

FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

Institutional Quality Assurance Program (IQAP) Review

Arts & Science Program

(Undergraduate Program)

Date of Review: 27-28 September, 2022

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 Arts and Science undergraduate program. This report identifies the significant strengths of the program, 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 Review

In accordance with the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), the Arts and Science program submitted a self-study in May 2022 to the Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning to initiate the cyclical program review of its program. 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 the CVs for each full-time member in the department.

Two arm's length external reviewers and one internal reviewer were endorsed by the Director of Arts and Science program and selected by the Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning. The review team reviewed the self-study documentation and then conducted a virtual site visit on 27-28 September, 2022. The review included interviews with the Deputy Provost, Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning, Director of Arts and Science program, and meetings with groups of Instructors, Administrators, alumni and current students, and individuals involved with community-engaged experiential learning opportunities.

The Director of Arts and Science program and the Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning submitted responses to the Reviewers' Report (December 2022). Specific recommendations were discussed, and clarifications and corrections were presented. Follow-up actions and timelines were included.

Strengths

The review team emphasized that “the program is strong” and suggested that “all of its key features ought to be maintained, including its relatively small enrolment size.” The report notes that the program learning outcomes are “clear, appropriate and aligned with the undergraduate Degree Level Expectations,” and that they “resonate deeply with the university’s mission.” We appreciate the reviewers’ suggestion that, “for a vivid reflection of the institution’s vision of ‘Impact, Ambition and Transformation through Excellence, Inclusion and Community,’ one need look no further than the Arts & Science program. The self-study, site visit and supporting materials attest to an exemplary undergraduate program, redounding to the credit of the institution as a whole.”

Among the other specific strengths noted, the following were highlighted:

- The “interdisciplinary, inquiry-focused approach to liberal education [the program] offers.” The review team indicated that “students benefit immensely from learning from both the arts and science,” and that “this foundation enables them to navigate later life, careers, and the challenges of an increasingly globalized, dynamic, yet uncertain world.”
- The reviewers also emphasized the importance of the program’s efforts “to inculcate sensitivity to public, ethical and social issues through inquiry-driven and self-directed learning in the Program’s early stages,” and noted that the required core courses enable students to “learn from a plurality of knowledge practices, which allows them to make sense of the world and to evaluate how critical decisions affecting societies are being framed.”
- It was appreciated that the program enables “students to carefully choose their electives, to engage in experiential and collaborative learning, and to embark on a research thesis in the upper levels,” thereby providing them “a holistic learning experience.”
- The reviewers recognized that “the Program has a strong and compassionate team of committed instructors, deploying pedagogies that aim to develop independent and critical thinking among students.”
- The review team pointed out that the program “curriculum is curated to achieve balance between diverse epistemologies and is aimed to deliver an innovative climate for inquiry, teaching, and learning,” and suggested that “Program’s strong ties with the MacPherson Institute reflect a commitment to innovation and critical self-reflection among those teaching in the Program.”
- The yearslong “committed, caring, and competent leadership of the Director and a team of Academic Coordinators” was underlined, as was the role of such leadership in supporting “the sustainability and outstanding achievements” of the program.
- Reviewers highlighted that “student feedback from different cohorts consistently attests to their acquisition of advanced skills in oral and written communication, critical and ethical thinking, and self-directed learning.” They likewise noted that “A good number of the Arts & Science alumni occupy important career niches and remain grateful to the foundational skills and values they received from the Program,” and highlighted the valuable, ongoing involvement of many alumni with the program after graduation.

Opportunities for Improvement and Enhancement, including appropriateness of resources:

The following key recommendations for enhancing the program and building on its strengths were offered in the executive summary:

Teaching and Learning

- “In the middle level years, sensitively steer students towards learning and growing within the broadness of the Program’s interdisciplinarity, but at the same time, proactively help them nurture aspirations and goals towards future work-life trajectories in an open-ended and realistic way”
- “Support students to seek meaning through making a difference in society now and after graduation, by cultivating habits of critical self-reflection and engaged local and global citizenship”
- “Increase and integrate diversity of content and instructors to reflect the aspirations, knowledges, and scholarly contributions of equity-denied groups”

Governance and Management

- “Strengthen the visibility of the program both internally and externally so that it can leverage and optimize its role and contribution to the university and to society.”
- “Ensure that the leadership team of the Program is sufficiently supported to address the growing demands of day-to-day operations and student needs for guidance”
- “Develop clearer, more transparent policies governing how equity, diversity and inclusion principles are meant to inform admissions procedures.”
- “Establish opportunities for regular dialogue among students in different years, along with faculty, program administrators, and the director on each of the following themes: 1) Reflecting critically and creatively on course content and teaching methods; 2) Plotting and discovering your educational trajectory; 3) Pursuing personal meaning and how to make a difference now and after graduation.”

