address those concerns while delivering high quality programs.</p> <p>In terms of program quality enhancement, we have started the process of continually reviewing the curriculum of each program with an eye to market trends, demands, and student needs. Under leadership of our chair and curriculum committee, we are carefully working to find ways to honor the academic integrity of each program while enhancing enrolments.</p>	
	2	<p>“The Specialist program proposed by the department is one way the department could take advantage of existing required courses and allow students to choose from clusters of electives that represent the fundamental domains of health studies. A unified Major program could potentially use the same general approach, with strong consideration given to limiting to those cluster domains from which the department has multiple faculty able to teach.”</p>	<p><b>Medium to long term:</b></p> <p>With the support of the Dean’s Office, we are considering offering a Specialist Program in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences – an idea that has been under development within DHS for over two years and is supported by the HESA report. Given that we have a substantial proposal already written that leverages the department’s existing strengths and courses, we believe there is real potential to foster collaboration with other units and program areas on campus, including Biological Sciences, Psychology, Neuroscience, Anthropology, Sociology, and Linguistics/Psycholinguistics, through relevant upper-level courses. The program features a foundational first- and second-year core curriculum, after which students can focus on specific clusters in their third year to develop a specialized area of expertise.</p>	<p>I appreciate the department’s efforts and creativity in envisioning and proposing a new Health Sciences Specialist that will promote interdisciplinary collaboration with our other academic units in the humanities, the social sciences, and the sciences.</p> <p>With the Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health (SAMIH) expected to serve as a hub for education in the health sciences, new program development is something that my office and I will pursue strategically and collaboratively with DHS and other stakeholders both within and beyond UTSC. The HESA working group has been reactivated in 2024-25 under the leadership of Associate Dean Suzanne Sicchia, and this table will offer crucial support for the development of this, and related, programs in collaboration with DHS and other units.</p>

			While clustering is possible within the credit constraints of a major program (7–9 credits), it is more effectively implemented in a Specialist program (12-16 credits). This approach also aligns with ongoing discussions around expanding health science-based programming across campus.	
	3	“Combine the Population Health and Health Policy programs into a single program with both HBA and HBS degree options.”	<p>The Department has carefully considered this suggestion and has decided to retain the two existing major programs in order to provide students with two Major options. In particular, we believe it is important to maintain the existing integrity of our BSc in light of provincial mandates. And in 2023-24, we made changes to strengthen the curriculum of each program to enhance their distinctiveness. We enhanced the science offerings in our BSc major giving it greater focus in population health and differentiated the focus of our BA with greater focus on health policy.</p> <p>The recommendation to consolidate or combine the majors likely stemmed from a naming convention where both are listed under the "Health Studies" umbrella (e.g., Health Studies – Health Policy and Health Studies – Population Health). However, "Health Studies" is not a formal parent program with defined streams, which has led to confusion and misrepresentation of our programs' structure. This naming convention is a remnant from the time when Health Studies was part of Anthropology and was unfortunately presented in an outdated way in online materials at the time of the review. After our review, we received permission and have been able to make some of our requests to remove the “Health Studies” on online materials.</p>	I am proud of the different pathways and program pairings students can pursue with the various Major programs offered by the different UTSC departments, including DHS. I support DHS’s decision to maintain the two existing programs in Population Health and Health Policy, at least in the short term. This structure also reflects the ways in which many of our students combine programs at UTSC through the combination of two Majors. In addition, I support DHS’ efforts in working with my team to improve clarity on the information presented to students and advisors.

<p>The reviewers observed that the overall number of DHS courses “appears larger than is reasonably sustainable with the existing faculty complement” and highlighted student concerns that some desirable courses are not offered most years; they recommended systematizing and streamlining processes for revising or discontinuing courses, and aligning the Department’s course offerings with strategic goals and teaching capacity.</p>	4	<p>“The decision-making process used by the department regarding if and when to discontinue courses — or to consider merging or otherwise substantially revising courses —... does appear to be based on ad hoc proposals by faculty rather than a strategic, systematic process to identify degree program wide goals and prioritize teaching capacity to meet those goals. Further, the discontinuation of courses could benefit from a more proactive approach... it seems that currently the question of whether or not to discontinue a course only comes up for discussion when a course repeatedly has low subscription and/or no available instructor for a number of terms or even years... Change in this area has the potential to significantly improve student, faculty, and staff experience with the programs.”</p>	<p><b>Short term and ongoing:</b></p> <p>The Department has recently had several faculty move into pre-tenure course releases or administrative positions which understandably has meant that some desirable courses had to be paused or taught by sessional instructors. While the Department has not retired many courses, we appreciate the idea of a systematic process to determine this and also want to be cautious as we welcome faculty back or find high quality alternative ways to offer desirable courses. Since the review, we put in place a system within our curriculum committee to engage in regular reviews of the curriculum with consideration for enrollment and student feedback and to review the learning outcomes of potentially low enrolled courses to ensure that each of these courses is relevant and in alignment with our mission. We are also working with the Dean’s Office to find ways to continue to deliver desirable courses that help meet student degree requirements.</p>	<p>The Dean’s Office applauds the department’s initiative in reviewing its course offerings more intentionally, taking into consideration factors such as changes in student enrolment, faculty complement, and healthcare trends. We will support them in this work as a part of the annual curriculum cycle, and in relation to program development, budget considerations, and student enrolment trends.</p>
	5	<p>“Right-size course offerings, based on programmatic strategic goals, to those which can be consistently taught by core faculty, inclusive of need for leaves and prioritize required courses over under-enrolled and/or elective courses in faculty teaching loads.”</p>	<p><b>Ongoing:</b></p> <p>Currently with the leadership of the Program Director and Chair, our curriculum committee works to structure course offerings and enrollment caps in courses in line with program growth figures while considering recruitment and strategic planning initiatives and mandates. For example, we have limited the number of D-level courses we offer and recognize that we need additional faculty hires in order to better attend to recent upsurges in student growth and the need for more stability in course offerings with 3 of our faculty in significant leadership positions and 12 of our faculty in pre-tenure related course releases.</p>	<p>My office and I will continue to work with the department to discuss issues pertaining to faculty complement and workload, as well as overall strategic enrolment management.</p>



<p>The reviewers noted that, although health studies course offerings cover a broad range of content areas, it is less clear that they also cover a broad array of skill areas. They suggested that DHS take a more intentional approach to the scaffolding of skills across courses, including quantitative and qualitative research skills as well as other foundational skill domains in the field.</p>	6	<p>“Current courses represent a very broad range of content areas within the field of health studies, but it is less clear that a broad range of skill areas are also represented... there may be room for greater intentionality at the program level regarding scaffolding of skills across courses – not only quantitative and qualitative research skills, but also other foundational skill domains in the field such as information literacy, health communication for different audiences, community and stakeholder engagement, quality improvement and evaluation.”</p>	<p><b>Short and medium term:</b></p> <p>Currently we are scaffolding courses that enhance research skills: numerical literacy has been a key area of discussion among our curriculum committee and at our faculty meetings for over two years. Both qualitative feedback and quantitative data have informed our approach to integrating and scaffolding numerical literacy across the program. For example, a new Applied Statistics for Public Health course was introduced at the B-level to address knowledge gaps identified in C-level Community Health and Epidemiology. This initiative also allowed us to scaffold skills backward, bridging gaps as far back as high school, to better prepare students for success. We have also introduced a new course which focuses on Black community engagement by developing student skills in health communication, promotion and health literacy, and we have courses in Policy Evaluation (HLTD11H3), Community Health and Wellness (offered as an advanced topic in partnership with TAIBU Community Health Centre, HLTD47H3), Critical Health Education (HLTD80H3), and quality improvement (offered as an advanced topic, HLTD29H3). We also have several new initiatives to provide our students with more applied skills. For example, a new partnership with CanPath will provide students and faculty with access to synthetic data that will allow them to apply their research methods skills in real-world settings.</p>	<p>My office and I commend the department for leveraging Advanced Topics courses to test out and introduce students to emerging health studies-related topics, as well as research and skill development areas. This important testing ground helps the department and the Dean’s Office identify which areas and skills would be strong candidates for the development of new permanent courses. The Dean’s Office looks forward to the results of the department’s partnership with CanPath to provide program students with the opportunity to work with synthetic data as part of their coursework.</p>
	7	<p>“...connecting with stakeholders – such as co-op placement site supervisors, those who hire department graduates, and graduate / professional programs attended by graduates – regarding gaps in needed skills and workforce capacity may provide a valuable source of</p>	<p><b>Short term and ongoing:</b></p> <p>We have initiated an alumni survey initiative with our Office of Development and Alumni Relations, which will gather data on alumni’s careers after graduating and their feedback on our programs’ curriculum and structure in the context of current</p>	<p>My office and I applaud the department’s initiatives to reach out and connect with program alumni to get their input on curriculum in relation to students’ future readiness. Bringing program alumni back on campus to connect with our students not only maintains students’ sense of</p>

		feedback for skills that could be explicitly targeted within existing courses.”	research and employment environments. Since this review, we have a renewed focus on work and professional program readiness through several ongoing initiatives. For example, we have developed a successful Allied Health Speaker Series that brings in current health professionals (often graduates of our programs) to speak about career pathways. We also conducted a gap analysis while researching comparable programs during the development of the Specialist. These efforts have directly influenced the creation of the Applied Statistics course and collaborations with coursework in departments such as Physiology, Development, and Anatomy into our curriculum.	belonging but further builds students’ professional networks. This is also an area where future divisional and tri-campus work is needed to better track graduates and better enable program-specific communication and outreach opportunities with alumni.
The reviewers raised several concerns regarding the size of the DHS faculty complement as it relates to program sustainability and departmental goals. They recommended prioritizing an expansion of the faculty complement when opportunities permit, balanced across rank and tenure/teaching streams, “to address the high student to core faculty ratio, to refine programming and the expansion of experiential opportunities, and to strengthen clusters of faculty in areas of core research strength.”	8	“We agree with the assessment in the DHS Self-Study report that there is a need to increase the faculty complement to address the high student to core faculty ratio... to refine programming and the expansion of experiential opportunities, and to strengthen clusters of faculty in areas of core research strength.”	<p><b>Ongoing:</b> Currently we are hiring in the area of Health Informatics and Health Professions &amp; Practice. These two hires will help increase our faculty complement and directly address some of the skill areas identified in the comments above (e.g., numerical and information literacy, health communications).</p> <p><b>Medium and longer term:</b> We are hoping to continue to hire in fields relevant to Allied Health Professions and that help us build strength in for our Health Humanities Minor, our Minor in Aging &amp; Society, and in support of the HESA report and SAMIH initiative.</p>	My office and I will continue to have regular dialogue with the chair of the department on matters pertaining to faculty complement and hiring, recognizing the significant role the department plays in supporting UTSC’s health sciences initiative and the establishment of SAMIH.
	9	“Commit to at least doubling the current faculty complement in the coming five years, balanced across rank and tenure-track/teaching streams, with additional faculty hires as needed to compensate for faculty in administrative leadership roles.”	<p><b>Short to medium term:</b> We view this recommendation as essential to fulfilling our commitment to the SAMIH initiative, the HESA report, and to creating the next generation of allied health professionals in the Scarborough region. Implementing item 8, with</p>	Please see response to recommendation #8.

			the leadership of the Dean, will support this in the short to medium term, as we are hoping to increase our faculty complement, particularly because of past deficits that have been coupled with steady growth in student enrolment.	
	10	“Strengthening research relationships for faculty and graduate students, and indicating the interdisciplinary breadth of faculty, is the diversity of graduate appointment of DHS faculty, totaling 12 graduate unit cross appointments... While this diversity indicates interdisciplinarity, it may also be indicative of a lack of consolidation around core research thematic areas. There is a danger in appointing ‘n’s of 1’ and future hiring should be in accordance with a well-thought out strategic research plan that builds strengths around core health and social challenges.”	<p>Our interdisciplinarity is unique and makes our program stand out across the Tri-Campus. The diversity of graduate appointment of DHS faculty, totaling 12 graduate unit cross appointments adds to its complexity and is also a strength.</p> <p><b>Short to medium term:</b> We hope to consolidate any needed hires and to build clusters around core research areas, such as Allied Health and Health Education, Health Humanities, Aging, Community Health, Paramedicine, Research Methods and Methodologies, and Statistics and Data Sciences (including Health Informatics).</p>	I appreciate the department’s identification of core research areas that would benefit from future hires. The clusters identified align closely with campus strategic priorities. In the current budget environment, my office and I are also working actively to align future hiring to these priority areas. We will continue to engage in regular dialogue with the chair of the department as well as with the Office of the Vice-Principal Research and Innovation at UTSC in considering how best to enhance research supports and cluster opportunities.
	11	“Due to high service duties, the career progression of junior faculty members is jeopardized if their scholarship is not protected. Future hires across the ranks, including senior ranks who can assume larger workloads including mentorship responsibilities, can mitigate this situation and help ensure junior faculty are successfully promoted.”	<p><b>Ongoing:</b> Since the review, this item is something that has been discussed with the Vice-Dean, Faculty Affairs, Equity, &amp; Success and will require the leadership of the Dean to gain clarity regarding whether their might be near-term future hires at senior ranks and regarding more specific or innovative forms of motivation for faculty in senior ranks who can assume larger workloads within the department, such as mentorship responsibilities.</p>	Please see response to recommendation #8. We recognize the pressures that the department has been experiencing. In addition to complement and administrative considerations, we also see mentorship, workload, and faculty progression as key components of this work.
The reviewers observed that faculty leaves and teaching releases can have an impact on the Department’s teaching capacity; they recommended the development of mechanisms to ensure that core and elective courses,	12	“Develop and ratify a teaching equity policy that considers an equitable balance of core and elective courses, class size, and reasons for teaching release.”	<p><b>Longer term:</b> With the support of the Vice-Dean, Faculty Affairs, Equity, &amp; Success, and the Dean, the Department plans to focus on establishing a teaching equity policy that considers an equitable balance of core and elective courses, class size,</p>	My office and I look forward to working with the department, guiding them toward the development of a departmental teaching equity policy that considers the different factors as identified by the reviewers.

