



FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT INTERDISCIPLINARY MASTER'S IN ART, MEDIA AND DESIGN (IAMD) GRADUATE STUDIES

Prepared by: Dr. Christine Bovis-Crossen, Vice-President, Academic; and Chair, Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC)

Period of Cyclical Review: July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2015

**Associate Vice-President,
Research and Dean,
Graduate Studies:** Dr. Helmut Reichenbächer

Program Chair(s): Associate Professor, Dr. Barbara Rauch

External Reviewers: Associate Professor, Dr. Rudi Meyer, Director, Master of Design Program, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD)

Associate Professor, Dr. Cameron Cartière, Faculty of Culture and Community, Emily Carr University of Art and Design

Associate Professor, Michelle Forsyth, Faculty of Art, OCAD University

Part 1: Synthesis of Review Documents:

a) Summary of Self-Study Brief

The self-study exercise confirmed that the Interdisciplinary Art, Media and Design program is a strong and viable graduate program with distinct degree streams. Following the review, the program has identified its strengths and weaknesses and has

already begun to tackle concerns such as the installation of improved lighting in the study spaces at 205 Richmond Street West.

The program intends to strengthen its distinct degree streams, namely the MFA with its focus on studio production, the MDes with its particular interest in design thinking and critical design production, and the MA with its scholarly rigour. The program also found that the needs for the full-time and part-time cohorts occasionally differ and that this differentiation needs further attention.

While the program delivers excellent thesis documents and final thesis exhibitions with rigorous thesis defences that are praised by the examination committees, there is a need to further address the specifics of the interdisciplinary nature of the research practice that the program supports. The program has the opportunity to claim a prime position in this field of study that is contemporary and innovative.

The program's success is evident and reflected by the applicant pool as well as the successful career paths of its alumni. Yet recurring issues such as the appropriateness of the study spaces for the students and the lack of a core faculty have been noted. The program relies on the commitment of faculty members and reliable access to workshops. As OCAD U's oldest Graduate program, IAMD has been recognized in local, regional, and national art and design communities and offers a valuable place to pursue rigorous creative art & design practice in conjunction with interdisciplinary scholarship.

b) Summary of External Reviewers' Response and Recommendations

The External Reviewers' site visit took place on January 26 and 27, 2015 and included meetings with the Program Review Team, faculty members, and students; the Vice-President Academic; the Associate Vice-President, Research and Dean, Graduate Studies; the Faculty and Curriculum Development team; the Coordinator, Academic Governance about IQAP policy; and a classroom visit. Facilities tours included shops, studios, maker lab and rapid prototyping centre, the graduate gallery. The external reviewers' report was received on February 16, 2015 and included the following recommendations:

External Reviewers' Recommendation #1

Address the studio lighting: light is absolutely crucial in the development of dynamic and innovative studio production. The IAMD studios currently have inadequate lighting and very few windows that have become obscured by the surrounding buildings. This makes the studios feel oppressive and office-like.

External Reviewers' Recommendation #2

Address the need for a safe working environment. Oversight is needed in relation to issues of safety on par with the level of diligence given to the studios at 100 McCaul.

External Reviewers' Recommendation #3:

Design and build new furniture in the IAMD studios. Each student should have her or his own work area to conduct research and studio production appropriate to the graduate level. The second year students currently have designated individual and shared studios, but the first year students have space in a common room. The random storage of items in this space—such as leftover conference tables and institutional chairs—are a detriment to creative thinking. While the review committee recognizes the value in allowing for flexibility in the first year shared studio and the desire for students to create their own community and negotiate their own studio structure, the general feeling of institutional oversight is obvious and reflected in the students' lack of activity and usage of the space. The review committee would suggest creating dynamic working spaces for the IAMD students using an approach similar to that of developing the furniture for faculty offices at 100 McCaul.

External Reviewers' Recommendation #4

Re-consider changes to the existing architecture if a move is not possible. The space constraints of a program on an urban campus are challenging, yet there are certainly ways to adapt the current IAMD space that would reflect the quality and quantity of work expected from the students in the Program.

External Reviewers' Recommendation #5

Faculty: Increase the core faculty by hiring directly into the IAMD. The missing design component in the curriculum teaching needs to be addressed as well; additional hiring could potentially be in this area.

External Reviewers' Recommendation #6

Faculty: Given the breath of the Program and the number of graduate students within IAMD, the Director of the IAMD should be considered a full-time position.