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

Recommendation #1:

Enhance internal and external communications.

Review team comments in the report related to this recommendation:

“We recommend that the program and university enhance its level of internal and external communications about the program.”

Department’s Response and Actions to be Taken:

As noted in the self-study, enhancing our communications is an ongoing and as yet unresolved concern. To help us respond meaningfully to this important suggestion, we hope to create an ‘outreach’ focused staff position (described further below). The person in such a position could also

interface with University communications staff in order to support the University's communications about the program where appropriate.

Dean's Response: (VPTL)

- The Director and I have had ongoing conversations about communications, internal and external. We will continue to work towards a dedicated role or a shared role with other units within the VPTL portfolio.

Recommendation #2:

Facilitated application processes

"We recommend that the program continue with developing a facilitated supplementary application process for potential students from equity-denied groups, but as part of a broader review of existing admission requirements, processes, and practices."

Department's Response and Actions to be Taken:

Conversations about recruitment and admissions processes (including potential development of a facilitated application process of relevance to the program) are underway, and will involve students, faculty, and staff. Alongside potential additions to the supplementary application process, other ideas being explored (suggested initially by Access Program Manager Celeste Licorish) include developing a stream of the highly successful McMaster Discovery Program that would engage students who are in/just post high school and identify as members of equity denied groups, and paid student 'equity-champion' positions to aid in recruitment efforts.

Dean's Response: (VPTL)

- I agree with the response of the Director. The program is engaging in a consultative process with units across campus to create an inclusive and equitable applications process.

Recommendation #3:

Policies governing equity, diversity and inclusion principles that inform supplementary application assessments

"We recommend clearer, more transparent policies governing how equity, diversity and inclusion principles are meant to inform the way supplementary application assessments are made. In conjunction, we recommend reviewing the design and content of the training/ information sessions, while adding follow-up opportunities for the application reviewers to identify any challenges and to develop best practices."

Work to consider such policies and principles, as well as a review of the training processes, will be factored into the efforts to continue reviewing and enhancing our recruitment and admissions procedures described above.

It is already the case that supplementary application reviewers are invited to offer feedback on the process each year. We will ensure that this process is maintained.

Dean's Response: (VPTL)

- I agree with the Director's response. Assessment of the facilitated applications is part of the creation process.

Recommendation #4:

Level I Practices of Knowledge and Contemporary Indigenous Studies

"We recommend that the Level I Practices of Knowledge and Contemporary Indigenous Studies courses seek enhanced complementarities that will enable students to understand epistemological differences more fully."

As we continue to refine the new 3-unit Practices of Knowledge course, we will encourage more active, explicit consideration of epistemologies and epistemological differences within it. The instructors of the two named courses will also be encouraged to confer and discuss potential complementarities if it proves appropriate (recognizing that the Indigenous Studies course also needs to meet the needs and priorities of the Indigenous Studies Department).

Dean's Response: (VPTL)

- I appreciate the ongoing consultative process that guides courses development and refinement in the Arts and Sciences Program. I am confident that the Director will manage the conversations with the instructors of the Level 1 Practices of Knowledge and Contemporary Indigenous Studies courses.

Recommendation #5:

Feedback on Academic Writing courses

"We also recommend that the Academic Writing course balance individual and collaborative writing exercises and sequence them in a way that feedback is made available for both types of writing. We encourage recruiting more TAs to enable more meaningful individual feedback and mentorship for students to strengthen their writing skills."

We will explore the balance of individual and collaborative writing activities in this course, and pursue the idea of securing additional graduate TAs for it.

Dean's Response: (VPTL)

- As Arts & Science is an undergraduate program, I appreciate the challenges of securing graduate TAs with the skills to support the writing development of the undergraduate students. MOUs secured with participating Faculties may help to stabilize TA support.