class sizes, and teaching releases are equitably balanced for faculty.			and reasons for teaching release in the short to medium term.	
The reviewers raised concerns regarding UTSC's shared staffing model, commenting that it limits capacity to support planned expansions in student programs and to leverage opportunities arising from DHS involvement in SAMIH. They recommended exploring ways to "allow adequate departmental capacity for strategic planning, student support, research and financial management, and community engagement."	13	"The DHS operates with a small and committed staff complement, but their ability to advance DHS interests, especially strategically, is limited by the fact that most of the staff serve 3 units at UTSC simultaneously, and one staff serves 6 units...We recommend that by the time of the move [to SAMIH], core staff, especially an Assistant Chair/Director Administration, Operations and Strategic Planning, be allocated to the unit."	<b>Short term and ongoing:</b> This is an immediate concern that will require the short-term leadership of the Dean and Chair as we face the move into the new SAMIH/Garron building. We are in conversations about proposals we have developed for a revised staff structure. Increased staff support and infrastructure is crucial for our ability as a department to grow our research interests and academic output.	We are working with the department to address these concerns. The planned move to the new SAMIH / Garron building offers an important moment to address staffing needs in relation to new space configurations for the department.
	14	"Increase staff positions dedicated to DHS by at least 2.5 FTE, to allow adequate departmental capacity for strategic planning, student support, research and financial management, and community engagement."	<b>Short term and ongoing:</b> We are in conversations about proposals we have developed for a revised staff structure as we move into the new SAMIH/Garron building and in light of major growth within our department. There is an immediate need for this that will require the support of the Dean.	See response to recommendation #13.
The reviewers recommended that equitable access to research space be provided for dry lab researchers and their teams to foster collaboration and research-related experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate students. They further recommended additional consultation with faculty and the allocation of temporary space to meet current needs in advance of the planned move to SAMIH.	15	"Provide equitable access to research space for "dry lab" researchers and their substantial research teams to foster collaboration and research-related experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate students. These space requirements may be met in the planned SAMIH, however, more consultation should be undertaken with DHS faculty and temporary space should be provided to address current needs."	<b>Ongoing:</b> Since this review, we are forming a departmental committee for 2025-26 to address space allocations for the move into the SAMIH/Garron building which will take place in 2026-27.	My office and I look forward to advocating spacing allocation needs on behalf of the department when engaging in discussions with the Office of the Vice-President & Principal and the Office of the Vice-Principal Research and Innovation as the construction of the Myron and Berna Garron Health Sciences Complex (SAMIH) continues and nears completion.
The reviewers noted student, staff, and faculty desire for additional opportunities for community building and support; suggestions included a departmental orientation, social activities for DHS faculty and staff, and	16	"...a clear theme emerged from both student comments and discussions with staff and more junior faculty about the need for additional opportunities for community building and support... Given that peer institutions are providing such opportunities and resources at the	<b>Ongoing:</b> We also recognize the need for additional opportunities for community building and support and intend to work with the Department of Community Partnerships and Engagement at UTSC, to work with HSSA (our affiliated student	My office and I commend the department's efforts to work with other UTSC offices and colleagues to build students' sense of belonging and increase students' opportunities to interact with and learn from peers, faculty members, and alumni, and professionals working in various

support activities and resources during stressful times.		department or program level to cultivate a culture of caring and a sense of belonging, especially among minoritized and first-generation university students, additional resources to support this work for such a vibrantly growing set of degree programs is merited.”	association), and to work more closely with our Co-op Office and other campus units to build strength here. In addition, we will continue to run our Allied Health Speaker Series. Following this review, we are launching our first DHS Research Day, where awards to increase recognition, belonging and inclusion will be presented and where students and faculty can present and discuss their research. The department remains open to developing relationships with the Office of Student Experience and Wellbeing to help further the culture of caring and sense of belonging students feel in our program and more broadly, on campus. We welcome support from the Dean's Office & select HESA Chairs to maximize impact and strengthen partnerships and collaboration.	health studies fields. The Dean's Office is actively supporting this work, in particular in relation to the Pathways for Health Professions Certificate and related co-curricular initiatives.
The reviewers recommended that DHS create a strategic research and academic plan, aligned with institutional strategy and goals; they noted that the plan should include a clear vision and mission to define the Department's academic priorities and commitments, guiding future hiring decisions and the establishment of research clusters.	17	“The DHS would benefit from a strategic research and academic plan with a clear vision and mission that then motivates its educational programs, research clusters and associated faculty hiring. The strategic plan should be refreshed at least every 5 years and consider institutional strategic plans. Students and external partners, especially community partners in the region, should be consulted in the development of the strategic plan.”	<b>Short to medium term:</b> Recognizing that we would benefit from a strategic research and academic plan with a clear vision and mission, we held a set of retreats and consultations in preparation for our review in September 2023, December 2023, January 2024, and following our review in September 2024 and December 2024 with a wide range of stakeholders relevant to DHS under the leadership of the chair. Subsequently at our retreat in December 2024 and February 2025, we brought in an external consultant who helped us formulate a clear mission, vision, and provided guidance on our strategic research and academic plan, which we are currently in the process of sharing on our website and in our public facing documents. We welcome support from the Dean's Office to ensure that our strategic plans are in alignment with the SAMIH initiative and consistent with budgetary realities.	I am delighted to hear that the department has convened the last couple of months to formulate its latest mission and vision, which will help set the tone of the department and its goals and objectives moving forward. My office and I look forward to reviewing, and offering our input to, the department's newly developed strategic research and academic plans. We see strong alignment with the work that the department is doing and campus strategic priorities, and see the department as playing a pivotal role in cross-disciplinary conversations related to the health sciences at UTSC as SAMIH is established.

	18	“Align research priorities with a strategic plan, mission, and values statement to strengthen interdisciplinary priority clusters and to develop areas of uniqueness, for which DHS will become known. Consolidate first around areas of strength with recruitment and then build out new research clusters.”	<b>Medium to longer term:</b> In response to the reviewer’s recommendations and as mentioned in item #17, we are working to align our research priorities with the strategic plan, mission, and values statement we have developed with the support of an external consultation. To this effect, we are consolidating and strengthening our interdisciplinary priority clusters and intend to continue to revisit this over the next several years as our faculty complement strengthens.	Please see response to recommendation #17.
The reviewers observed that UTSC has a number of programs and initiatives to support Indigenous students, but noted that it was not clear how much DHS students can access them; they recommended close attention to the recruitment, retention, and success rates of Indigenous students, and exploring whether Indigenous students may disproportionately experience barriers to participating in co-op, undergraduate research experience, and/or access to mentorship.	19	“The UTSC hosts several Indigenous initiatives... but most of these seem to be associated with the Sociology program. It is not clear to what extent, Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in the DHS can access these initiatives. Again, with a clear strategic plan, the DHS could specify how its students can engage in these initiatives through their academic curricula. In particular, it would be important to identify Indigenous students and monitor their recruitment, retention and success rates, as well as to explore whether Indigenous students may disproportionately experience barriers to participating in co-op, undergraduate research experience, and/or access to mentorship.”	<b>Medium term:</b> The Department is committed to Indigenous initiatives as evidenced by the research concentrations of four core faculty. Currently, we participate in the UTSC Working Circle with the Office of Indigenous Initiatives. As well, we are developing a section within our departmental website to feature core research and coursework directly relevant to Indigenous Initiatives. The page will include information about relevant DHS courses; research projects from our faculty and research assistants as well as graduate students’ openings for these projects. In addition, to achieve this medium-term goal, we are working with UTSC’s Registrar’s Office, Admissions and Student Recruitment Office, Development and Alumni Relations Office, and the Office of Indigenous Initiatives with respect to data and alumni tracking.	The Dean’s Office applauds the department’s efforts to work with the Office of Indigenous Initiatives and other offices to collect data and track the progress of students. The Dean’s Office supports the department’s initiative to highlight research and coursework that intersect with Indigenous initiatives. This is work that also connects to the UTSC campus curriculum review, which has been led by the Dean’s Office. With the establishment of Indigenous House in June 2025, we anticipate further opportunities to strengthen Indigenous research and curriculum at UTSC. We appreciate the reviewers’ comments about the importance of assessing potential barriers for Indigenous students in co-op, research, mentorship, and other areas, and we will continue to partner with the department, with the Office of Indigenous Initiatives, and other units at UTSC and across the University of Toronto to address these concerns.
	20	“Prospectively collect equity-related data and provide to all departments (including DHS) in a de-identified manner that allows monitoring and intervention for barriers to access and success within departmental programs.”	<b>Short term and ongoing:</b> This is an area of priority for us as a department and we will work with the Dean’s Office to implement the UTSC commitments to this effort as stated in the Scarborough Charter, the U of T	The Dean’s Office is committed to the goals of inclusive excellence outlined in the campus strategic plan, and will continue to collaborate with the department and with offices such as the Office of the Registrar, the Office of Admissions and Student Recruitment, and the Department of

			Anti-Black Racism Task Force Report, and other relevant resources.	Community Partnerships on examining and removing barriers to access for students enrolled in DHS’s programs. The university as a whole is also moving towards collecting more comprehensive equity-related data which is crucial to support this work.
Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response	21	“Numerical literacy at the level required, especially in the Population Health program may need to be addressed through enhancing educational supports or addition of a numeracy-skills-focused course specific to population health.”	<p><b>Short term and ongoing:</b></p> <p>Plans to enhance numerical literacy have become a priority for the Department. For further clarification, please refer to the response in point 6 above. As well, please note that we are working with the Registrar's Office and the Office of Admissions and Student Recruitment to add Grade 12 math as recommended (but not required) in recruitment publications for prospective students (e.g., Viewbook) as of next year. To address preparation gaps, we have also revised our program requirements, mandating students take a specific general statistics course in their first year (STAB23H3). This ensures they avoid the more commonly selected statistics course, which explicitly minimizes mathematical calculations in its description.</p> <p>The previous scaffolding was as follows:</p> <p>STAB22H3 (Statistics I) or STAB23H3 (Introduction to Statistics for the Social Sciences) in Year 1 or 2            HLTB15H3 (Health Research Methodologies) and HLTB16H3 (Public Health) in Year 2            HLTC27H3 (Community Health and Epidemiology) in Year 3</p> <p>The current scaffolding is now (for Population Health):</p> <p>Grade 12 Math recommended (any)</p>	The Dean’s Office supports the department’s efforts to better scaffold skills across its course offerings and clarify expectations for students. The Centre for Teaching and Learning is a crucial resource for the department in this area. The programs and curriculum team in the Dean’s Office is also available to advise on strategies for strengthening scaffolding structures in the department’s curricular offerings without compromising the department’s commitment to equity and access.

