



## FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Contemporary Art, Design and New Media Art Histories (CADN), Graduate Studies

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<b>Period of Cyclical Review:</b>	November 1, 2017 – December 31, 2019
<b>Dean:</b>	Ashok Mathur, Dean, Graduate Studies
<b>Program Review Team:</b>	Keith Bresnahan, Dot Tuer, Julian Haladyn
<b>External Reviewers:</b>	<p>Catherine Black (OCAD U)</p> <p>Richard Hill (Emily Carr University of Art and Design)</p> <p>Kirsty Robertson (Western University, Visual Arts)</p>

#### 1. Executive Summary of Cyclical Program Review:

The cyclical program review for the Contemporary Art, Design and New Media Art Histories MA program (CADN) began in November 2017 and concluded with a response to the external reviewers' report in December 2019. It comprised a series of workshops with program faculty, students, and stakeholders; alumni and student surveys; and curricular reviews, leading to the production of a Self-Study Brief outlining the history and current state of the CADN graduate program. This report was reviewed by faculty external to the program and the University, concluding with a 3-day site visit by the external examiners in November 2019. The Self-Study Brief was reviewed by the VP Academic and the Dean of Graduate Studies, as was the examiners' report and the response by the CADN cyclical review team.

The Report prepared by the external examiners found the program to be consistent with OCADU's mission and academic plan, particularly in the areas of decolonization, interdisciplinarity, and student experience. Course and Program learning outcomes are aligned with Degree-Level Expectations and accreditation standards, and graduates were seen to be well-prepared by the program for further postgraduate experiences and

professional practices. Clear and logical pathways encourage successful on-time completion; learning outcomes are clearly conveyed and graduation rates are high. Reviewers noted that the structure of the program encourages a balance of interdisciplinary learning and student-led research. Meaningful student-faculty engagement, innovative curriculum, flexible pathways, interdisciplinary studies situated in a practice-based context, and productive exchanges with other graduate programs were all cited as benefiting student success; students reported high satisfaction with teaching and with the program in general. The Report also noted the innovative and progressive nature of this program, highlighting its interdisciplinary and contemporary focus, as well as its teaching of design history, as distinct features within the landscape of art-history graduate programs in Canada.

Finally, reviewers suggest that the broader identity of the program, focused on a progressive and contemporary approach to art and design history, could be strengthened and would provide a curricular rationale. This could also include exploring and expanding upon connections to OCADU's undergraduate BA program in Visual and Critical Studies, with the possibility for a program name-change in parallel with this program, to be announced in conjunction with a new vision statement and mandate for the program, and a renewed marketing campaign.

## 2. **Strengths and Challenges:**

**Strengths:** The program stands out among other graduate programs in art history in Ontario and across Canada for its progressive and interdisciplinary focus on contemporary art, design, and new media. The embeddedness of critical writing throughout the program, the success of the students, and the flexibility of program pathways are all significant strengths of this program. Additionally, interactions between the CADN program and studio practice-based programs at OCADU, and the location of the program more broadly within OCADU's context of studio education, is a unique strength. Alumni have largely either gone on to further success in post-graduate education or have found employment related to their studies. Clear and logical pathways encourage successful on-time completion; learning outcomes are clearly conveyed and graduation rates are high. The structure of the program encourages a balance of interdisciplinary learning and student-led research. Core program faculty are experts in their field, whose expertise reflects program areas of focus, and are seen as accessible to students. Meaningful student-faculty engagement, innovative curriculum, flexible pathways, interdisciplinary studies situated in a practice-based context, and productive exchanges with other graduate programs all benefit student success and satisfaction with the program.

**Challenges:** The relatively small size of the CADN program (6-8 students admitted per year) is on par with similar MA programs at other institutions. However, the program struggles at times to attract and retain qualified applicants in sufficient numbers. The program loses good students each year to other programs with more robust funding packages. Increased scholarship and bursary funds, alongside a continued commitment to offer Teaching Assistantships to all incoming students, would help to attract and retain top applicants.

Our aim of increasing the range of courses and program faculty, particularly in areas of Indigenous and non-Western art history, is limited by the number of courses we can offer and the restricted availability of qualified faculty to teach in the program. Supervision of theses and major research papers tends to fall on faculty who are actively teaching in the program, and could be more equitably distributed. Finally, the program suffers at present from a lack of a clearly articulated vision, tied both to the program name and curricular rationale. This should be explored, with an aim to promote the program more actively to those communities of prospective students and community stakeholders we wish to reach.