Recommendation #6:

Undergraduate thesis supervision

“To optimize interdisciplinarity, we recommend that students and faculty advisors have the option of having a primary advisor <i>and</i> a second reader [for student theses], each hailing from distinct or perhaps cognate academic disciplines.”
While we understand this suggestion, we are not in a position to act on it at this point, given that Arts & Science students are graciously supervised by faculty from across campus, and we cannot ensure sufficient faculty resources to enable such a model.
Dean’s Response: (VPTL) I appreciate the response of the Director. There is no way to currently guarantee participation of faculty from across campus to support this model.
Recommendation #7: <i>Communications staff role</i> “We recommend that an additional administrative position be created that would support logistical, budgetary, and communication services of Arts & Science with perhaps 75% or at least 50% employment.”
We appreciate the suggestion that additional staff support might be valuable, and will consult with the Provost (via the budget process) about resourcing such a request. Rather than focusing primarily on logistical and budgetary support, we believe an additional staff position would be best focused on outreach (broadly defined), as such a position could assist with meeting the communications needs highlighted throughout the IQAP process as well as with other key outreach initiatives relevant to priorities highlighted by the reviewers (including recruitment and admissions processes, ongoing alumni engagement efforts and related efforts to support students’ understanding of career trajectories).
Dean’s Response: (VPTL) There have been ongoing conversations about communications support that would include outreach, recruitment, alumni engagement. We have discussed a shared role with other units within the VPTL envelope. While we will hold on to this as a possibility in the future, current budgetary constraints will make it difficult to act upon now.

Recommendation #8: <i>Student mapping of their work-life trajectories</i> “the program’s leadership should be mindful of students’ need to map out their work-life trajectories in a gradual manner as they progress. For this to happen, full information on electives, their pre-requisites, and term availability of courses should be provided in the early stages of the program.”
Such information is provided to students to the best of our ability throughout their studies (e.g., through annual combined honours program info sessions, one-on-one consultation, etc.) Nevertheless, we will continue to explore ways of enhancing the communication of this information.
Dean’s Response: (VPTL) The Arts & Science program has excellent in-person supports to guide and mentor students. I think that this is also a broader question across campus on how to provide information to students on elective options, including concurrent certificates, minors, and microcredentials.

There will be collaborative work with the other Associate Deans across Faculties to discuss models for student guidance.

Recommendation #9:

Disciplinary diversity of alumni careers

“We recommend ensuring that alumni in fields beyond medicine, law and business be invited to share their experiences – both rewards and challenges— in their chosen fields.”

We agree that this is vital, and note that alumni working in a large range of fields are invited to participate in events like the New World of Work Forum (NWWF) and the Alumni Experience Inquiry course, and featured in spaces like the Alumni Corner on our website. We will continue this process, and look to refine and enhance it where possible. The potential addition of the staff position described above, and a review of the NWWF (about to commence) provide concrete opportunities to explore ways in which we might further enhance opportunities for alumni in a wide range of fields to share their experiences.

Dean’s Response: (VPTL)

- I appreciate that the Director has already begun to address this issue through the New World of Work Forum (NWWF). This will continue to be an ongoing priority. As indicated, this would benefit from new staff support.

Recommendation #10:

Review of application and admission criteria; foundational ethics of social justice and responsibility

“We recommend a review of application and admission criteria to ascertain that incoming Arts & Science students have some foundational ethics of social justice and responsibility.”

Cultivating and supporting social awareness is indeed a key feature of the program, while the capacity to inquire meaningfully into issues of social concern is one of its central learning outcomes. With this in mind, we recently added a question to our supplementary application that asks students to outline and explain a question they have about the world and why it is significant to them. This question might generate responses that could begin to speak to applicants’ interest in issues of social import, and thereby help to address the recommendation above. At the same time, we don’t wish to *require* that incoming students already have extensive foundational knowledge in this area, as openness to learning about and developing their knowledge, skills, and attitudes is more significant. We will seek to further assess and respond as appropriate to these questions/tensions in our review of application procedures.

Dean’s Response: (VPTL)

- I appreciate that the Director is attentive to both the skills and attitudes of the incoming students, as well as their potential to grow and develop. There are ongoing assessments of the application questions that will help to address this recommendation.

Recommendation #11:

Post-graduate tracer study

“We recommend carrying out a tracer study of Arts & Science graduates.”