			<p>STAB23H3 (Introduction to Statistics for the Social Sciences) in Year 1            HLTB15H3 (Health Research Methodologies),            HLTB16H3 (Public Health), and HLTB27H3 (Applied Statistics for Public Health) in Year 2            HLTC27H3 (Community Health and Epidemiology) in Year 3.</p> <p>This work has been completed since the review under the leadership of the chair, working closely with the Program Coordinator.</p>	
	22	<p>“...in the absence of broader alumni-specific data from the institution, engagement with community partners who commonly hire and/or admit program graduates for their feedback on current degree program quality and the performance of its graduates may be worth considering.”</p>	<p><b>Medium term:</b>            We have sought support from the Development and Alumni Relations Office and are actively working with students and alumni and community organizations (including but not limited to the Scarborough Health Network) to build sustainable relationships that will help increase hiring opportunities for our students. This is a medium-term goal that requires support of the Dean’s Office and the Research Office.</p>	<p>The Dean’s Office supports the department’s collaborations with the Development and Alumni Relations Office and other community organizations to monitor trends and emerging areas of skill development for students and graduates in health studies-related programs.</p>
	23	<p>“Develop and maintain stronger relationships with community partners and alumni, to enhance experiential learning opportunities and access to program outcome data.”</p>	<p><b>Longer term:</b>            Through their research projects, our faculty have developed numerous partnerships with local, national, and international community partners. We will be exploring how those relationships can be leveraged for the department to carry out its new mission, vision, and values more effectively. In 2023, we initiated the Allied Health Speaker Series and are keen to work with others across the campus and in relation to SAMIH continue to develop and maintain stronger relationships with community partners and alumni, to enhance experiential learning opportunities and access to program outcome data. This is a longer-term goal that we will work with the Experiential Learning</p>	<p>The Dean’s Office supports the department’s efforts to work with the various offices within UTSC and with community partners to further develop and continually refine experiential learning opportunities to meet the needs of students, alumni, and employers. We are also prioritizing clearer data-gathering related to experiential learning to better support the department and the campus as a whole in meeting the SMA goal of 100% engagement with experiential learning. Experiential learning is a historic strength of UTSC and a significant priority for the future.</p>



			team to brainstorm ideas and implement opportunities.	
	24	“At present, students are not formally included in DHS committees, and the reviewers believe this is a missed opportunity to engage students who are future alumni and leaders. As the department matures, thought should be given to the appropriate governance mechanisms that distribute the burden between strategy development and operational decision making.”	<b>Short term and ongoing:</b> We have strong engagement with students through HSSA and other student associations which ensure student feedback and input while we develop formal engagement opportunities through committee membership for the future. We have begun to implement this in curriculum and our current faculty search committees based on the feedback from this review.	The Dean’s Office commends the department’s efforts to get more of their program students involved in the department’s decision making.
	25	“Build consistent discretionary funding into the department budget for the chair to use for evolving departmental priorities, such as undergraduate research assistantships, etc.”	The department is open to exploring this further and will defer to the Dean’s Office for guidance.	The Dean’s Office is currently in dialogue with departments to assess budget needs as the campus prepares to move to a new budgetary model. We recognize the importance of some degree of flexibility and autonomy for departments within budgetary frameworks.
	26	“Provide training for DHS leadership in advancement and access to advancement professionals at UofT to develop and implement an integrated alumni relations and advancement strategy for DHS.”	<b>Short term and ongoing:</b> Following the March 2024 cyclical review of the department, we worked with the UTSC Development and Alumni Relations Office to introduce a new scholarship for our students. This initiative has raised over \$50,000 for two endowed scholarships to be awarded annually to students studying Aging & Society. Through our continued collaboration with this office, an additional scholarship will be introduced in the next year. The current chair is very open to engaging in additional training.	The Dean’s Office appreciates the department’s collaboration with the Development and Alumni Relations Office to discuss and implement advancement and alumni engagement strategies.

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

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*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

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The reviewers praised the department's "unique and highly valuable blend of courses" that approach health from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, and noted that "students graduate with a more holistic view of health and society." They commended the opportunities for experiential learning in the Department's programs, and observed that students praised the quality of instruction and the creation of safe learning environments in which they can bring their diverse lived experience to discussions of complex health and social issues. They highlighted the department's strengths in adopting universal design principles and proactive disability-related accommodations, particularly in upper-year courses. They applauded the department's exceptional new faculty hiring decisions, and noted the content expertise and full engagement with research and skills development in teaching and learning among teaching faculty. Finally, the reviewers highlighted the potential for inclusion in the Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health to enhance the Department's research profile and impact.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: considering future strategic directions for the Population Health and Health Policy programs, including potential integration, light of current workload and capacity to deliver; systematizing and streamlining processes for revising or discontinuing courses and aligning the Department's course offerings with strategic goals and teaching capacity; taking a more intentional approach to the scaffolding of skills across courses, including quantitative and qualitative research skills as well as other foundational skill domains in the field; prioritizing expansion of the faculty complement when opportunities permit, balanced across rank and tenure/teaching streams, "to address the high student to core faculty ratio, to refine programming and the expansion of experiential opportunities, and to strengthen clusters of faculty in areas of core research strength"; developing mechanisms to ensure that core and elective courses, class sizes, and teaching releases are equitably balanced for faculty; exploring ways to "allow adequate departmental capacity for strategic planning, student support, research and financial management, and community engagement"; providing equitable access to research space for dry lab researchers and their teams to foster collaboration and research-related experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate students; consulting with faculty and allocating temporary space to meet current needs in advance of the planned move to SAMIH; creating additional opportunities for community building and support such as a departmental orientation, social activities for DHS faculty and staff, and support activities and resources during stressful times; creating a strategic research and academic plan that includes a clear vision and mission to define the Department's academic priorities and commitments, guiding

future hiring decisions and the establishment of research clusters; paying close attention to recruitment, retention, and success rates of Indigenous students, and exploring whether Indigenous students may disproportionately experience barriers to participating in co-op, undergraduate research experience, and/or access to mentorship.

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

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The Dean's Office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the Chair of the Department of Health and Society.

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs in 2028 on the status of the implementation plans.

The next review will take place no later than the 2031-32 academic year.

## 6 Distribution

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On July 15<sup>th</sup>, 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 UTSC, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to unit/program leadership.

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

## 1 Review Summary

<b>Program(s) Reviewed:</b>	<p>Applied Climatology Minor (Science)</p> <p>Astronomy and Astrophysics Minor (Science)</p> <p>Biochemistry (HBSc): Major, Major Co-op</p> <p>Biological Chemistry (HBSc): Specialist, Specialist Co-op; Major, Major Co-op</p> <p>Chemistry (HBSc): Specialist, Specialist Co-op; Major, Major Co-op</p> <p>Environmental Chemistry (HBSc): Specialist, Specialist Co-op; Major, Major Co-op</p> <p>Environmental Geoscience (HBSc): Specialist, Specialist Co-op</p> <p>Environmental Physics (HBSc): Specialist, Specialist Co-op</p> <p>Environmental Science (HBSc): Major, Major Co-op; Minor</p> <p>Environmental Studies (BA): Major</p> <p>Global Environmental Change (formerly Environmental Biology), (HBSc): Specialist, Specialist Co-op</p> <p>Natural Sciences and Environmental Management Minor (Science)</p> <p>Physics and Astrophysics (HBSc): Specialist; Major</p> <p>Physical and Mathematical Sciences (HBSc): Specialist</p> <p>Physical Sciences (HBSc): Major</p> <p>Certificate in Sustainability (Category 2)</p> <p>Combined Degree Programs with FASE MEng</p> <p>Combined Degree Programs with MEnvSc</p> <p>Combined Degree Programs with OISE MT</p> <p>Master of Environmental Science (MEnvSc)</p> <p>Environmental Science (PhD)</p> <p>Environmental Science (MSc) (approved to begin in May 2023)</p>
<b>Unit Reviewed:</b>	Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences, University of Toronto Scarborough
<b>Commissioning Officer:</b>	Vice-Principal, Academic & Dean, University of Toronto Scarborough

<b>Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Simon Bates, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice President, Teaching &amp; Learning, and Professor of Teaching, Department of Physics &amp; Astronomy, University of British Columbia</li> <li>• Dr. Jeffrey McKenzie, Professor, Department of Earth &amp; Planetary Sciences, McGill University</li> <li>• Dr. Jonathan Overpeck, Samuel A. Graham Dean, School for Environment and Sustainability, University of Michigan</li> </ul>
<b>Date of Review Visit:</b>	March 27-28, 2024
<b>Review Report Received by VPAP:</b>	June 13, 2024
<b>Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:</b>	March 20, 2025
<b>Date Reported to AP&amp;P:</b>	April 10, 2025

## Previous UTQAP Review

Date:

### Summary of Findings and Recommendations

#### Significant Program Strengths

- Faculty and staff deliver a first-class undergraduate educational program
- Students obtain experience in industry, with co-op available for students in most programs
- Innovative diversity of degree offerings
- Range of funding opportunities available to students
- Outstanding faculty research
- Strong faculty collaborations within the department and across Canada
- Extraordinarily high morale

#### Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Developing a task force to review graduation rates and barriers to completion, as well as increasing outreach and tracking employment outcomes of graduates
- Addressing the writing requirements across all programs
- Addressing student challenges with calculus in introductory courses
- Expanding experiential learning opportunities for students in environmental science and environmental geoscience programs
- Supporting additional opportunities for undergraduate research
- Exploring opportunities for improvements in student advising
- Addressing challenges around staff workloads, equipment and space to provide better support to students and programs
- Exploring ways to enhance engagement between faculty from different disciplines and appointment categories within the department

## Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

### Documentation Provided to Reviewers

External Review Material: Terms of reference; Self-study and supporting data and appendices; Review report template; Site visit schedule; Previous review report, including the administrative response(s); Access to all undergraduate and graduate course and program descriptions; Access to the curricula vitae of faculty; Curriculum maps for the department's undergraduate and graduate programs.

Supplemental Material from Site Visit Meetings: Presentation deck from the UTSC Arts & Science Co-op Office.

## Consultation Process

Decanal group, faculty, students, administrative staff and senior program administrators, as well as members of relevant cognate units, including the UTSC Library, the Office of the Registrar, the Arts & Science Co-op Office, and the Office of the Vice-Principal Research & Innovation.

## Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

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### 1. Undergraduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ Program quality enhancement processes are in place, and reviewers observe no broad issues of concern
- Objectives
  - ▶ Program requirements including program-level learning outcomes are appropriate; and learning expectations and program outcomes are well-linked
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Admission requirements appear entirely appropriate for the programs offered
  - ▶ Environmental Science has very strong enrolment across all of its programs
  - ▶ Physics and Astrophysics program demonstrates high entrance requirements for incoming students
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Delivery modes are appropriate for the programs, with a reasonable mixture of in-person and online teaching
  - ▶ Curricula are current and relevant, reflecting trends within the various disciplines across DPES programs
  - ▶ Program curricula provide a good range of continuously assessed components, with a clear, cross-cutting focus on writing skills
  - ▶ DPES has been responsive to challenges related to changes in high school curricula by adapting their undergraduate course requirements
- Innovation
  - ▶ Availability of 'prep courses' for incoming students is noted as an important innovation related to undergraduate admissions
  - ▶ Many DPES program and course designs support Universal Design for Learning principals, which can enhance the experience of all learners
- Assessment of learning
  - ▶ Assessment methods are varied and balanced
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Impressive breadth and impact of the Co-op programs for undergraduates

- ▶ DPES programs provide numerous experiential learning opportunities for students, including teaching laboratories, field-based projects, and field trips
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - ▶ Physics and Astrophysics undergraduate students are academically focused, with strong GPA outcomes

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

- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Challenges noted related to management of the co-op program for the undergraduate programs noted repeatedly during site visit discussions; reviewers note that DPES desires to move this program out of the divisional co-op office and into the department

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ “It is impossible for us, with our short visit to campus, to fully understand the issues and implications of this [potential] change, and to provide a definitive recommendation as to management of the Co-op program. But it is very clear that there is an issue that must be addressed.”
  - ▶ Reviewers note that it should be a priority for the new Dean to determine appropriate future directions regarding management of the undergraduate co-op program, involving consultation and discussion with UTSC co-op office leadership, DPES representation, and the Dean’s office
  - ▶ “Ultimately, the goal of the Co-op program for DPES should be to (i) improve the experiential learning for students; (ii) ensure subject matter voices are present in designing and delivering the co-op support for DPES students, and (iii) capitalize on the coherence and economies of a central unit.”
  - ▶ Consider the potential feasibility of collaboration between DPES and the UTSC co-op office to hire staff who might be embedded in DPES but have clear liaison responsibility to the central co-op office
  - ▶ “It is critical that DPES student experience be paramount even if this means more university resources need to be focused on making sure off-campus partners also see their collaborations with the university as a winning venture”

## 2. Graduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ Unit has a thriving research environment for graduate students
  - ▶ DPES students comprise half of the graduate students affiliated with the UTSC campus



- ▶ Professional MSc in Environmental Science is a leader in Canada for one year coursework and co-op based environment programs, and is very effective both in teaching and creating a strong learning community
- ▶ Program quality enhancement processes are in place, and reviewers note no broad issues of concern
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ PhD program has had consistent application numbers, and approximately 15 new students enrol each year
  - ▶ Admission requirements appear entirely appropriate for the programs offered
  - ▶ Environmental Science has very strong enrolment across all of its programs
  - ▶ Environmental Studies program has shown a significant increase in enrolment in recent years
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Professional MSc in Environmental Science has a standard set of courses that prepares students for the workplace by developing professional skills
  - ▶ Course sequence pathways that do not impede time to completion for graduate students who do co-op options have been developed, and more work is in progress to improve these pathways
  - ▶ Program curricula provide a good range of continuously assessed components, with a clear, cross-cutting focus on writing skills
- Innovation
  - ▶ Many DPES program and course designs support Universal Design for Learning principals, which can enhance the experience of all learners
- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▶ In the Professional MSc, there are numerous activities to support students from diverse backgrounds
- Assessment of learning
  - ▶ Assessment methods are varied and balanced
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Professional MSc offers an online professional skills primer course for incoming students
  - ▶ Impressive breadth and impact of the Co-op program for the Professional MSc, with a 100% success rate in finding co-op/internship placements Professional Masters students
  - ▶ In addition to standard course requirements, DPES exhibits an excellent focus on preparing PhD students to enter the workforce
  - ▶ Department has introduced an innovative new staff position: a Student Learning and Professional Development Coordinator, to implement plans to support the development of work-integrated learning opportunities for doctoral students; reviewers note that this is one of the few programs in the physical sciences addressing the emerging trend of PhD students with post-degree goals outside of academia

- ▶ Professional MSc in Environmental Science co-op program is notable for being managed directly by DPES and not by the UTSC co-op office, and its success is a result of the work of a small number of dedicated staff members
- Quality indicators – graduate students
  - ▶ Students are very academically successful, with numerous competitive scholarships from entities such as NSERC, CIHR, OGS, etc.
  - ▶ PhD students are highly productive, with publications in a number of journals
- Student funding
  - ▶ “There is evidence that the financial support for the PhD program was sufficient”

