

FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

Institutional Quality Assurance Program (IQAP) Review

Art History

Date of Review: February 6 – 7, 2017

*In accordance with the University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response and assessments of the **Art History** undergraduate programs delivered by the School of the Arts. This report identifies the significant strengths of the programs, together with opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, and it sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.*

The report includes an Implementation Plan that identifies who will be responsible for approving the recommendations set out in the Final Assessment Report; who will be responsible for providing any resources entailed by those recommendations; any changes in organization, policy or governance that will be necessary to meet the recommendations and who will be responsible for acting on those recommendations; and timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations.

Executive Summary of the Cyclical Program Review of the Undergraduate

Art History Program

In accordance with the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), the School of the Arts (Art History) submitted a self-study in December 2016 to the Associate Vice-President, Faculty to initiate the cyclical program review of its undergraduate programs. The approved self-study presented program descriptions, learning outcomes, and analyses of data provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis. Appendices to the self-study contained all course outlines associated with the program and the CVs for each full-time member in the department.

Two arm's length external reviewers, one from Ontario and one from Pennsylvania and one internal reviewer were endorsed by the Dean, Faculty of Humanities, and selected by the Associate Vice-President, Faculty. The review team reviewed the self-study documentation and then conducted a site visit to McMaster University on February 6 – 7, 2017. The visit included interviews with the Provost and Vice-President (Academic); Associate Vice-President, Faculty, Director of the School and meetings with groups of current undergraduate students, full-time faculty and support staff.

The Director of the School and the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities submitted responses to the Reviewers' Report (August 2017). Specific recommendations were discussed and clarifications and corrections were presented. Follow-up actions and timelines were included.

Strengths

In their report (March 2017), the Review Team noted that the Art History program is a remarkably strong, dynamic, coherent and intellectually vibrant program with high self-expectations, as serious work ethic, strong commitments to excellence in teaching and research and an impressive reach beyond its core faculty and students enrolled in their courses. The report also notes that faculty and staff outside Art History have high praise for the department and that student and alumni praise is overwhelming. Further highlights identified in the report include:

- Faculty teaching informed by grant-funded research
- Innovative curriculum including pioneering instruction of first year course offered online, and broad offerings of non-western and western courses
- High-quality mentoring of in-course students and considerable success in placing students in well-ranked graduate programs, often with funding, as well as arts-related career trajectories

Areas of Improvement

In their report, the Review Team identified some recommendations for areas of improvement including creating a stronger alignment with the Museum and departments and Schools across campus. Further recommendations are outlined below.

- Continue to strengthen the diverse curricular offerings, in the short term, by drawing from community resources, hiring high-quality Sessional instructors who are a distinct asset to the program
- Continue to foster commitment of alumni and community donors to the Friends of Art History with a longer-term, ambitious goal of raising money to support opportunities for the program

The Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, in consultation with the Director of the School of the Arts shall be responsible for monitoring the recommendations implementation plan. The details of the progress made will be presented in the progress report and filed in the Vice-Provost, Faculty's office.

Summary of the Reviewers' Recommendations with the Department's and Dean's Responses

Recommendation	Proposed Follow-Up	Responsibility for Leading Follow-Up	Timeline for Addressing Recommendation
Tenure-track hire of a specialist in Contemporary Art and Artistic practices	Request that the Faculty of Humanities consider a tenure-track appointment in Art History of a specialist in Contemporary Art and Artistic practices. This position would result in	Drs. Angela Sheng and Alison McQueen	Submit request March 2018

	undergraduate courses that could be cross listed with several other programs including: Indigenous Studies, Communication Studies and Multimedia, History, English and Cultural Studies, as well as potentially graduate courses in Gender Studies and Feminist Research		
Develop an Experiential Learning course to heighten visibility of the internships that have previously be taught as Applied Humanities 3W03 and 4W03 courses	Develop a Level III course entitled Applied Art History for program students through which they would register to undertake experiential learning including: internships (such as at the McMaster Museum of Art, the Art Gallery of Hamilton, and other arts institutions in the region), internships at Heritage Sites, and Historical Societies, and other such possibilities reviewed and approved by program faculty. Students would have the possibility of enrolling in this course in the Fall, Winter, Spring or Summer sessions.	Drs. Angela Sheng and Alison McQueen	Submit new course proposal to the School of the Arts in September 2017, for consideration by the Faculty of Humanities Undergraduate Curriculum Committee in fall 2017
Increased to \$5,000 departmental funding for outside lectures, student field trips to museums, or academic related purposes	Request an increase to \$5,000, prioritizing for visiting speakers and field trips to museums, from the budget allocated to the School of the Arts; and align with amount allocated to Visiting Artists for the Art program	Dr. Angela Sheng	November 2017 submit request for the increase to take effect for the 2018-19 budget cycle
Audio-visual needs of	Request, through the	Drs. Angela Sheng and	January 2018 submit