While we do not currently have the resources for such a study, and do already maintain a list of Arts & Science alumni, which—wherever possible—includes information about their trajectories post-graduation, we note that the addition of an outreach staff role might allow us to update this list and follow up with alumni in a more systematic way.

Dean’s Response: (VPTL)

- I agree with the Director, there is good foundational data already collected. Maintaining and updating this data will require an additional staff member to support this work.

Recommendation #12:

Countering Eurocentrism and white supremacy in curriculum

“Calls to counter Eurocentrism and white supremacy in university courses and programs, and questions about how additional areas of disciplinary/ interdisciplinary study might be incorporated into the curriculum are issues flagged in the self-study as potential areas of enhancement. So too is ongoing review of program pedagogy. In addition to recruitment and hiring practices that prioritize faculty expertise in non-Western, Indigenous, Global South, and Third World perspectives, research areas, and methodologies, we think these kinds of issues are valuably addressed in an iterative, collaborative way. Hence one of our main recommendations is about ensuring a forum to discuss and deepen the generative opportunities that differing perspectives about such matters offer.”

We appreciate the reviewers’ emphasis on importance of continuing to work on these articulated program priorities, and on the need to do so in an “iterative, collaborative way.” We have made preliminary strides in this direction (e.g., by initiating and planning conversations with students, faculty, and staff about equity in admissions processes; by taking initial steps toward developing a new upper-level Inquiry course that will offer students a chance to engage deeply with non-Northern/non-Western political theory (beginning with an offering focused on engaging with Gandhi and responses to / reverberations of his thought); by reaching out to colleagues at the MacPherson Institute about potentially supporting discussions with faculty about equitable and anti-racist pedagogy).

We are aware of the need to continue and extend these efforts, and will work to do so in a way that is responsive and collaborative, rather than following a pre-set plan.

Dean’s Response: (VPTL)

- I appreciate the detailed and thoughtful response of the Director. Curriculum continues to evolve and to be informed by the global context. I agree with the reviewers that this is an issue that needs constant attention. While Arts & Science often does not choose which permanent/tenured faculty are assigned to teach from across campus, there is on-going support and resources available through the MacPherson Institute and the Equity and

Inclusion Office to inform anti-racist pedagogies. There are also potential ways to bring postdoctoral fellows into the teaching program to bring in new perspectives and lived experiences.

Recommendation #13:

Faculty diversity

“A number of students noted that the faculty is lacking in diversity.”

We agree that this is an important concern, and one which we have been actively trying to address. We have made initial strides toward increasing the diversity of our faculty complement by securing funds (in collaboration with the Department of Philosophy) to recruit a Black Philosopher, who will have responsibilities to both Arts & Science and Philosophy. This will initially be a 3-year contractually limited appointment, though we are hopeful it might be renewed and ultimately converted into a tenure-track role. The program director has also had initial conversations with the Deans of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Science about the possibility of other cross-appointments. Should such cross-appointments prove possible, we will explore whether they might be targeted to faculty who identify as members of equity-denied groups. We will also ensure that any new faculty/instructor hiring processes in which the Program is involved will align with principles of employment equity.

Dean’s Response: (VPTL)

- I appreciate the Director’s awareness of this issue and recognize that they are limited in directly addressing it. Faculty members are not normally hired to teach in Arts & Science. I think that the suggestion to explore cross-appointments would be beneficial, either in tenured/permanent, contract, or postdoctoral roles.

Recommendation #14:

Digital specialist

“Continue to pursue a digital specialist - possibly from the alumni roster who has appropriate expertise and highly values the Arts & Science Program - to enhance and improve the public face of the program not limited to its website but to develop potentially living content through a suite of social media formats and platforms.”

Please see the point about a new staff role above. Our hope is that a skilled ‘outreach’ person could enhance our communications as well as contribute to maintaining and enhancing related efforts connected to recruitment and admissions and alumni engagement.

Dean’s Response: (VPTL)

- I agree, this is another example of the need for a communications/outreach staff role with the appropriate digital skills.

Recommendation #15:

Balance between encouraging curiosity and learning with the realistic considerations of carving a career pathway

“Aspire to achieve a balance between encouraging curiosity and learning with the realistic considerations of carving a career pathway. We recommend that students undergo a reflection session with Academic Coordinators, Alumni and the Director at the end of Level II with regards to possible trajectories in terms of Minor/Major undertakings for more long term and strategic decision making at a later stage.”