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

- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Graduate students note some challenges related to interactions with faculty and peers at the St. George campus, which appear to be partly a result of physical distance and the time and resources required to travel between campuses
  - ▶ Graduate students express feeling siloed at UTSC, and unable to easily access infrastructure across the three campuses
  - ▶ Graduate students express concerns about TA hours, feeling that the actual time they spend far exceeds their budgeted hours
- Student funding
  - ▶ Reviewers note they did not receive information regarding financial arrangements for students in the professional MSc program

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Reviewers recommend “a review of TA activities and if necessary, a calibration of TA hours and workloads so that students only work for the hours they are paid”

### 3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ DPES faculty have excellent broad expertise across their respective fields of study
  - ▶ Quality of DPES faculty is very impressive
  - ▶ “Given the limited number of faculty relative to the expansive disciplinary nature of DPES, it makes sense that each disciplinary grouping within the department has made strategic choices to focus on specific research areas as their strengths”
- Research
  - ▶ Departmental research is exceptionally strong
  - ▶ Research strength is a key feature in supporting a thriving graduate education system in DPES

- ▶ DPES has several Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada and holders of Canada Research Chairs; and many faculty receive high-profile national and international awards
- ▶ DPES produces more than 200 peer-reviewed publications annually, and consistently receives more than \$2.5 million each year in competitive grant funding
- ▶ Almost all tenure stream faculty hold tri-council grants
- Faculty
  - ▶ Faculty are leading numerous initiatives related to EDI, including a teaching grant to support EDI training for graduate students and TAs
  - ▶ Teaching stream faculty are leading technological and pedagogical innovations, as well as a number of EDI-centred curriculum initiatives
  - ▶ DPES has an excellent balance of tenure and teaching stream faculty, who enjoy strong integration and mutual recognition across the two groups
  - ▶ Teaching stream faculty who support the professional MSc program display an impressive breadth of knowledge
  - ▶ Reviewers “did not hear any concerns expressed about supervisory loads nor did we observe any associated problems”
  - ▶ Teaching stream faculty make important contributions to course design, undergraduate research activities, and pedagogical scholarship within their respective areas
  - ▶ Teaching stream publications on Chemistry Education noted as particularly impressive
  - ▶ Chemistry program has a very strong complement of tenure and teaching stream faculty with numerous teaching and research awards
  - ▶ Impressive Physics faculty group, who put on a full BSc program with a “skeleton” group of 8 faculty members

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

- Faculty
  - ▶ While DPES is a large department, the faculty complement is lean in most subject areas; Physics in particular is noted as the “leanest”
  - ▶ Half of the Physics group have been on sabbatical or other leave, with similar absences anticipated the following year; reviewers note concerns about the sustainability of this arrangement
  - ▶ Recent opportunities to grow the faculty complement do not appear to have been pursued by the Physics group, “which suggests a degree of internal disharmony”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ “Given that faculty and staff numbers need to increase to support the growing nature of departmental student enrollments, it makes sense that each disciplinary grouping within DPES continues to focus on specific strengths rather than become more diffuse in research excellence”

- Faculty
  - ▶ Reviewers recommend that adding to the diversity of the faculty complement should be a departmental goal, though acknowledge that this process can take time

## 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
  - ▶ Unit has benefited from a stable period of strong departmental leadership; leadership's contributions to the success of DPES are widely acknowledged
  - ▶ Departmental morale appears high; very positive interactions noted across various programs and across student, faculty and staff roles
  - ▶ Undergraduate program has very strong connections to local community, with 50% of students coming from the immediate surrounding area
  - ▶ Numerous community partnerships are noted to further drive student diversity
  - ▶ "In DPES, the cohesive and respectful interactions between research-focused and teaching stream faculty are the norm...DPES should be commended for this positive, collegial environment and esteem of expertise."
  - ▶ Faculty appear to enjoy and benefit from participation in a unit with such a broad range of interdisciplinary teaching and research opportunities
  - ▶ Department enjoys good relationships with other UTSC units
  - ▶ DPES subject librarian is very active in working with faculty and students
  - ▶ Department clearly demonstrates strong relationships with local community and organizations
  - ▶ DPES has numerous industry and government connections through the Professional MSc program
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ DPES's organizational and financial structure is appropriate and effective, with clear processes in place for managing departmental financial activities and supporting research activities
  - ▶ Impressive investment in laboratory facilities since the last review
  - ▶ The analytical instrumentation facility is impressive and used by researchers and students, including undergraduates
  - ▶ Some teaching laboratories are state-of-the-art
  - ▶ DPES is located in a fairly new building with excellent spaces and resources
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Department is functioning highly effectively, and in alignment with UTSC and U of T's plans and priorities

- ▶ “DPES programs are distinct in their applied and interdisciplinary learning, with many programs augmented with strong experiential components”
- ▶ Many DPES programs are in growth mode, and the new Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health (SAMIH) may offer further growth potential through teaching opportunities
- ▶ Faculty and staff support a highly cohesive and functional grouping of different disciplines, programs and research activities
- ▶ Significant progress has been made on responding to recommendations from the previous review
- ▶ Department has undergone a major transformation in response to the 2017 review, with a net increase of 18 faculty and staff, and 150 submissions of course/program proposals and revisions
- ▶ Department has made significant progress in increasing experiential learning opportunities for students, with “a wealth” of such opportunities now available
- ▶ Reviewers note many exciting advances in promoting departmental EDI initiatives
- ▶ The Registrar’s office has done impressive work in promoting the department’s programs to Black and Indigenous students
- ▶ Reviewers highlight that DPES maintains accreditation for some Chemistry programs with the Canadian Society for Chemistry; and for the Major programs in Environmental Science and Environmental Studies by the Environmental Careers Organization of Canada
- ▶ “[W]e feel that DPES, as a whole, is very strong as an interdisciplinary academic unit; it leads the way on campus for research graduate student enrollment, research outputs are high quality and taught programs are current, interdisciplinary and distinctively experiential. It is the integration of several disciplines that fosters a spirit of interdisciplinary collaboration, particularly for the disciplines co-located within the same building.”
- ▶ DPES has a dedicated committee to help promote EDI initiatives, and EDI appears to be integrated in some of the unit’s curricula
- International comparators
  - ▶ “The department is a unique combination of disciplines and interdisciplinary synergy that is clearly thriving under a common departmental home”

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

- Relationships
  - ▶ Relationships with the Campus Co-op office appear strained as a result of differing perspectives regarding where ownership of the DPES undergraduate co-op programs should reside
  - ▶ Reviewers wonder if the physical separation of the Physics faculty group from the rest of the DPES unit serves as a barrier to cohesion and relationship building; Physics teaching stream faculty note for example that they rarely have opportunities to collaborate on pedagogy or innovation projects with other instructors
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ DPES workloads are high, particularly for support staff

- ▶ Reviewers echo faculty concerns regarding insufficient teaching and administrative staffing; “[this] is a serious issue given overall rising enrollments and future increases due to more activity on the UTSC campus”
- ▶ Reviewers note that there does not appear to be a coherent departmental plan for prioritized staffing requests, due to constraints related to a hiring freeze
- ▶ Some “minor disquiet” noted in the DPES community regarding a move away from the ‘Associate Chair (Discipline)’ role to disciplinary representatives reporting to the unit head
- ▶ Some teaching laboratories are outdated
- ▶ Some challenges noted regarding student preparedness and confidence in laboratory settings; accessibility for all types of learners is also limited, as are the resources for teaching lab technical support
- ▶ Reviewers note it is unfortunate that the Physics group does not reside in the same building as the rest of DPES; and that such distance may make it difficult for Physics to feel cohesion with the rest of the unit
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Lack of clarity noted around whether DPES has a strategic and/or succession plan to address numerous upcoming changes that will impact them, including a change in Departmental Chair; a new UTM Vice-Principal, Academic and Dean; and the opening of SAMIH
  - ▶ Reviewers note that the importance of EDI was addressed in a somewhat limited manner in the DPES self study, and that the unit’s diverse student body is eager to see EDI initiatives given greater prominence in the department
- International comparators
  - ▶ Reviewers note that comparison of DPES and its programs to similar units at peer institutions is difficult, given the omnibus nature of the department

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ Reviewers recommend prioritizing the development of a collaborative plan to increase the integration of the Physics group into the broader DPES unit, and address challenges in Physics related to cohesion and capacity; (reviewers note that addressing these issues will likely require an investment of resources, but that increased enrolments and the improved functioning of the Physics program should justify such investments)
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ “More attention and investment are needed to ensure that all teaching laboratories, and not just some, are safe and accessible to all learners”
  - ▶ Undergraduate students note a desire for extended library hours and communal meeting spaces
  - ▶ “We learned that the university will be moving to responsibility-based financial management, and hope that implementation of this strategy will result in increased flows of resources to DPES commensurate with the growing enrollments and success of the department”

- ▶ While fundraising is not currently a significant component of DPES activities, reviewers note some potential for development in this area (at the institutional, divisional and/or departmental level), given the strong growth of DPES alumni numbers, and the growing societal importance of sustainability, environmental action, and social justice issues
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Prospects for the unit's future are bright, "particularly if [the] university increases funding to match the on-going growth in departmental stature, student numbers and overall impact"
  - ▶ "There are opportunities for further departmental growth and increased teaching, but strategic decisions are needed."
  - ▶ "[G]iven the growing societal need for sustainability, environmental solutions, climate action, and socially just solutions, DPES offers the university a way to become more prominent both nationally and internationally. The university must invest more in DPES in order to fully seize this opportunity."
  - ▶ Noting enrolment opportunities for DPES related to the opening of SAMIH, the reviewers recommend accelerated planning for how SAMIH students will be accommodated on campus, especially in teaching labs
  - ▶ ..."The university must make it a top priority to address current limitations [in particular related to teaching laboratories] and ensure that the fixes will be able to accommodate the technical support demands that will arise with increased student numbers."
  - ▶ Reviewers recommend that DPES ensure that EDI is made more prominent in departmental activities, noting that students would be useful and enthusiastic partners in planning and implementing related endeavours
  - ▶ Consider working with faculty, staff and students to embed more EDI into departmental program design, assessment, classroom climate and other areas; consider also engaging with partners from across UTSC and beyond, who may have relevant expertise



March 20, 2025

Professor Nicholas Rule  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
Division of the Vice-President & Provost  
University of Toronto

**Dean's Administrative Response: External Review of the Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences,  
University of Toronto Scarborough**

Dear Professor Rule,

Thank you for your letter of December 9, 2024, requesting my administrative response to the March 2024 external review of the Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences. I want to extend my gratitude to the review team—Simon Bates, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President, Teaching & Learning, and Professor of Teaching, Department of Physics & Astronomy, University of British Columbia; Jeffrey McKenzie, Professor, Department of Earth & Planetary Sciences, McGill University; and Jonathan Overpeck, Samuel A. Graham Dean, School for Environment and Sustainability, University of Michigan—for their consultation with the Department during the site visit from March 27-28, 2024, and for their Report, which was finalized on June 13, 2024, and shared with the Department.

We deeply appreciate the reviewers' commendation of the Department's curricula in relation to current disciplinary trends, as well as the Department's extensive experiential learning and co-op offerings for undergraduate students. In addition to praising the flourishing research environment created by the Department for its graduate students and for preparing PhD students to pursue different pathways, the reviewers recognized the technological and pedagogical innovations led by the Department's faculty members, noting the transformative progress undertaken by the Department since its last review.

The report from the review team identifies several areas for enhancement and development, including determining appropriate future directions for optimal stewardship of the undergraduate co-op program; exploring options to ensure the Department's graduate student population is appropriately supported; encouraging greater collaboration and community among all faculty members of the Department; making Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) more prominent in departmental activities; engaging in strategic planning to address future leadership and growth changes; and assessing available laboratory spaces in relation to technical support demands and student accessibility needs. With this letter, I have included a table summarizing the responses to the specific recommendations of the reviewers and anticipated timelines for implementation, where appropriate.

Once again, I thank the review team for their insightful and valuable review of the Department and its programs. I look forward to supporting the Department in implementing the recommendations of this report. The Dean's Office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the Chair of the Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences. An interim report to the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs will be prepared in **Fall 2028**. The next external review of the Department will take place **no later than the 2031-32 academic year**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Karin Ruhlandt".