### 3. Implementation Plan:

Recommendation	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility and Other Stakeholders	Implementation Date/Timeline
<b>Academic and strategic priorities</b>  1. Program identity needs to be more clearly defined and communicated through a vision statement, connected to curricular rationales.	A program mission/visioning workshop has been proposed for Summer 2020, with further work to continue over the next 3-4 months, to be communicated to the public in advance of next recruitment cycle.	Graduate Program Director and faculty  Dean/Program Coordinator to provide support	Fall 2020
<b>Academic and strategic priorities</b>  2. Change in the name of the program to support vision statement/mandate and assist with marketing. Current name is seen as cumbersome, confusing. Potential exists to adopt nomenclature in parallel with Visual and Cultural Studies undergraduate program (BA).	This suggestion will come under the purview of the CADN Program Committee, in discussion with program stakeholders (students, faculty, Dean) and undergraduate Visual and Critical Studies stakeholders.  A change to a program name constitutes a minor revision to program under IQAP, and will require Senate approval.	Graduate Program Director and CADN program committee  Dean/Program Coordinator to provide support  Stakeholders: Students and alumni, CADN graduate program; Program Committee, Visual and Critical Studies (BA)	Fall 2020-Winter 2021

	Any name change will further require revision of marketing and public-facing aspects of the program to reflect new nomenclature. Ideally this would take place prior to the next recruitment cycle (Fall 2020) — and if not, then prior to the Fall 2021 recruitment and admissions.	undergraduate program; Dean/Associate Deans, FOLASSIS	
<b>Academic and Strategic Priorities / Human Resources Development</b>  3. Proactively involve Indigenous faculty and issues in the program.  Increase teaching and supervisory roles for Indigenous faculty in the CADN program; consider curricular planning and scheduling so CADN program courses offered do not conflict with Indigenous-themed courses in other programs.  Consider recruiting a faculty member with a specialization in Indigenous art histories.	Continue to engage with individual faculty and the administrative leadership of undergraduate Faculties and programs, to place interested Indigenous faculty members in graduate teaching and supervision.  The present practice of largely providing Indigenous content to MA students in the program through upper-year undergraduate courses is inconsistent with the stated goals of the program. These approaches and content should be addressed rather through the program offering its own diverse graduate curriculum.  As graduate programs do not have their own hiring lines, we will consult with undergraduate Faculties (especially FOLASSIS) to promote the hiring of new faculty members with a focus in Indigenous art	Program Director, CADN  Dean, Graduate Studies  Dean, FOLASSIS  Chair, Indigenous Visual Culture	Fall 2020 - ongoing

	history and diverse areas of focus.		
<b>Admissions, recruitment and retention</b>  1. Aim to attract greater numbers of qualified applicants to the program, through targeted marketing, increased visibility, and outreach. A new marketing push will be especially important in the framework of proposed program name-change.  The aim is to 'sell' the particular strengths of the program — its contemporary and interdisciplinary focus, its progressive methodologies, and unique strengths. This should also include highlighting and promoting research by core faculty, which can help focus marketing of the program.	This objective entails continuing and building on existing relationships between the program and OCADU's Admissions and Recruitment office, as well as Marketing and Communications.  Targeted outreach to specific markets and communities (beyond traditional art-history undergraduate programs) may be desirable.  Program Director to work with the Research Office on ways to promote faculty research in ways specific to program faculty.	Program Director  CADN Program Committee  Support from Admissions & Recruitment, Marketing & Communications	Fall 2020 (ongoing)
<b>Admissions, recruitment and retention</b>  2. Sustain current size of the program (6-8 admitted students per year), as both realistic and pedagogically optimal.  Tied to item 1, above: an increased number of qualified applicants will allow us to secure stable numbers of admitted students. This may require further investments in scholarships and in program marketing, in order to not only attract	Program Director to work with Admissions and Recruitment, as well as Marketing and Communications as above, to strengthen marketing of the program both outside and inside the university.  Program Director to work with Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean/Associate Deans of FoLASSIS, and Advisor to Provost on Partnerships, Outreach &	Dean, Graduate Studies  Executive Director & Advisor to Provost / Partnerships, Outreach & Research  Admissions/Recruitment	Fall/Winter 2020-21 (ongoing)