Students are currently invited to a Combined Honours session held in March of each year (while this is tailored particularly to Level I students, any student with interests in/questions about combining can attend). As noted elsewhere, we will continue to refine and build on this session given the feedback offered in the IQAP and in other conversations with students.

Looking forward, we will assess whether this session might be fruitfully expanded to more thoroughly consider issues outside of Combined Honours programs, or supplemented by other relevant programming (time and resources permitting).

Dean’s Response: (VPTL)

- There are an increasing number of skills-focussed concurrent certificates and minors, including interdisciplinary minors, that are open to all students across campus. There is also a need for tools and resources to allow students across all of our Faculties to navigate to those opportunities. The Director will be involved in those broader conversations.

Recommendation #16:

Partnered forums for course development, career planning, student impact

“We recommend regular inter-year, student/faculty/ program administrator/ director gatherings with a thematic focus because certain recurrent themes, indeed points of contention, could provide opportunities for generative, insightful dialogue when approached in a deliberate, collaborative way.” (The reviewers highlight the particular value of forums focused on the following: (1) course content and teaching methods, and in particular the aim of countering Eurocentrism in curricula; (2) plotting one’s academic trajectory; (3) helping students make a difference in society now and after graduation).”

We are grateful for the opportunities we have in Arts & Science program to have such gatherings and discussions, and will continue to build on these opportunities where it is practicable and effective to do so. Currently, we are pursuing two initiatives related to the highlighted areas:

- The point about further supporting discussion of academic trajectories will inform our annual ‘combined honours information session’. This session is led by the Director and students interested in combining/who have questions about combining are encouraged to attend. The feedback from the IQAP, and, indeed, from ongoing discussions with students, will inform this session this year, and we will continue to explore how this session might be refined and enhanced going forward.

- We are about to undertake a review of the New World of Work Forum, which has for the past 5 years offered a key opportunity for students, alumni, and faculty to come together and discuss work in a wide range of fields. This review should help us better understand the successes of the NWWF and plan for the future of the gift that funds it. Such plans may include developing initiatives (forums

or otherwise) that support the kind of socially-conscious career planning and alumni engagement highlighted in the reviewers' recommendation (though, of course, they must align with the aims of the gift itself first and foremost). While the NWWF has been paused this year, we are planning a one-day panel event to be held in its place, focused on the question of how we might make workplaces more equitable and just. This event, which will feature a range of speakers and hopefully bring together Arts & Science students, faculty, staff, and alumni, stands itself to offer an example of the kind of forum for which the reviewers call.

As noted elsewhere, we are also running discussions this term (initially between the Director and members of particular equity-denied groups, with openness to expanding on these) on the theme of equity in recruitment and admissions and ways in which our recruitment and admissions processes might better contribute to countering systemic inequities. These discussions will complement similar conversations (some of which have already been initiated) with program instructors and staff, and with relevant campus partners.) While this is not a particular 'forum theme' highlighted by the reviewers, it is in line with other suggestions highlighted in the report and offers another potential example of the collaborative approach to advancing key program priorities suggested.

We will also maintain the several existing avenues for feedback and discussion about curriculum and pedagogy that already exist.

Dean's Response: (VPTL)

- I appreciate the thoughtful response of the Director. The Arts & Science community of students, staff, and faculty do tend to be very collaborative and responsive in their curriculum development and co-curricular creation. I am confident that the actions noted by the Director above will address the recommendation of the reviewers.
- I will also note that the McMaster Students as Partners program originated in Arts & Science and provides opportunities for students and faculty to work together on curriculum review and redesign. This spirit, fostered in Arts & Science, has spread across campus.

Implementation Plan

In the chart below, please outline the recommendations made by reviewers, briefly outline the actions you plan to take, who will be responsible for leading the action, and a timeline for completion.