Professor Karin Ruhlandt  
Vice-Principal Academic & Dean



## 2023-24 UTQAP Review of the UTSC Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences - 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 highlighted significant challenges and differences of opinion related to management of the undergraduate co-op program. They recommended that UTSC leadership engage in consultations with all stakeholders to determine appropriate future directions for optimal stewardship of the program.	1.	<p>“[The management of the undergraduate co-op program] should be a priority for the new Dean. There should be a series of focused conversations around addressing the breakdown of trust and cooperation, involving Co-op office leadership, departmental representation, and the Dean’s office, with a decision on the way forward (even if as a 1-2 year pilot) by Fall 2024. Ultimately, the goal of the Co-op program for DPES should be to (i) improve the experiential learning for students; (ii) ensure subject matter voices are present in designing and delivering the co-op support for DPES students, and (iii) capitalize on the coherence and economies of a central unit.”</p>	<p>This is an issue that was raised extensively in our self-assessment report. We are delighted that the external reviewers emphasized the need to rectify the multitude of issues that make the performance of our co-op programs far from satisfactory. Moving forward, the next major aspiration of the department is to take full control of our co-op programs; especially in Environmental Sciences (EES). Counter to the significant growth of our EES (Major, Minors, and Specialist) programs over the past 6-7 years, the enrollment trends in their co-op counterparts have been disturbingly stagnant with no discernible signs of improvement (i.e., collectively less than 50 EES co-op students).</p> <p>While the Arts &amp; Science Co-op Office has recently embarked on a promising exercise that aims to address some of the long-standing dysfunctionalities of the programs, such as the development of proper course sequencing that will increase the number of summer offerings, we have fundamentally different perspectives regarding the framework that should be in place</p>	<p>Co-op is a historic strength of UTSC, and the Dean’s Office is committed to the success of these programs. As an initial step toward addressing the concerns identified by reviewers and the department, the Arts &amp; Science Co-Op Office has hired a dedicated liaison to support programming in the sciences. We have also completed a review of all required course pathways for students in the department’s co-op programs and committed funding to better facilitate regular timetabling; this has been an ongoing barrier to program completion. We are in the early stages of this new structure and will need to assess its success.</p> <p>We acknowledge that the department has a different perspective on supporting the professional development of students, particularly at the undergraduate level. With that in mind, I am committed to engaging in strategic discussions with academic leaders and with the Arts &amp; Science Co-Op office to ensure that appropriate supports are in place for the long-term success of co-op and experiential learning</p>

			<p>to ensure a rich professional development for our students. The astonishing record of our MEnvSci internship team -100% internship placements annually, and more than 70% extensions of their internships and/or full-time employment offers- sets an “academic model” that we aspire to implement to our co-op programs. These tangible deliverables are the result of an academically rigorous curriculum, rich in experiential-learning opportunities, and tightly linked with the workforce (industry, government, non-profit organizations).</p> <p>From a departmental perspective, having our undergraduate co-op programs under our supervision will establish the department as the focal academic unit within the UofT system that offers comprehensive education and promising career prospects in Environmental Sciences. A fully functional undergraduate EES co-op, combined with our Professional MEnvSci program and the proposed Work Integrated Learning pathway in our PhD program will allow us to establish the Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences as an academic unit that offers clear linkages with the workforce for BSc, MSc, and PhD students!</p> <p>It is our hope that this change in the administration of our co-op program, endowed with the appropriate human and financial resources, will be in the foreseeable future. As a first step, our plans involve the EES undergraduate co-op, but we do intend to request full administrative oversight of the CHM programs within the next 2-3 years.</p>	<p>not only in the department but across the campus as a whole. At this stage, we are interested in taking a coordinated approach that supports and connects needs across the campus rather than implementing department-specific offices. We are considering the possibility of an external review of co-op at UTSC as a part of the assessment of next steps.</p>
The reviewers raised concerns that graduate students in DPES feel isolated from the St. George campus,	2.	“In our meeting with graduate students two issues of concern were discussed. First, the graduate students found interactions with faculty	The vast majority of these concerns have been raised by students, who are affiliated with tri-campus graduate programs of cognate academic	Almost half of UTSC graduate students are “affiliated” and belong to tri-campus graduate units that are largely based downtown. The Vice-

<p>encounter difficulties accessing tri-campus resources and infrastructure, and report that their TA responsibilities often require more time than is budgeted. They recommended exploring approaches to ensure that the unit's graduate student population is appropriately supported.</p>		<p>and peers at the St. George campus to be challenging. Part of the issue was physical distance, and the time/resources required to visit the other campus. Further, the students felt siloed at UTSC, and not easily able to access infrastructure across the tri-campus. Second, the graduate students expressed concerns about TA hours, and felt that their actual time spent undertaking TA hours far exceeded their budgeted hours. We would recommend a review of TA activities and if necessary, a calibration of TA hours and workloads so that students only work for the hours they are paid.”</p>	<p>units primarily located at the St. George campus. DPES has already reached out to the departments of Chemistry and Physics. Starting from next year, we will play a more active role with the delivery of the seminar series of their units and they will do the same for ours. There will be more opportunities for cross-fertilization through nomination of speakers, as well as live streaming of all the talks. That said, the department is very open to instigate more initiatives that will bring the three campuses of the University of Toronto system closer, assuming that the required resources are available.</p> <p>As far as the TA activities are concerned, the department has recently completed a comprehensive review of our TA assignments and we are happy to report two major advancements: (i) Courses that needed extra support have -on average- received a 10% increase in the allocated TA hours. (ii) The tasks assigned to TAs have been revisited to ensure optimal use of the existing resources for several courses. We have not received any complaints by any of our graduate students so far. We are committed to closely monitor this issue and rectify any problems that may be raised in the future.</p>	<p>Dean Graduate &amp; Postdoctoral Studies at UTSC regularly holds events and workshops to foster a unique graduate community on campus. The Graduate Chair from Chemistry tries to regularly meet with UTSC graduate students in person and we will encourage leaders from other graduate units to do the same.</p> <p>The Dean's Office appreciates the department's collaborations with other cognate units at the St. George campus to bring graduate students from that campus and UTSC together for various initiatives. We also support the department's efforts to review and optimize the allocation of tasks and hours for TA activities across different courses. We look forward to engaging in further discussion with the department about how these processes will connect to the campus-wide implementation of the planned new budget model to ensure appropriate supports.</p>
<p>The reviewers recommended that the unit engage in a strategic faculty complement planning process; and that they prioritize ensuring appropriate coverage in Physics and adding to the diversity of the faculty complement when hiring opportunities permit. They also highlighted opportunities to strengthen the integration of the Physics faculty group with the rest of the unit, and to</p>	<p>3.</p>	<p>“We learned that 4 out of the 8 Physics faculty (tenure track plus teaching) were on sabbatical and leave this year (with the same or similar numbers next year). It is hard to see how this is sustainable, let alone how it can support growth in student numbers (e.g., associated with the SAMIH). Conversely, we also learned that opportunities to grow the faculty complement were not taken up by Physics faculty which suggests a degree of internal disharmony. We wonder if the physical separation from the rest of the DPES department is a barrier. For example,</p>	<p>The approval of all the sabbatical/study leaves during the academic year 2022-2023 was an executive decision made by the leadership of the department, in order to accommodate a multitude of health/mental issues raised by our faculty members after 2.5 years of the pandemic. It was a one-time-only decision to support our academic personnel and allow them to recover from the toll of these extraordinary times. The physical separation of the physics group from the rest of the department is certainly an issue....and an unfortunate decision that was made in 2014</p>	<p>Recognizing the long after-effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges to collegiality within our community due to global geopolitical uncertainties, the Office of the Vice-Dean Faculty Affairs, Equity, and Success (OVDFAES) has designated 2024-25 as the Year Towards Restoration, with new initiatives organized aiming to transform the institutional culture of UTSC into a more restorative one. We are pleased also to note that three faculty members from the Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences are part of this year's</p>

<p>encourage greater collaboration and community among all DPES faculty.</p>		<p>the teaching stream faculty in Physics, in contrast to the other DPES Teaching Stream faculty, said they rarely had the opportunity to collaborate on pedagogy or innovation projects with other instructors. Lab technical support is also an issue that needs to be addressed.</p> <p>We recommend making it a priority (e.g., because of likely near-term demand growth due to the SAMIH) to develop a collaborative plan that addresses the challenges noted above in a pragmatic and sustainable manner. This plan will undoubtedly require more investment of resources, but increased enrollments should justify this investment, as will the fact that a more well-functioning and integrated Physics program should serve to increase the stature of DPES and the university.”</p>	<p>during the construction of the ESC building. We are hopeful that the ongoing development in our campus will offer an opportunity for space re-allocation that will make it feasible for the physics group to come closer to the rest of the department. Of equal importance is our proposal for a major renovation of our A-level physics labs (please refer to our self-assessment study). The proposed changes will not only enrich the learning experience of our students but will also allow us to accommodate the enrollment increase from the establishment of SAMIH. Last but not least, there is a plan for a new faculty position in the area of environmental physics that will not only allow to support our dynamic specialist program but will also bring (intellectually) closer the disciplines of Environmental Sciences and Physics. Once the current hiring freeze is removed, this position will be one of our strategic priorities.</p>	<p>Mentoring Excellence and Diversity Advisory Committee (MEAD), which advises on and provides resources for the professional development of faculty and librarians. In addition, DPES faculty are active members of two OVDFAES-funded Mentorship Partnerships focused on (1) sensory, affective, imaginative and land-based (SAIL) pedagogy and (2) sharing Indigenous knowledge and learnings. Mentorship Partnerships aim to foster community and learning among faculty and librarians. DPES participation affirms faculty need for such opportunities; and DPES leadership has been integral to their success.</p> <p>Several capital projects are currently underway at the University of Toronto Scarborough, including the construction of the Myron and Berna Garron Health Sciences Complex (SAMIH) and the development of Phase 2 of the Environmental and Related Technologies Hub. My office and I look forward to advocating spacing (re-)allocation needs on behalf of the department when engaging in discussions with the Office of the Vice-President &amp; Principal and the Office of the Vice-Principal Research and Innovation as these projects continue and near completion.</p> <p>My office and I appreciate the department’s desire for renovated physics lab spaces to enhance the student experience and the identification of environmental physics as a potential area for future hiring. In the current budget environment, my office is actively working to align future hiring and capital projects with campus strategic priorities, while being mindful of the Physics group’s current needs within the department.</p>
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	4.	<p>“We recognize that increased diversity in the faculty complement is a slow process (particularly in tight financial conditions and in a department where people like their colleagues and don’t leave). Nonetheless, creating a more diverse faculty should also be a goal.”</p>	<p>As noted during the site visit of the external reviewers, the department has made remarkable progress in achieving a gender-balanced faculty membership over the past ten (10) years; especially if we consider that we are a STEM department. The department has also been actively involved with academic initiatives targeting a multitude of equity-deserving groups, e.g., Environmental Anthropology. We are intensely committed to continue with these initiatives for years to come.</p>	<p>UTSC is committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion in its goal of inspiring inclusive excellence. This commitment is reflected in our faculty hiring practices and our success in welcoming Black and Indigenous colleagues to UTSC through the UTSC Pathway to Parity program (supported by funding from the University Provost), a concerted effort to increase the number of Black and Indigenous faculty to reflect the community and student populations we serve. DPES is a valued partner in this work, having launched one (ultimately unsuccessful) recruitment effort in recent years and leading a Pathway hire in 2024-25. The current Pathway search is in Environmental Studies and attracted a gender and racially diverse pool of applicants, boding well for future hiring efforts. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with the department on ongoing planning toward the further diversification of faculty and related structural changes that support inclusive excellence across the campus.</p> <p>Currently, three of the 17 members (including 2 Co-Chairs) of UTSC’s Mentoring Excellence and Diversity Advisory Committee (MEAD) are faculty members from the Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences. Notably, all three of these faculty members are women, and one is a person of colour. MEAD advises on and provides resources for the professional development of faculty and librarians.</p>
<p>The reviewers noted limited coverage of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion activities in the unit’s self-study document. They broadly recommended that DPES take steps to ensure that EDI is made more prominent in departmental activities,</p>	5.	<p>“...the students that we met with were diverse and keen to see greater prominence of EDI initiatives (e.g., equity and inclusion oriented, including the teaching of knowledge from more diverse sources and perspectives); they would be useful and enthusiastic partners in planning and implementing such endeavours.”</p>	<p>DPES has a dedicated and extremely active committee to deal with Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) issues, and its mandate is completely aligned with the UTSC mission. The purpose has been to promote initiatives that remove barriers to access opportunities/resources for faculty, staff, and</p>	<p>The department has been actively involved in the campus-wide curriculum review, which since 2020 has been working to reflect equity, accessibility, anti-racism, anti-colonialism, and Indigeneity in curriculum and pedagogy, as well as student mental health and well-being. We have included in our formal communications</p>