sufficient numbers of qualified applicants, but also to make attractive offers of admission and retain these students.	Research, on potential new scholarships and bursaries, as well as stable numbers of Teaching Assistantships for all students admitted to the program.		
<b>Curriculum Development</b>  1. Offer a Methods course every year which brings members of the first-year cohort together. Methods course should address progressive, cross-disciplinary approaches to visual/material analysis that will be relevant to students of art, design and media histories	Following a hiatus in 2019, we have already reinstated a required program-specific Methods course for 2020-21, and are currently working to revise course description and structure to better reflect the progressive, cross-disciplinary approaches of the program.	CADN Program Committee  Support from Dean, Graduate Studies  Stakeholders: Program students	Fall 2020
<b>Curriculum Development</b>  2. Work on core curriculum to create shared conversations among students in the program. Possibly achieved through required Indigenous graduate course.	<p>The Program Committee will be considering the role of the required (non-thesis) courses in the program at present, including re-evaluating their current role and usefulness in the program.</p> <p>While the idea of a mandated core Indigenous course may not be an appropriate solution, a better integration of program mandate and goals — including indigenization and decolonization — with logical and consistent program curricular offerings, forms the basis for upcoming</p>	CADN Program Committee  Support from Dean, Graduate Studies  Stakeholders: Program students	Fall 2020-ongoing

	items on the Program Committee's agenda		
<p><b>Curriculum Development</b></p> <p>3. Shift Professional Practices courses to earlier in the program, between Winter of Year 1 and Fall of Year 2, rather than current Fall/Winter Year 2.</p> <p>Public thesis colloquium should be scheduled earlier in the fall to avoid lag between thesis proposal submission (August) and this event, typically held in October.</p>	<p>We have already revised the program curriculum to shift the Professional Practices course to a one-semester series of professional workshops in the fall semester of second year.</p> <p>Organizing workshops around Thesis/MRP structure and writing for first-year students in the Winter term may also be advisable.</p> <p>A change to the public thesis colloquium has already been approved at the program committee level, and will take place in early September, approximately 3 weeks after the submission of the thesis proposal.</p>	<p>Program Committee, CADN</p> <p>Graduate Program Director</p>	<p>Summer-Fall 2020</p>
<p><b>Faculty development</b></p> <p>1. Establish better distribution of supervisory faculty across the program.</p> <p>This entails both incentivizing faculty to undertake supervision through greater exposure to and involvement in the program, and providing opportunities for students to connect with faculty members and learn about faculty research.</p> <p>Suggestion of assigning supervisors to students not</p>	<p>Aim to supplement the existing roster of faculty supervising in the program, by involving new faculty members in teaching and program committee work, and program events. BIPOC faculty members should especially be encouraged to participate in supervision. Current faculty who are directly engaged in the program should be recognized for their contributions and similarly encouraged.</p>	<p>Graduate Program Director</p> <p>CADN Program Committee</p> <p>Dean, Graduate Studies</p> <p>Marketing and Communications</p> <p>Research Office</p>	<p>Fall/Winter 2020-21 (ongoing)</p>

feasible due to characterization of supervision as voluntary labour in Faculty MoA. This is not ideal in any case from a pedagogical perspective.	<p>Program committee might work with Graduate Studies to consider recommended limits to faculty supervision (eg., x number of students at a given time)</p> <p>Investigate means of promoting program faculty visibility at OCADU (and in our public-facing platforms) with Marketing &amp; Communications and the Research Office. Establish regular events where program faculty present their research to students, including series of faculty lunchtime talks.</p>		
<p><b>Additional recommendations to be implemented, not included in the external review report (if applicable):</b></p>			
Recommendation	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility and Other Stakeholders	Implementation Date/Timeline
<p><b>Quality of Educational Experience</b></p> <p>1. Maintain established practice of offering four elective offerings (inclusive of Field-Specific seminars) within the CADN program across Fall/Winter semesters. These courses provide students with choice and flexibility of options, and provide elective offerings for students in other graduate programs at OCADU.</p> <p>Work to minimize current program reliance on undergraduate course-offerings and Independent</p>	<p>Undertake ongoing consultations with Graduate Studies and OCADU administration to emphasize the importance of diversified course offerings and student choice of electives in a realistic framework, in the face of economic realities.</p> <p>Student satisfaction, and our ability to recruit and retain strong students, will depend on our offering a robust slate of program courses</p>	<p>Program Director, CADN</p> <p>Other Graduate Program Directors</p> <p>Registrar</p> <p>Dean, Graduate Studies</p> <p>VPA/Provost</p>	<p>Fall 2020 - ongoing</p>