Recommendation (as stated in the reviewers' report)	Proposed Follow-Up	Responsibility for Leading Follow-Up	Timeline for Addressing Recommendation
"We recommend that the program and university enhance its level of internal and external communications about the program."	As noted in the self-study, enhancing our communications is an ongoing and as yet unresolved concern. To help us respond meaningfully to this important suggestion, we hope to create an 'outreach' focused staff position (described further below). The person in such a position could also interface with University communications staff in order to support the University's communications about the program where appropriate.	Program Director	Position to be proposed in FY24 budget.
"We recommend that the program continue with developing a facilitated supplementary application process for potential students from equity-denied groups, but as part of a broader review of existing admission requirements, processes, and practices."	Conversations about recruitment and admissions processes (including potential development of a facilitated application process of relevance to the program) are underway, and will involve students, faculty, and staff. Alongside potential additions to the supplementary application process, other ideas being explored (suggested initially by Access Program Manager Celeste Licorish) include developing a stream of the highly successful McMaster Discovery Program that would engage students who are in/just post high school and identify as members of equity denied groups, and paid student 'equity-champion' positions to aid in recruitment efforts.	Program Director, in partnership with program faculty, staff, and students.	Underway, in the hopes of rolling out initial refinements for the 2023-24 recruitment and application cycle.

“We recommend clearer, more transparent policies governing how equity, diversity and inclusion principles are meant to inform the way supplementary application assessments are made. In conjunction, we recommend reviewing the design and content of the training/ information sessions, while adding follow-up opportunities for the application reviewers to identify any challenges and to develop best practices.”	Work to consider such policies and principles, as well as a review of the training processes, will be factored into the efforts to continue reviewing and enhancing our recruitment and admissions procedures described above. It is already the case that supplementary application reviewers are invited to offer feedback on the process each year. We will ensure that this process is maintained.	See above	See above
“We recommend that the Level I Practices of Knowledge and Contemporary Indigenous Studies courses seek enhanced complementarities that will enable students to understand epistemological differences more fully.”	As we continue to refine the new 3-unit Practices of Knowledge course, we will encourage more active, explicit consideration of epistemologies and epistemological differences within it. The instructors of the two named courses will also be encouraged to confer and discuss potential complementarities if it proves appropriate (recognizing that the Indigenous Studies course also needs to meet the needs and priorities of the Indigenous Studies Department).	Relevant course instructors, with the support of the Program Director.	2023-24 academic year.

“We also recommend that the Academic Writing course balance individual and collaborative writing exercises and sequence them in a way that feedback is made available for both types of writing. We encourage recruiting more TAs to enable more meaningful individual feedback and mentorship for students to strengthen their writing skills.”	We will explore the balance of individual and collaborative writing activities in this course, and pursue the idea of securing additional graduate TAs for it.	Program Director, relevant course instructor	Additional TA support will be factored into the FY24 budget submission. Potential revisions to the course design will be considered for the 2023-24 offering.
“To optimize interdisciplinarity, we recommend that students and faculty advisors have the option of having a primary advisor <i>and</i> a second reader [for student theses], each hailing from distinct or perhaps cognate academic disciplines.”	While we understand this suggestion, we are not in a position to act on it at this point, given that Arts & Science students are graciously supervised by faculty from across campus, and we cannot ensure sufficient faculty resources to enable such a model.	n/a	n/a
“We recommend that an additional administrative position be created that would support logistical, budgetary, and communication services of Arts & Science with perhaps	We appreciate the suggestion that additional staff support might be valuable, and will consult with the Provost (via the budget process) about resourcing such a request. Rather than focusing primarily on logistical and budgetary support, we believe an additional staff position would be best focused on outreach (broadly defined), as such a position could assist with meeting the	Program Director	Position to be proposed in the FY24 budget.

75% or at least 50% employment.”	communications needs highlighted throughout the IQAP process as well as with other key outreach initiatives relevant to priorities highlighted by the reviewers (including recruitment and admissions processes, ongoing alumni engagement efforts and related efforts to support students’ understanding of career trajectories).		
“the program’s leadership should be mindful of students’ need to map out their work-life trajectories in a gradual manner as they progress. For this to happen, full information on electives, their pre-requisites, and term availability of courses should be provided in the early stages of the program.”	Such information is provided to students to the best of our ability throughout their studies (e.g., through annual combined honours program info sessions, one-on-one consultation, etc.) Nevertheless, we will continue to explore ways of enhancing the communication of this information.	Academic Program Administrators, Program Director	2023-24 to 2025-26 academic years
“We recommend ensuring that alumni in fields beyond medicine, law and business be invited to share their experiences – both rewards and challenges— in their chosen fields.”	We agree that this is vital, and note that alumni working in a large range of fields are invited to participate in events like the New World of Work Forum (NWWF) and the Alumni Experience Inquiry course, and featured in spaces like the Alumni Corner on our website. We will continue this process, and look to refine and enhance it where possible. The potential addition of the staff position described above, and a review of the NWWF (about to commence) provide concrete opportunities to explore ways in which we might further	Director, Academic Program Administrators, New Outreach Coordinator	Ongoing