<p>and that they engage with students in pursuing such endeavors.</p>			<p>students and inspire intellectual growth over the entire EDI spectrum. Most of these initiatives are planned and discussed within the EDI team and are communicated by the Chair's office. Faculty who are involved in campus-wide initiatives, such as campus EDI committee, microaggression in the classroom, EDI in Teaching etc. share insights with the team and work towards departmental EDI goals.</p> <p>The Dean's office and DPES have dedicated funding for faculty to work and implement EDI principles in our program and course delivery. One such example is the Pedagogies of Inclusive Excellence (PIE) fund that is available for DPES faculty to incorporate inclusive pedagogies, including Indigenous content in our curriculum. We are extremely proud to report that DPES has achieved an impressive success rate with the PIE fund, and the successful proposals include learning opportunities conducive to the EDI principles across a multitude of A-,B-C-, and D-level courses.</p> <p>DPES faculty, staff, and students are also increasingly engaged with the Indigenous history and knowledge of the Peoples that populated the land we live on today. A recent event that was sponsored by a PIE fund initiative was held at DPES (e.g., workshops with Indigenous collaborators and colleagues) on June 27, 2023: Walking Together - Implementing Indigenous pedagogies in Environmental Sciences. During this workshop, the participants discussed how to include in the course material, Indigenous teaching and the history of racism and colonialism, highlighted the fear of faculty in getting it wrong and offering inadequate content.</p>	<p>(including the <a href="#">UTSC Campus Curriculum Review Working Circle's Resource Hub</a>) to academic units examples of resources to consult as they incorporate different elements of EDI in their development of curriculum, and we will continue to partner with the department in the implementation and deepening of this work.</p> <p>UTSC has dedicated educational developers to assist the department in developing curriculum that centres universal design for learning and anti-racist pedagogies. In addition, the UTSC's Mentoring Excellence and Diversity Advisory Committee (MEAD) advises on and provides resources for the professional development of faculty and librarians.</p> <p>My office is committed to continuing to support the department's efforts to enhance and embed EDI in its programming, activities, and events. We would be happy to connect the department with the campus's Marketing and Communications team to brainstorm additional ways to better showcase the EDI and reconciliation initiatives that are underway in the department from an outreach perspective.</p>
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		<p>Similar events provide us with most valuable feedback from Indigenous colleagues, students and allies to be courageous and open to criticism, as this is the first step towards a sincere reconciliation and collaboration. Such events also helped us form valuable collaborations with other non-Indigenous colleagues to a multitude of (presumably intimidating) tasks together instead of individually. Based on participation of our faculty and staff in such workshops and events, as well as the received feedback, we think that DPES, and the EES group specifically, is on the right track to creating a safer and more inclusive space for our current and future students.</p> <p>Discussion and collaborative work during these workshops showed the high interest of our faculty and staff to get involved with EDI issues and use any opportunity to integrate Indigenous history, knowledge and ways of teaching not only in conventional settings, but also in field-based courses (e.g., history of the people and lands we travel during field camps). Another example is a project that seeks to promote anti-colonial pedagogy at UTSC through an experiential learning opportunity for DPES Graduate students. This work builds upon an established relationship with a community and treaty partner, Giidaakunadaad (Nancy Rowe) at Akinomaagaye Gaamik, on the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Here, our students have an opportunity to engage with Indigenous culture and practice and reflect on their own values, conceptions and responsibilities through an immersive community-based learning experience.</p> <p>The MEnvSc program prepares students for careers as environmental professionals, and many of our graduates will directly engage with Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous</p>	
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		<p>communities in their careers. With this in mind, we are working to foster an understanding of how to equitably engage with diverse knowledge systems and what it means to be an active treaty partner.</p> <p>DPES instructors and the Chair’s Office continuously aim at creating a safe, inclusive and equitable environment for everyone. For example, instructors try to make sure that all students know that everyone is welcome in the learning environment and that everyone can participate in experiential learning. This includes subsidizing field trips, helping students maneuver travel grant applications to further lower the costs, or make sure that the field trip logistics are clearly outlined, reviewed, and discussed with the students. These practices allow us to determine the changes that have to be made to be more inclusive or the alternative options that can be offered.</p> <p>Our many field trips in environmental science are key for experiential learning, but access to proper safety gear represents a subtle economic barrier for students, who did not grow up with substantial outdoor experience during their childhood. Many students lack the proper rain gear and steel toed boots to safely participate in field trips. To address this issue, Environmental Science received CTL funding to procure field camp equipment (\$12,576). The grant was used to improve the recruitment of students into geosciences by removing barriers (i.e., reducing the cost) for field trip participation.</p> <p>In addition to the departmental efforts to foster inclusion and accessibility in our courses, the University of Toronto Scarborough offers student a multitude of services and funding</p>	
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			opportunities; please refer to our self-assessment study.	
	6.	“We recommend that DPES ensure that EDI is prominent in department activities, and with speakers/visitors brought in to interact with the students.”	Please see our response to comment #5.	Please see our response to recommendation #5. We would also be happy to connect the department with offices within UTSC, such as the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Office and the Office of Indigenous Initiatives to explore recommended practices and plan for ways to execute these effectively.
	7.	“We recognize that increased diversity in the faculty complement is a slow process (particularly in tight financial conditions and in a department where people like their colleagues and don’t leave). Nonetheless, creating a more diverse faculty should also be a goal. In the meantime, an approach may be to work with current faculty, staff, and students to embed more EDI in departmental assessment, program design, classroom climate, and other areas. We also encourage working with partners from across UTSC, as well as from community and other universities, where relevant expertise can be brought in.”	Please see our response to comment #5.	Please see our response to recommendation #5. We would also be happy to connect the department with offices within UTSC, such as the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Office and the Office of Indigenous Initiatives to explore recommended practices and plan for ways to execute these effectively.
The reviewers highlighted a lack of clarity around whether DPES has developed plans to address numerous upcoming leadership and growth changes that will significantly impact them. They emphasized the critical importance of strategic planning and decision making for the unit.	8.	“There are numerous changes ahead for DPES, including a change in Departmental Chair, a new Dean, and the opening of SAMIH. It was not clear that DPES had a strategic and/or succession plan to address these numerous changes that will occur over the next year. There are opportunities for further departmental growth and increased teaching, but strategic decisions are needed.”	<p>The department is currently in the phase of recruiting a new Chair. While this change will inevitably involve a learning curve from the new leadership, the department has a clear academic plan, as amply described in the self-assessment study, that ensures its seamless future growth.</p> <p>In regard to the academic changes related to the opening of SAMIH, the department recently modified our former Specialist in Biological Chemistry, now referred to as Medicinal and Biological Chemistry, in order to highlight the existing medicinal chemistry content already in the program, and to further expand on in the</p>	<p>My office will be working closely with the department through the transition to a new Chair, building on the invaluable contributions and stellar leadership that the current Chair has provided to the department for many years. DPES is also actively involved in campus-wide planning that relates to SAMIH programming, recruitment, and space-related needs in the life sciences.</p> <p>My office looks forward to participating in the Chemical Society of Canada’s re-accreditation process for the department’s suite of Chemistry programs, including the modified and re-titled</p>

			<p>same thematic area through additional course offerings. It is anticipated that this revised program will better align with the interests of our students and campus, and lead to increased growth in the future. As a result of the implemented program changes, which included a program title change, the Chemical Society of Canada (CSC) accreditation for the Biological Chemistry Specialist does not apply to the Medicinal and Biological Chemistry Specialist. We have applied for accreditation of this new program, and we anticipate that it will easily meet the requirements for accreditation next month, when the site visit of the CSC external appraisers will take place.</p> <p>This specialist and its co-op counterpart are crafted as an intensive program that provides students with the breadth and depth needed to explore chemistry and its myriad of applications to medicinal, biological and health-related sciences. The first year of the program provides a solid base in general chemistry, introductory biology and calculus (two courses each), as well as introductory courses in physics and statistics (one each). The second year offers introductory courses in the main subdisciplines of chemistry, along with courses in cell biology. The third year brings in more specialized courses in biochemistry, bio-organic chemistry and medicinal chemistry, while continuing to develop student knowledge of organic, analytical and either physical or inorganic chemistry. The third-year courses lay the foundation for advanced interdisciplinary courses in the fourth year, which showcase applications of biological and medicinal chemistry through contemporary topics. As part of their final year, students are required to complete at least 0.5 credit of directed research under the supervision of a faculty member,</p>	Specialist and Specialist (Co-op) in Medicinal and Biological Chemistry in April 2025.
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			culminating in a written thesis and oral presentation by the student. Overall, students need to complete between 14.5 and 15.0 credits to meet the program requirements (depending on student course selection).	
Noting the impending arrival of SAMIH students at UTSC and related enrolment opportunities for DPES, the reviewers recommended accelerated planning for accommodating these learners on campus, with a particular focus on teaching laboratories. They also urged unit and divisional leadership to assess available laboratory spaces, and ensure that these spaces are updated appropriately to meet technical support demands and to accommodate student accessibility needs.	9.	“Given that SAMIH students will be on campus starting Fall 2024, we recommend accelerated planning for how these students will be accommodated, especially with respect to the teaching labs that will be needed.”	Thanks to the Dean’s support, the department has been granted an additional technician position to support the delivery of our Chemistry labs. However, it is absolutely necessary to get one more technician position given that the incoming cohort of students is expected to increase exponentially the pressure to our personnel. This request will be submitted as part of our new faculty complement plan.	My office and I are continuing to work with the department to address these concerns. We recognize the pressures that the department has been experiencing and will continue to partner with them to address these needs as best we can given the current fiscal climate and related hiring constraints.
	10.	“There are currently safety issues in the chemistry laboratories, such as line of sight for instructors who must be able to observe all students. Furthermore, there are currently some challenges around student preparedness and confidence in laboratory settings. Accessibility for all types of learners is also limited, and the resources for teaching lab technical support is stretched too thinly. The university must make it a top priority to address current [laboratory] limitations and ensure that the fixes will be able to accommodate the technical support demands that will arise with increased student numbers.”	<p>This comment from the external reviewers was most welcome. Our self-assessment study allocated more than ten pages to communicate the need for additional investments to our old Chemistry labs (Science Wing). One of the core issues that continues to plague the SW chemistry teaching laboratories since they were last renovated in 2004 are the poor sight lines, making it difficult to adequately communicate instructions, monitor student progress, and quickly identify students who may require extra attention. This is especially important because these labs are used for our A-level undergraduate chemistry laboratory practical sessions. These courses have a large enrollment of students with a wide array of diverse abilities and varying levels of chemistry knowledge and experience from their secondary institutions.</p> <p>Apart from poor sightlines, insufficient lighting is another downfall of the opaque walled fume hoods. Workbenches rely on two fluorescent tube lights to illuminate the space which can burn out causing the need for replacement of the bulb</p>	The accessibility and safety of our labs are paramount to the experiences of students, researchers, and educators. My office and I will advocate for these issues on behalf of the department during discussions with the Office of the Vice-President & Principal and the Office of the Vice-Principal Research and Innovation. In addition, we will consult with the Environmental Health and Safety Office as needed.

		<p>or in some cases the ballast. Fume hoods are also reliant on two working fluorescent tube lights, which without them make the fume hoods unsafe to use. Redesigning and renovating the layout of the space would not only improve the sightlines and illumination of workspace while making the labs safer to enhance the student learning experience, it would also present an opportunity to design the labs such that they can accommodate other disciplines from future growth if required, such as Environmental Sciences.</p> <p>In addition to making the space more flexible, incorporating new technology such as Piab vacuum systems and replacing the Constant Air Volume (CAV) fume hood systems with Variable Air Volume (VAV) systems (similar to those incorporated in the ESCB labs) would make the labs much more energy efficient and environmentally friendly, along with saving the University a significant amount on their energy expenses. Moreover, while the SW teaching labs have recently received a CTL teaching equipment grant to invest in accessible chemistry labware and equipment for students acquiring accommodations, there should also be a larger investment in adjustable height fume hoods and lab benches. Currently, each large lab has one accessible workstation with a hood, which is at a non-adjustable height. Incorporating large screen TVs and accompanying micro-PCs would also help to standardize pre-lab talks amongst TAs and significantly improve the communication of instructions to enhance the facilitation of lab exercises. There are a number of other changes that should be in place, and it is our hope that the upper administration will provide all the resources to necessitate for the department to continue its exciting trajectory.</p>	
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	11.	“More attention and investment are needed to ensure that all teaching laboratories, and not just some, are safe and accessible to all learners.”	Please see our response to comments #9 and #10.	Please see our response to recommendation #10.
Other recommendations:	12.	“We did hear from undergraduate students a need for extended library hours and a need for communal meeting spaces.”	This issue has been addressed by changing the designated space for our librarian within the second EV floor of our administration. The greater visibility of the new office space has increased student visitation. Unfortunately, space limitations do not allow for a regular arrangement to accommodate communal meetings. That said, the department has recently allocated space to our graduate students to facilitate the writing of their thesis and manuscripts.	The Sam Ibrahim Building, which opened in Fall 2024, serves as a central hub on the North Campus of UTSC for students to use as study spaces or to simply hang out. In addition, the UTSC Library has undergone extensive renovations that is enabling them to add group study rooms and general study spaces.
	13.	“The department does have an outreach - communications committee, but it understandably seems that fundraising is beyond the scope of an academic unit. Nonetheless, there is potential given the strong growth in the department alumni numbers and the growing importance of sustainability, environmental (especially climate) action, and social justice issues in society. Many universities are choosing to make these topics important components of their fundraising efforts, and the university (and department) might do well with a similar strategy.”	There have been sporadic fundraising efforts with modest success. The department has both the capacity and commitment to work together with the Development and Alumni Relations Office toward similar initiatives in a more systematic manner. We will welcome this prospect.	The Dean’s Office would be pleased to facilitate a connection between the department and the UTSC Development and Alumni Relations Office to discuss advancement and alumni engagement strategies, as well as recommended practices.