<p>Study courses to fill out graduate curriculum; work on alternatives, including special topics courses.</p>	<p>reflecting the program mandate and vision.</p> <p>Work to increase rotating elective course offerings in program areas, and to bring both new and existing faculty into the classroom, through a regular offering of special topics courses.</p> <p>Offering four elective (non-required) courses per year within the CADN program may not be economically feasible. While advocating for the program offering a robust slate of elective courses, we will also actively work with other Graduate programs at OCADU, and the Registrar's Office, to ensure non-conflictual scheduling with suitable elective offerings in other programs, to provide our students with a full range of available course options.</p>		
<p><b>Admissions, Recruitment and Retention / Quality of Educational Experience</b></p> <p>1. Work with the graduate program in Criticism and Curatorial Practice (CCP) on the possibility of absorbing that program's current 'Criticism' stream into CADN.</p> <p>This would permit the CCP program to focus on</p>	<p>Program Director and Program committee, CADN, to work with CCP Program committee and Director. Preliminary discussions have already taken place, but further consultation is needed between both programs, and larger stakeholders</p>	<p>Program Director, CADN</p> <p>Program Committee, CADN</p> <p>Program Director and Program Committee, CCP</p>	<p>Discussions to commence in Fall 2020</p> <p>Potentially form working-group of members from both program committees.</p>

<p>curatorial practice and avoid the frequent transfer of admitted students in CCP into CADN during their first year of study (or, worse, their leaving the university).</p> <p>This would also benefit CADN by incorporating the established curricular strengths associated with this stream, and may further assist in our marketing and recruitment of the CADN program.</p>	<p>at the university. If undertaken, this move may necessitate further curricular revision in the CADN program.</p>	<p>Support from Dean, Graduate Studies, and VPA/Provost</p> <p>Stakeholders: Marketing and Communications</p> <p>Admissions and Recruitment</p>	
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#### 4. Recommendations:

The CADN Program has recently undergone a number of curricular revisions and initiatives aimed at creating a more flexible and streamlined student experience, both as part of and separate from the cyclical self-study process. These have, in our opinion, already moved towards a number of the objectives of the Academic Plan, the Strategic Research Plan, and the Strategic Directions of the University. We are now in a position to undertake a number of the initiatives and implement recommendations listed above, to begin shortly. The first priority identified by the External Reviewers' Report, and our first item of business, is to convene a working-group from among Program Committee members, program faculty and interested stakeholders, to articulate a clear vision for the program going forward, highlighting its strengths, mandate, and objectives. At least two further action-items above will follow directly from this: the potential for a program name-change and a new marketing strategy, as well as the rationale for further curricular revision – including the possibility of incorporating the 'Criticism' stream from the CCP graduate program into this program.

The larger goals of program stability through increased numbers of applicants and attracting top applicants, will depend on the success of our marketing highlighting the program's unique strengths, on the establishment of new scholarships and other sources of funding, and on the promotion of diverse faculty expertise and research (including Indigenous and BIPOC faculty). These will also depend on the satisfaction of the program among its graduates and current students, their experience of the program as one of interdisciplinary research, robust and progressive course-offerings, and access to supports and faculty supervisors. For this reason, these are also ongoing priorities that we feel must be supported, to whatever extent possible.

5. **Conclusion:**

The Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) was provided the documents pertaining to the Contemporary Art, Design and New Media Art Histories cyclical program review, including the self-study brief, the responses of the Dean and Vice-President, Academic and Provost; the External Review Report and the Internal Response. In their review of the final report, the SQAC focused discussion on the strengths and challenges of the program as well as undergraduate and graduate alignment, marketing, and human resource needs. The committee recommended the report to Senate for approval. The report received approval from Senate on April 27, 2020.