	enhance opportunities for alumni in a wide range of fields to share their experiences.		
“We recommend a review of application and admission criteria to ascertain that incoming Arts & Science students have some foundational ethics of social justice and responsibility.”	Cultivating and supporting social awareness is indeed a key feature of the program, while the capacity to inquire meaningfully into issues of social concern is one of its central learning outcomes. With this in mind, we recently added a question to our supplementary application that asks students to outline and explain a question they have about the world and why it is significant to them. This question might generate responses that could begin to speak to applicants’ interest in issues of social import, and thereby help to address the recommendation above. At the same time, we don’t wish to <i>require</i> that incoming students already have extensive foundational knowledge in this area, as openness to learning about and developing their knowledge, skills, and attitudes is more significant. We will seek to further assess and respond as appropriate to these questions/tensions in our review of application procedures.	See above points about the review of application and admissions processes	See above points about the review of application and admissions processes
“We recommend carrying out a tracer study of Arts & Science graduates.”	While we do not currently have the resources for such a study, and do already maintain a list of Arts & Science alumni, which—wherever possible—includes information about their trajectories post-graduation, we note that the addition of an outreach staff role might allow us to update this list and follow up with alumni in a more systematic way.	n/a; New Outreach Coordinator	2024, and then ongoing thereafter

“Calls to counter Eurocentrism and white supremacy in university courses and programs, and questions about how additional areas of disciplinary/ interdisciplinary study might be incorporated into the curriculum are issues flagged in the self-study as potential areas of enhancement. So too is ongoing review of program pedagogy. In addition to recruitment and hiring practices that prioritize faculty expertise in non-Western, Indigenous, Global South, and Third World perspectives, research areas, and methodologies, we think these kinds of issues are valuably addressed in an iterative, collaborative way. Hence one of our main recommendations is about ensuring a forum to discuss and deepen the generative opportunities that differing perspectives about such matters offer.”	We appreciate the reviewers’ emphasis on importance of continuing to work on these articulated program priorities, and on the need to do so in an “iterative, collaborative way.” We have made preliminary strides in this direction (e.g., by initiating and planning conversations with students, faculty, and staff about equity in admissions processes; by taking initial steps toward developing a new upper-level Inquiry course that will offer students a chance to engage deeply with non-Northern/non-Western political theory (beginning with an offering focused on engaging with Gandhi and responses to / reverberations of his thought); by reaching out to colleagues at the MacPherson Institute about potentially supporting discussions with faculty about equitable and anti-racist pedagogy). We are aware of the need to continue and extend these efforts, and will work to do so in a way that is responsive and collaborative, rather than following a pre-set plan.	Program Director, Council of Instructors	Admissions and recruitment discussions ongoing. New course to be offered for the first time in 2023-24 (under a Special Topics course code, and potentially submitted as an ongoing curriculum addition in Fall 2023). Potential meeting/retreat supported by MacPherson Institute staff in 2023-24.
“A number of students noted that the faculty is lacking in diversity.”	We agree that this is an important concern, and one which we have been actively trying to address. We have made initial strides toward	Program Director, in collaboration with relevant campus partners where appropriate.	CLA faculty search in Winter 2023, in the hopes of having

	increasing the diversity of our faculty complement by securing funds (in collaboration with the Department of Philosophy) to recruit a Black Philosopher, who will have responsibilities to both Arts & Science and Philosophy. This will initially be a 3-year contractually limited appointment, though we are hopeful it might be renewed and ultimately converted into a tenure-track role. The program director has also had initial conversations with the Deans of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Science about the possibility of other cross-appointments. Should such cross-appointments prove possible, we will explore whether they might be targeted to faculty who identify as members of equity-denied groups. We will also ensure that any new faculty/instructor hiring processes in which the Program is involved will align with principles of employment equity.		someone in place for the 2023-24 year. Additional conversations with relevant Chairs/Deans across the 2023-24 and 2024-25 years.
“Continue to pursue a digital specialist - possibly from the alumni roster who has appropriate expertise and highly values the Arts & Science Program - to enhance and improve the public face of the program not limited to its website but to develop potentially living content through a suite of social media formats and platforms.”	Please see the point about a new staff role above. Our hope is that a skilled ‘outreach’ person could enhance our communications as well as contribute to maintaining and enhancing related efforts connected to recruitment and admissions and alumni engagement.	Program Director, New Outreach Coordinator	Position to be proposed in FY24 budget.