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

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*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

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The reviewers praised DPES for offering up-to-date undergraduate curricula that align with current disciplinary trends. Notably, the reviewers commended the Department's extensive experiential learning opportunities and robust co-op programs. They congratulated DPES on its thriving research environment for graduate students with an excellent focus on preparing PhD students to enter the workforce – in academia and beyond. They highlighted the impressive quality of DPES faculty and exceptionally strong departmental research; and noted that teaching stream faculty are leading technological and pedagogical innovations. Finally, the reviewers highlighted that DPES has made transformative progress since their last review, resulting in a net increase of faculty and staff; the Department benefits from stable leadership and strong morale; and the unit is housed in a modern building with excellent facilities.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: engaging in consultations with all stakeholders to determine appropriate future directions for optimal stewardship of the undergraduate co-op program; exploring approaches to ensure that the unit's graduate student population is appropriately supported; engaging in a strategic faculty complement planning process, and prioritizing coverage in Physics and adding to the diversity of the faculty complement when hiring opportunities permit; taking steps to ensure that EDI is made more prominent in departmental activities; engaging in strategic planning and decision making related to numerous upcoming leadership and growth changes; and conducting accelerated planning to accommodate the arrival of SAMIH students at UTSC, with a particular focus on teaching laboratories, as well as more broadly ensuring that laboratory spaces are updated appropriately to meet technical support demands and student accessibility needs.

The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty 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

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The Dean's Office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the Chair of the Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences.

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs in 2028 on the status of the implementation plans.

The next review will take place no later than the 2031-32 academic year.

## **6 Distribution**

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On July 15<sup>th</sup> 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 of UTSC, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to unit/program leadership.

# UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

## THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

### REPORT NUMBER 228 OF THE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC POLICY AND PROGRAMS

Thursday, April, 10, 2025

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To the Academic Board,  
University of Toronto,

Your Committee reports that it held a meeting on Thursday, April 10, 2025 at 3:10 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Simcoe Hall with the following members present:

**PRESENT:** Catherine Amara (Chair), Walid Houry (Vice-Chair), Nicholas Rule (Vice-Provost, Academic Programs), Robert Austin\*, Sheila Batacharya, Daniel Bowyer, Pier Bryden, Susan Bondy, Robert Cooper, Joe Flessa\*, Ehab James, Shone Joos, Anuradha Prakki, Kevin Temple, Rosa Saverino, Suzanne Wood

**REGRETS:** Joshua Barker (Vice-Provost, Graduate Research & Education and Dean, School of Graduate Studies), Laurent Bozec, Tarun Dewan, Annabelle Dravid, Jason Harlow, Akina Lalla, Marcus Law, Yee Fun Lo, Amy Mann, Karen Reid

**NON-VOTING ASSESSORS:** Leah Cowen (Vice-President, Research and Innovation, and Strategic Initiatives), Angelique Saweczko (University Registrar)

**SECRETARIAT:** Joanne Chou

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Melanie Woodin, Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Dean Academic Planning  
Ken MacDonald, Interim Director, Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies  
Linda Feng, Acting Department Chair, East Asian Studies  
Louis Pauly, Acting Department Chair, Political Science  
Joseph Clarke, Department Chair, Art History  
Kajri Jain, Tri-Campus Graduate Chair, Art History  
Jill Ross, Director, Centre for Comparative Literature  
Alex Hernandez, Principal, Victoria College  
Eric Jennings, Department Chair, History  
Christopher Yip, Dean, Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering  
Natalie Enright Jerger, Director, Division of Engineering Science  
Justin Nodwell, Vice-Dean, Research & Health Science Education  
Mingyao Liu, Director, Institute of Medical Science  
Katie Larson, Vice-Dean, Teaching, Learning & Undergraduate Programs, UTSC  
Marianne Hatzopoulou, Chair, Department of Civil and Mineral Engineering  
George Arhonditsis, Chair and Graduate Chair, Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences  
Michelle Silver, Chair, Department of Health and Society  
Emma del Junco, Academic Reviews & Planning Specialist, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs



David Lock, Academic Reviews & Planning Specialist, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
Alexandra Varela, Coordinator, Academic Programs, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
Lachmi Singh, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
Jennifer Francisco, Academic Change Specialist, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

(\*attended remotely)

## OPEN SESSION

### 1. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed members and guests to the meeting. She noted that they would be fulfilling one of the most important parts of the mandate, the second part of the Semi-Annual Reviews of Programs and Units.

### 2. Reports of the Administrative Assessors

The Chair remarked that there were no reports of the Administrative Assessors.

### 3. New Undergraduate Program Proposal: Major in Film Studies in an existing undergraduate degree (HBA), University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC)

The Committee reviewed the new program proposal, the major in film studies in an existing undergraduate degree at the University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC).

Professor Rule reported that the new undergraduate major in film studies, which led to the Honours Bachelor of Arts degree would be offered by the Department of English, at UTSC. Building on the success of the popular minor in film studies, the major enabled students to develop an understanding of the formal and technological components of film, and a strong grasp of the historical esthetic, cultural, economic and political context of cinema and moving image media.

The program had unlimited enrollment, and ensued once students completed 4.0 credits. The major consisted of 7.5 credits. Students in first and second year courses received a broad introduction to the critical study of film, the global history of cinema and the larger cultural context of cinematic and literary production in courses. In the second and third year courses students learned about various genres, traditions and methodologies in film studies, and the year four courses offered a more in-depth approach to specific topics, including a focus on directors, regions, particular practices and specific theoretical approaches to film. The major in film studies prepared students for graduate studies in film and related fields, and for potential careers in the film industry and in film and arts organizations. Consultations occurred outside of UTSC with the Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS) and University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM), in which both divisions supported the proposal for a September 2025 start date.

Members had no questions.

On motion duly made, seconded, and carried

IT WAS RESOLVED,

THAT the proposed Major in Film Studies, which will confer the existing HBA degree, as described in the proposal from the University of Toronto Scarborough dated March 17, 2025, be approved effective September 1, 2025.

#### **4. Reviews of Academic Programs and Units**

##### **a. Semi-Annual Report on the Reviews of Academic Units and Programs**

The Chair noted that the Committee had received 12 reviews of units and programs, which included one Provostial review, and 11 Decanal reviews. All were brought forward for information and discussion. The submissions included the signed administrative responses from each Dean, which highlighted action plans in response to reviewer recommendations.

The Chair reported that members had been placed into four reading groups and that each group had been assigned up to four reviews to consider. To guide their work, members of these groups were asked to consider four questions:

*i) Does the summary accurately tell the story of the full review?*

*ii) Does the administrative response address all issues identified?*

*iii) Are there any questions, comments or substantive issues that the Committee should consider?*

*iv) Is there a need to ask that the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs bring forward a follow-up report?*

The Chair also noted that, as part of their review, each of the Reading groups had submitted comments to the appropriate Deans' Offices for their consideration in advance of the meeting.

The Chair invited Professor Rule to make general remarks about the reviews.

Professor Rule noted that the Committee played a critical role in the reviews of all academic programs and units at the University. The goals of these reviews were to:

- to obtain expert advice of leaders in the field concerning academic and administrative issues,
- to measure performance against leading international programs, and
- to obtain guidance and input from peers on key strategic decisions.

He confirmed that 12 reviews were being brought forward for the Committee's consideration; recurring and new themes were identified in the reviews: the talent and high caliber of students and the impressive body of scholarship produced by faculty, as well as the academic units' strong and productive connections with surrounding communities, and the many initiatives undertaken by the academic units to enhance equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Professor Rule noted that as always, the reviews indicated areas for development. The reviews identified opportunities for units to strengthen coordination and leverage interdisciplinary strengths, and suggested ways to augment support and mentorship for students. The reviews also highlighted the benefits of enhancing communications and clarity for faculty around promotion processes and requirements, and continuing to ensure that diversity was reflected in faculty complement and curriculum.

#### **Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering (FASE), Division of Engineering Science (EngSci)**

The spokesperson for the reading group reported that the review summary accurately described the full review and that overall, they found the review highlighted the many strengths of the program, as well as areas for improvement. The group noted the program's academic rigour and reputation, strong alumni engagement, interdisciplinary structure, and supportive student community. The reading group reported that the Dean's administrative response had adequately addressed issues identified by the review, but requested more clarity regarding the first and second year curriculum challenges with the materials, hiring practices related to faculty and teaching rotation planning, and concerns related to Equity, Diversity & Inclusion ("EDI") measured outcomes.

Dean Chris Yip responded that regarding engagement and hiring practices, EngSci sourced from cognate departments, as many of the core faculty members were appointed in other departments, emphasizing a cross collaboration between units.

Natalie Enright Jerger, Director, Division of Engineering Science added that it was by design that they drew their teaching faculty from across FASE, and FAS, noting that it was a strength of the program. They had strong relationships with Department Chairs in the Faculty to discuss any issues around teaching rotations in a timely fashion. As a faculty member with The Edward S. Rogers Sr. Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering ("ECE"), she was engaged in that faculty's hiring process as appropriate and would explore additional formal mechanisms. They were reviewing EDI both in teaching staff and students, and were doing well in relation to diversity in FASE teaching staff overall. In terms of students, they were measuring outcomes of student retention, years to completion, student success in the Professional Experience Year Co-op Program ("PEY Co-op"), and other post-graduate opportunities.

No follow-up report was requested.

#### **Temerty Faculty of Medicine, Institute of Medical Science (IMS)**

The spokesperson for the reading group reported that the review summary had accurately reflected the full review, and that overall, they had found the review to be positive, noting that the program provided "world renowned" training in an "impressive diversity of research topics." However, the reading group noted that the reviewers were not able to give a fulsome review of the Graduate Diploma program due to the attendance of only one student during the consultation process, therefore recommended that an additional review of the program take place. The reading group reported that the Dean's administrative response did not adequately address the issues identified and did not align with the Unit's response, and asked the Faculty to further comment on a number of matters which included how the review took place, failed recruitment efforts to generate more applicants and widened geographic spread, data collection and evaluation of faculty supervision data and demographic data, lack of communication surrounding rules and expectations in various programs for students and faculty, and evaluation of the success of the graduate diploma.

Justin Nodwell, Vice-Dean, Research & Health Science Education responded that regarding the demographic data, it was attributed to a lack of awareness and that the demographic data

dashboard was processed through the School of Graduate Studies (“SGS”). He explained that he had spent a lot of time reviewing the data, but not in the context of IMS.

Regarding the evaluation of the success of the graduate diploma, Professor Nodwell noted that the IMS was a unique and established program of the graduate unit, enabling faculty to supervise graduate trainees (MD and non-MD) in a formal and high-quality program. He acknowledged that the Dean’s response did not address several points in the review, and that there was a planned review for the Graduate Diploma in Health Research (“GDipHR”) program.

Regarding the evaluation of faculty supervision data, Professor Nodwell noted this oversight, that there had been a graduate supervision review for all the basic sciences in medicine for the past five years. This was an annual exercise which included IMS, and where IMS scored well. He added that both the faculty-wide results were shared in an anonymized form with all departments, as well as the specific departmental review.

Regarding recruitment, this was an area of concern as their focus was to recruit the best students and work with many moving targets regarding the funding landscape. There was a harmonized stipend agreement for all of the graduate students, and an upper limit where the number of accepted students was dependent on available funding. There were various supports and resources for Principal Investigators to optimize their success, and recruitment numbers fluctuated year-over-year.

Regarding how the review took place, Professor Nodwell confirmed that the review was conducted virtually.

Mingyao Liu, Director, Institute of Medical Science responded that he was committed to make the adjustments as recommended in the review. Although they requested an in-person review, it was virtual due to the previous year’s circumstances. He explained that due to poor coordination between the organizer and students, this led to a disconnect where only one student attended the Graduate Diploma program consultation review, and a separate review for this program would be organized.

Regarding recruitment, Professor Liu commented that both a special recruitment committee, and an admission committee had the mandate of increasing the quality of the students by focusing on academic excellence and EDI. Supports were being explored to help students from outside the province or other institutions to find a supervisor. The harmonized stipend had been increased in the last five years, approximately \$10,000 for each student. The operational cost for each year was over \$5 million to maintain the current number of students, impacted by economic challenges of low funding and high cost of living.

Professor Nick Rule added that it was permissible to have a virtual visit, but that in-person review site visits were strongly encouraged.

A one-year follow-up was requested on the status of the GDipHR review.

**University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) Department of Physical & Environmental Sciences (DPES)**

The spokesperson for the reading group reported that the review summary accurately described the full review, and the Dean's administrative response adequately addressed all issues identified. The Reading Group reported that the review highlighted high morale, strong research, breadth of program, strong co-op and experiential learning opportunities, interdisciplinary collaboration and clear progress since last review. The Reading Group asked the Unit to further comment on the strong opposing views on the management of the co-op program.

Katie Larson, Vice-Dean, Teaching, Learning & Undergraduate Programs, responded that the co-op and experiential learning programs were core commitments, a strength and priority of the campus. The Arts & Science co-op office administered the co-op program in a centralized format, working with various departments to support those programs. The Department of Physical & Environmental Sciences ("DPES") had been advocating for a department focused model, whereas the Dean's office wanted to explore a centralized model. Steps were taken in the interim to address the departmental concerns that were highlighted in the review. There were dedicated staff that served as direct department liaisons and they were in the early stages of assessing progress, acknowledging the core differences in opinion. Professor Larson noted that this was an ongoing discussion, and that there was a planned external review of the Arts & Science co-op program at UTSC, to gain proper insight on how best to move forward, since this concern was connected to experiential learning more broadly on campus.

No follow-up report was requested.

**University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) Interdisciplinary Centre for Health and Society**

The spokesperson for the reading group reported that the review summary accurately described the full review and that overall, they had found the review to be positive. The Dean's administrative response had mostly addressed issues identified by the review, noting that steps were already in progress to address concerns. The Reading Group asked the Department to further address the concerns regarding progress toward program enhancement, specifically the proposed increase of dedicated staff positions and faculty complement, building consistent discretionary funding into the department's budget for the Chair to support evolving departmental priorities, and "appropriateness and effectiveness of the methods for assessing student achievement."