External Reviewers' Recommendation #7

Integration: The students (and the program) could be more fully integrated into the overall infrastructure of the University. IAMD students complained that they felt alienated from faculty, other programs, and the 100 McCaul St. facilities. An extended effort to incorporate this program into the day-to-day life of the University is desirable.

External Reviewers' Recommendation #8

Integration: The IAMD should be reintegrated into the OCAD U pantheon of graduate programs. The self-study suggests that “a stronger affiliation between the IAMD Program and the School of Interdisciplinary Studies, currently housed within the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Science” would be beneficial. “The IAMD Program, alongside the Digital Futures Program, could become one of the interdisciplinary graduate programs of the School of Interdisciplinary Studies.”

External Reviewers' Recommendation #9

Curriculum: Research-through-practice could be more fully integrated into more of the courses so as to foster the interdisciplinary interactions between students in a given cohort. The carefully constructed make-up of each cohort could be instrumentalized for the benefit of all.

Part 2: Summary of Internal Response and Recommendations

a) Implementation Plan

| Recommendation to be Implemented | Responsibility for Implementation | Implementation Date/Timeline |
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| <i>External Reviewer Recommendation #1-4</i> Address the lighting in the studios, safety issues, studio furnishings, and consider changes to the existing architecture OCAD will install an improved lighting system, open the study spaces to allow light into the open space, install a second sink, and create more dynamic and flexible work spaces for the IAMD students in order to explore opportunities to create more collaborative working environments | Dean, Graduate Studies and Vice-President Finance and Administration | 2015-2017 |
| <i>External Reviewer Recommendation #5</i> Faculty: core faculty by hiring directly into the IAMD. The missing design component in the curriculum teaching will be addressed through additional graduate faculty appointments | Faculty of Design Dean | 2015 - 2017 |
| <i>External Reviewer Recommendation #6</i> Given the breadth of the Program and the number of graduate students within IAMD, the | Dean, Graduate Studies and Faculty Deans | 2017-18 |

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| <p>Director of the IAMD should be considered a full-time position.</p> <p>Revisit appropriate teaching releases and focused teaching responsibility within the program.</p> | | |
| <p><i>External Reviewer Recommendation #7</i></p> <p>Integration: The students (and the Program) could be more fully integrated into the overall infrastructure of the University.</p> <p>Facilitate opportunities for graduate students to obtain better access to fabrication facilities at 100 McCaul and for graduate students to be integrated into the social and intellectual activities of the campus.</p> | <p>Dean, Graduate studies</p> | <p>2015 - 16</p> |
| <p><i>External Reviewer Recommendation #8</i></p> <p>Integration: 1. The IAMD should be reintegrated into the OCAD U pantheon of graduate programs. 2. a stronger affiliation between the IAMD Program and the School of Interdisciplinary Studies, currently housed within the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Science would be beneficial.</p> <p>1. In order to increase opportunities for greater integration and collaboration amongst various graduate programs, Graduate Studies will create a number of governance and social initiatives, including the establishing of a Graduate Studies Curriculum Committee</p> <p>2. The Graduate Studies Taskforce will review the structural relationships between Graduate Studies and the Faculties</p> | <p>Dean, Graduate Studies, and Vice-President, Academic</p> | <p>2015 - 16</p> |
| <p><i>External Reviewer Recommendation #9</i></p> <p>Curriculum: Research-through-practice could be more fully integrated into more of the courses so as to foster the interdisciplinary interactions between students in a given cohort. The carefully constructed make-up of each cohort could be instrumentalized for the benefit of all.</p> <p>The IAMD graduate program committee and the to-be-established Graduate Studies Curriculum Committee will develop strategies on how to</p> | <p>Graduate Program Director and Dean, Graduate Studies</p> | <p>2015 - 2018</p> |

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| implement the curricular and student cohort recommendations | | |
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b) Conclusion:

The Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) conducted a thorough review of the documents pertaining to the IAMD cyclical program review, including the IAMD Self-study Report; the Responses of Associate Vice-President, Research and Dean, Graduate Studies and the Vice-President, Academic; the External Reviewers' Report; and the Program Review Team's Internal Response Report. The SQAC provided minor additional suggestions and commended the results of the IAMD cyclical review to the Senate for approval. The Senate approved the Final Assessment Report on June 22, 2015.