“Aspire to achieve a balance between encouraging curiosity and learning with the realistic considerations of carving a career pathway. We recommend that students undergo a reflection session with Academic Coordinators, Alumni and the Director at the end of Level II with regards to possible trajectories in terms of Minor/Major undertakings for more long term and strategic decision making at a later stage.”	Students are currently invited to a Combined Honours session held in March of each year (while this is tailored particularly to Level I students, any student with interests in/questions about combining can attend). As noted elsewhere, we will continue to refine and build on this session given the feedback offered in the IQAP and in other conversations with students. Looking forward, we will assess whether this session might be fruitfully expanded to more thoroughly consider issues outside of Combined Honours programs, or supplemented by other relevant programming (time and resources permitting).	Program Director, Academic Program Administrators	Initial attention will be paid to these issues in preparing the Combined Honours Info Session in Winter 2023, with the potential for more sustained/ extensive consideration following in 2024-25.
“We recommend regular inter-year, student/faculty/ program administrator/ director gatherings with a thematic focus because certain recurrent themes, indeed points of contention, could provide opportunities for generative, insightful dialogue when approached in a deliberate, collaborative way.” (The reviewers highlight the particular value of forums focused on the following: (1) course content and teaching methods, and in particular the aim of	We are grateful for the opportunities we have in Arts & Science program to have such gatherings and discussions, and will continue to build on these opportunities where it is practicable and effective to do so. Currently, we are pursuing two initiatives related to the highlighted areas: - The point about further supporting discussion of academic trajectories will inform our annual ‘combined honours information session’. This session is led by the Director and students interested in combining/who have questions about combining are encouraged to attend. The feedback from the IQAP, and, indeed, from ongoing discussions with students, will inform this session this year, and we will continue to	Director and Academic Program Administrators, in collaboration with program students and faculty.	Specific initiatives described at left are underway / being rolled out in Winter 2023.

countering Eurocentrism in curricula; (2) plotting one's academic trajectory; (3) helping students make a difference in society now and after graduation)."	explore how this session might be refined and enhanced going forward. - We are about to undertake a review of the New World of Work Forum, which has for the past 5 years offered a key opportunity for students, alumni, and faculty to come together and discuss work in a wide range of fields. This review should help us better understand the successes of the NWWF and plan for the future of the gift that funds it. Such plans may include developing initiatives (forums or otherwise) that support the kind of socially-conscious career planning and alumni engagement highlighted in the reviewers' recommendation (though, of course, they must align with the aims of the gift itself first and foremost). While the NWWF has been paused this year, we are planning a one-day panel event to be held in its place, focused on the question of how we might make workplaces more equitable and just. This event, which will feature a range of speakers and hopefully bring together Arts & Science students, faculty, staff, and alumni, stands itself to offer an example of the kind of forum for which the reviewers call. As noted elsewhere, we are also running discussions this term (initially between the Director and members of particular equity-denied groups, with openness to expanding on these) on the theme of equity in recruitment and admissions and ways in which our recruitment and admissions processes might better contribute to countering systemic inequities. These discussions will complement similar conversations (some of which have		
--	--	--	--

	already been initiated) with program instructors and staff, and with relevant campus partners.) While this is not a particular ‘forum theme’ highlighted by the reviewers, it is in line with other suggestions highlighted in the report and offers another potential example of the collaborative approach to advancing key program priorities suggested. We will also maintain the several existing avenues for feedback and discussion about curriculum and pedagogy that already exist.		
--	--	--	--

Quality Assurance Committee Recommendation

McMaster's Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) reviewed the above documentation at the March 19, 2026, meeting. The committee recommends that the **Arts and Science (UG)** program should follow the regular course of action with an 18-month progress report and subsequent full external cyclical review to be scheduled in seven years, and to be conducted no later than eight years after the start of the last review.