Michelle Silver, Chair, Department of Health and Society ("DHS") responded that the department comprises faculty from health, humanities, sciences and social sciences. They had embarked on a collaborative effort to evaluate how assessments took place. She noted that a large group of students had engaged with the assessors during the site visit, and their feedback was related to exam policy and the fact that exams were returned without comments at the end of the term. They had explored ways to provide feedback to honor the exam policy, noting that the types of assessments in the humanities courses were different than the lab-based courses. She remarked that they would continue to discuss and collaborate to ensure that the assessments were substantially different and reflected appropriate student learning.

Katie Larson, Vice-Dean, Teaching, Learning & Undergraduate Programs, reported that regarding faculty complement planning, DHS played an important role in the broader campus-wide strategy connected to preparations for The Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health ("SAMIH") Garron building. UTSC undertook limited strategic hires related to SAMIH and the Health Sciences, which was a priority. DHS was actively involved from a curricular perspective, regarding program demand and program expansion as Health Sciences were further established at UTSC. This was an ongoing priority and as the move was planned to

SAMIH, DHS was part of the shared staffing considerations to ensure that they had the staffing resources that they needed.

Regarding the budget considerations, there were ongoing budget discussions with all departments in the current fiscal context, to ensure that the Department Chairs had the resources that they needed. She noted that they were shifting towards a new budget model, which provided departments with more autonomy over their finances.

No follow-up report was requested.

### **Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering (FASE) Department of Civil & Mineral Engineering**

The spokesperson for the reading group reported that the review summary accurately described the full review and that overall, they had found the review to be positive. The Dean's administrative response addressed most of the issues identified and expressed support for the unit's approach to the concerns identified in the review report. The reading group requested further explanation of the appointment of a pre-tenure professor as Associate Chair to oversee professional programs.

Marianne Hatzopoulou, Chair, Department of Civil and Mineral Engineering reported that she took a different approach to workload: She supported people's ambitions and engagements, and noted that the Associate Chair was a high performer, well connected and led initiatives at the department level. She concluded that the individual received a teaching reduction, and delivered an excellent presentation to the review team.

No follow-up report was requested.

### **Faculty of Arts & Science (FAS) (Provostial Review)**

The spokesperson for the reading group reported that the review summary accurately reflected the full review. While the administrative response covered most of the pertinent issues, the group highlighted several areas of concern, which included the expansion of teaching by sessional faculty, challenges for FAS decision-making given multiple constituencies, and the changes and impact of the new budget model.

Dean Melanie Woodin responded that in the past 5 years, there had been a significant decline in the number of courses taught by sessional instructors; in 2017-2018, 17% of FAS courses were taught by sessional instructors, and in 2023-24, 13% were taught by sessional instructors. Therefore, there was an increase in the percentage of teaching done by appointed faculty. More courses were also being taught by graduate students, since the number of graduate students grew over this period of time.

Dean Woodin stated that given the large size of the Faculty and its many disciplines, decision-making was a complex process. She highlighted the collaborative and transparent process that engaged multiple stakeholders throughout the Faculty, and recognized their contributions to budgetary decisions. All constituencies were engaged in decision making. During the transition towards the new budget model, there was a commitment to make all information clear and accessible on a SharePoint site, and to communicate timelines for subsequent decision making.

Dean Woodin explained that the new budget model reflected a change from a historic expense-based model. She provided context regarding the historical process with its associated challenges, including lack of transparency, predictability and stability. Every unit going into the new budget model would have the exact same budget next year as it did the previous year, with

no cuts. The goal was to encourage department chairs and directors to better understand their revenue sources and expenses, as they are best positioned to make decisions regarding funding priorities in their own discipline.

No follow-up report was requested.

#### **Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS) Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies**

The spokesperson for the reading group reported that the review summary had accurately reflected the full review, and that the administrative response fully addressed the issues identified and included a comprehensive, forward-looking plan. The group had no additional questions or comments.

No follow-up report was requested.

#### **Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS) The Department of East Asian Studies**

The reading group found the summary to accurately reflect the full review. While the administrative response covered most of the pertinent issues, the group requested further explanation of a statement in the report that: “[We] emphasize that we have never seen such a poorly funded, top-ranked graduate program anywhere in North America”, and to identify any potential vulnerabilities regarding the comment: “The department enrolls the largest proportion of international students of any humanities unit at U of T” given the uncertain and rapidly changing international context.

Dean Melanie Woodin responded that the University had significantly increased the minimum funding packages for graduate students to \$40,000 per year across the University, an increase from \$28,000. Dean Woodin noted that PhD students in the department experienced higher than average times to completion, highlighting connections between time to completion and student funding. There were continued efforts to support the department’s learning objectives and student success within the funded cohort.

Regarding the large proportion of international students, Dean Woodin reported that quantitative data were not available, but that the proportion of international students in the unit was known to be high. The vulnerabilities identified also existed across the entire Faculty, and across the tri-campus structure. She noted that the department itself would have difficulties mitigating this vulnerability on its own, and that the University was focused on addressing these challenges.

No follow-up report was requested.

#### **Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS) The Department of Political Science**

The reading group found the summary to accurately reflect the full review. The group reported that the Dean’s administrative response adequately addressed issues identified by the review, however they asked that the Department further comment on the impact of the FAS budget model, and the relationship between the Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy and the Department of Political Science.

Dean Melanie Woodin responded that the academic plan for the Faculty of Arts and Science, titled *Leveraging Our Strengths*, was focused on the interdisciplinary breadth and depth of research across the Faculty. The new budget model had been developed to incentivize interdisciplinarity and encourage departmental collaboration. This included revenue sharing with budget transparency for those processes. The former budget model involved separate



agreements between department chairs which served for that moment but, over time with changes in chairs and department context, was susceptible to confusion and lack of transparency, resulting in eroded relationships between academic. The new budget model supported transparency and relationship building between units.

Louis Pauly, Acting Department Chair, Political Science reported that the relationship between the Munk School and the Department of Political Science had been an ongoing discussion since the inauguration of the Munk school. Much of the Munk School leadership at that time were appointed from the Department of Political Science and other cognate units. Professor Pauly noted that over time, faculty cross-appointments had increased, and highlighted collaborative and mutually supportive partnerships. Transparency from the new budget model enabled the sustained joint and mutually beneficial relationship between the Department and the Munk School.

No follow-up report was requested.

### **Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS) The Department of Art History**

The spokesperson for the reading group reported that the review summary had accurately reflected the full review. The reading group reported that the Dean's administrative response had adequately addressed the issues identified by the review, however, asked the Department to further address the concerns around enhanced faculty advising and student experience, short term deliverables regarding mentorship, specific timelines for reporting on program and student outcomes, tracking and engagement of faculty participation at the Works-in-Progress seminar, EDI outcomes and supports, clarifying specific task timelines and identifying success criteria to evaluate positive impacts.

Dean Melanie Woodin responded that there was ongoing work to navigate climate challenges, and that unit leadership was committed to collaborating with the Dean's office to ensure that the department and the graduate program thrived.

Regarding the mentorship concerns, Dean Woodin reported that the Faculty had recently launched new mentorship guidelines. Prior to this, departments had a range of formal and informal mentorship programs, with various levels of success. In consultation with units, a set of guidelines was developed to foster uniformity of expectations about mentorship, and offer flexibility for chairs and directors to tailor the program to best suit their needs. The mentorship guidelines preserved best practices, which included clarity around the mentor role, affirming confidentiality, and engagement.

Regarding transparent reporting on program and student outcomes, Dean Woodin reported that SGS had unveiled an extensive data dashboard on their website which was valuable to FAS. The dashboard included detailed items such as time to completion, attrition for PhDs at the unit level, and specific information on job outcomes.

Regarding EDI outcomes and supports, Dean Woodin reported on recent developments in the Faculty. The FAS EDI Office recently launched the Arts and Science Equity Practitioners Community of Practice. Developed for departmental staff members supporting EDI initiatives, the Community of Practice provided professional development, opportunities for shared EDI knowledge and resources, and awareness for successful initiatives in other units. A second initiative was also launched to support academic colleagues that chaired EDI committees and foster collaborations. The Department would also leverage resources from The Institutional Equity offices. Chairs of EDI committees developed an EDI plan that included internal processes for implementation and progress tracking. The Chairs of the Undergraduate and Graduate Programs jointly worked together to advance the engagement of the EDI plan and availability of resources.



Dean Woodin confirmed that a faculty workshop, addressing interpersonal and inter-campus issues to enable constructive conversations, had been scheduled for Sept. 5.

Joseph Clarke, Department Chair, Art History reported that enhancing student advising was a priority for the department. Over the past five years, program enrolments increased by 54% and staff FTEs increased by only 39%; thus the challenge was to ensure that all students were supported and received the advising needed. There were planned initiatives to enhance student experience, such as the creation of a thesis option for undergraduate students. The faculty advised students on subject matter and potential graduate studies. There was continued work on formalizing the internship program with supports from the experiential learning and outreach support office around areas of professional and career development.

Professor Clarke stated they were developing a codified plan regarding mentorship expectations, and collaborating with the Dean's office to ensure its alignment with the newly launched mentorship guidelines.

Kajri Jain, Tri-Campus Graduate Chair, Art History reported that tracking faculty engagement in the Works-in-Progress seminar was a simple matter of noting the number of participants at a given event. This program, where students and faculty present works-in-progress, was noted as a positive initiative, however it had been better attended by students than faculty. One of the ways they measured faculty engagement in the graduate unit was the quarterly Tri-Campus graduate faculty meetings, and they would try to find resources to provide better refreshments based on the feedback they received.

Considering that there were several matters of concern and complex issues to address, the reading group requested a one-year follow-up to report on progress following the upcoming curriculum retreat(s) and mediated faculty retreat.

**Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS) Centre for Comparative Literature (CCL) + Literature and Critical Theory programs (LCT) (Victoria College)**

The spokesperson for the reading group reported that the review summary accurately described the full review and that overall, they had found the review to be positive. The reading group reported that the Dean's administrative response had adequately addressed issues identified by the review. They asked, however, that the College further comment on the revised Memorandum of Agreement ("MOA"), graduate funding (MA & PhD), faculty complement, allocation of grants.

Dean Melanie Woodin responded that regarding the MOA renewal, the CCL and Victoria College had a long standing collegial and productive relationship which they were eager to continue. Plans were underway to review the MOA, with the first meeting scheduled on May 6. The Dean's office had ensured that the program and college leadership were aware of the new budget model, and understood its potential impacts related to the MOA.

As the main point of contact for future graduate students, SGS had updated their website with data on student funding at the unit level, to ensure transparency for future students. As the primary point of contact related to the students' financial packages, FAS had extended its SharePoint platform to include information about graduate funding. This robust site presented extensive information on all aspects of funding of the program, amplifying information provided by SGS.

Regarding faculty complement and stability, Dean Woodin reported that proposed faculty appointments were reviewed by the Faculty Appointments Committee, which included representation from all disciplines to ensure a transparent and fair process.

Regarding the allocation of grants, Dean Woodin reported that faculty members with budgetary appointments in multiple units were able to choose the unit through which their grant funds would

be administered. Dean Woodin noted that grant funding cannot be administered through a unit in which a faculty member has a non-budgetary appointment, but that this information would be reported in units' review self studies going forward.

Jill Ross, Director, Centre for Comparative Literature reported that the website was updated and reflected the new \$40,000 funding package, increasing student awareness of this development.

No follow-up report was requested.

### **Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS) Department of History**

The spokesperson for the reading group reported that the review summary had accurately reflected the full review, and that the Dean's administrative response fully addressed the issues identified. While the administrative response covered most of the pertinent issues, the group requested further explanation of the issues regarding graduate funding and the new budget model, governance formalization and graduate curriculum.

Eric Jennings, Department Chair, History responded that regarding governance formalization, the unit had disentangled their governance structure, which now comprised a four-chair model, and the unit was working to define the functions of these roles.

Regarding the graduate curriculum, Professor Jennings noted that the majority of MA and direct-entry PhD students took a mandatory methods course, which assisted them with methodology and thesis writing. Only PhD students entering the program with an MA from another institution were not required to take this course, having previously received methodological training. Professor Jennings commented that the unit was developing a methods course to harmonize course content and avoid repetition. There were also professionalization opportunities available to students, such as mock job talks.

Regarding graduate funding, Professor Jennings noted that the department was a pioneer in offering \$40,000 per student before this was implemented across the institution, and that the unit would explore potential adjustments as appropriate.

No follow-up report was requested.

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### **CONSENT AGENDA**

On motion duly moved, seconded, and carried

YOUR COMMITTEE APPROVED

THAT the consent agenda be adopted and that Item 5, the Report of the Previous Meeting, be approved.

### **5. Report of the Previous Meeting**

The report of the previous meeting was approved.

**6. Business Arising from the Report of the Previous Meeting**

There was no business arising from the report of the previous meeting.

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**7. Date of the Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 13, 2025**

The Chair confirmed that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday, May 13, 2025 in the Council Chamber.

**8. Other Business**

There were no items of other business.

**The meeting adjourned at 5:04 p.m.**

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Secretary

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Chair

April 21, 2025