<p>the Art History program should be met, with adequate budget to ensure there are sufficient classrooms with AV equipment to support the program, which has distinct needs based on its object-based teaching, and that courses in the Art History program are given priority access to the classrooms that have the necessary equipment</p>	<p>School of the Arts, that the Faculty communicate the distinct audio-visual needs of the Art History program to the head of University Technology Services, and request that adequate budget be assigned to keep classroom AV equipment maintained and renewed in a sufficient number of classrooms. Request, through the School of the Arts, that the Faculty communicate to the head of the Registrar's office that Art History courses be given priority access to those classrooms.</p>	<p>Alison McQueen</p>	<p>assessment of current classroom audio-visual infrastructure, focusing on classrooms in which Art History courses have, historically, most commonly been taught (Togo Salmon Hall B-105, B-106, and B-128) as well as the seminar room in Wilson Hall (1212) that will be replacing the room previously used by the program for its seminars (Togo Salmon Hall 321).</p>
<p>Increase to library funding, specifically for database subscriptions and book purchases</p>	<p>Request an increase to library funding for book purchases, particularly for new and recently developed courses in Art History that are being developed with the intent of continuing to foster the western and non-western curriculum in the program. Request the library fund new database subscription access to Hathi Trust.</p>	<p>Drs. Angela Sheng and Alison McQueen</p>	<p>Submit request to Wade Wyckoff and Janice Adlington in Collections Development at Mills Library in February 2018.</p>
<p>Introduce an annual undergraduate conference or symposium in Art History and Visual Culture</p>	<p>The Art History faculty appreciate the suggestion, which indicates that the External Reviewers' regarded the work of Art History students at McMaster as being of a very high calibre,</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>

	<p>worthy of public presentation. The faculty see the potential value of an annual conference or symposium, however due to the limited faculty complement they do not see it as realistic to undertake such a venture, particularly as any such symposium could only be a forum for papers by a select number of students, best developed over the course of more time than a three-unit course allows.</p>		
<p>Take full advantage of the relationship between the Art and Art History programs</p>	<p>Discuss with the Art faculty their willingness to accommodate one or two Art History students in select Art classes (enrolment permitted, and determined in collaboration with Art faculty). With support from faculty in the Art program, develop a new Level III course entitled Inquiry, Art making and Art History. Program students would attend selected Art courses and participate in art making and produce two written papers that would be graded by Art History faculty. The initial paper would focus on a selected art work, examining its context in history, medium, and why the</p>	<p>Dr. Angela Sheng</p>	<p>During 2017-18 to schedule discussions to result in a course proposal for curriculum submission in September 2018</p>

	<p>student is interest in the object and its aesthetics. At the end of the term the student would submit a longer paper that would outline how the experience of art making has informed how they have a deeper analysis of the same art work than they did previously.</p>		
<p>Take full advantage of the relationship between the Art History Program and the McMaster Museum of Art</p>	<p>The Art History faculty have been very forthcoming with support for the museum in various ways, they have offered regular contributions to exhibitions and curatorial expertise, in addition to offering teaching resources including course outlines. The Art History faculty have been disappointed and dismayed over decisions taken without consultation with them and the many ways in which they have had a negative impact on the Art History program and the Faculty of Humanities. The Art History faculty propose: 1) That all future curatorial and directorial appointments to the McMaster Museum of Art include a commitment that the</p>	<p>Drs. Angela Sheng and Alison McQueen request the support of the Office of the Provost and Vice-President Academic, to which the Director of the MMA directly reports.</p>	<p>2017/18</p>

	<p>individual hired teach a minimum of one three unit course in Art History every academic year. This opportunity will enrich the curator's research and ensure their expertise is directly accessible to students in the Art History and other programs across campus.</p> <p>2) That their expertise be manifest in a voting capacity on any future curatorial, directorial or fellowship positions assigned to the McMaster Museum of Art.</p> <p>3) That the Provost's Office patriate to the Art History program the Visual Literacy course that is currently taught by the MMA for the Family Practice program, and that the class be taught by Art History faculty in the future with enrolment credit assigned to the Faculty of Humanities, and that the course continue to enjoy the support of the MMA for students to do direct study of objects at the museum.</p>		
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Dean's Response, Faculty of Humanities:

The Dean thanks the Review team, the Director of SOTA and the faculty members in the Art History program for their thorough and constructive approach to the review. Like the reviewers, the Dean was particularly struck by the willingness of sessional instructors, current students and alumni to become actively engaged in the visit of the review team.

The reviewers clearly identify this very small program as surprisingly strong, and as having forged a distinctive identity for itself by encouraging its students to engage with non-western art. The program has had a very good relationship with the Art Gallery of Hamilton, and the increased involvement of their curators in teaching in the program has greatly strengthened opportunities for students. As will be noted in the response, the relationship between the program and our own Museum of Art has been somewhat more strained; the dean notes that he learned from the reviewers that our institution is not alone in facing this kind of situation. Nevertheless, it is to be hoped that the program and the museum can find some opportunities to collaborate in the next few years; the reviewers offer several constructive comments on how such collaborations might be encouraged.

The Dean generally supports the attached response of the School of the Arts and faculty members in the program, and will continue to work to sustain this program.

Quality Assurance Committee Recommendations

McMaster's Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) reviewed the above documentation and the committee recommends that the program should follow the regular course of action with an 18-month progress report and a subsequent full external cyclical review to be conducted no later than 8 years after the start of the last review.