OCAD UNIVERSITY

FINAL ASSESMENT REPORT
Strategic Foresight and Innovation, Graduate Studies

Prepared by:	Senate Quality Assurance Committee
Period of Cyclical Review:	01 July 2015 -30 June 2016 01 July 2016- 30 June 2017 (Program team established in July 2015)
Dean, Graduate Studies:	Michael Prokopow (Interim)
Program Review Team Lead:	Professor Lenore Richards
External Reviewers:	Professor Andrew Hinds, University of Houston Professor Nathan Shedroff, California College of the Arts Professor Martha Ladly, OCAD University External review process took place on site between 10 February and 11 February 2017. (Report submitted 23 February 2017).

Part 1: Synthesis of Review Documents:

a) Summary of Cyclical Program Review: This is the first institutional review of the Strategic Foresight and Innovation graduate program and one of the first of the reviews of OCAD University's graduate programs to be undertaken in the context of the new Institutional Quality Assurance Process that was implemented in 2011. The self-study exercise affirmed that the SFI (Master of Design) program is intellectually significant and structurally viable. The Program Review Team, under the leadership of Professor Lenore Richards (the founding Director of SFI) was defined by extensive consultation with faculty, students and staff. The review identified strengths and weaknesses and steps have been taken to address the concerns raised during the IQAP (self-study) process and external review.

Part 2: Strengths, Challenges, and Recommendations:

a) **Strengths and Challenges:** In the course of its history the SFI program has gained an international reputation. It is respected for its intellectual rigour, curricular and pedagogical distinctiveness, the excellence of its faculty and what can be called a critically demanding

and ultimately rewarding approach to addressing questions of social need (and thus transformation) through the application of design thinking to contemporary issues both current and anticipated. As the university's largest graduate program (with fully enrolled part time and full time programs) SFI has demonstrated its power to attract highly qualified national and international applicants and, given the success of its program alumni, its ability to produce highly able and accomplished thinkers, industry leaders and agents of change. This said, there are the looming questions of the ability of the university to continue to provide sufficient resources (faculty, infrastructure) so as to ensure the continuing success of the program and the larger issue of how to sustain local and provincial interest in the program given changes in the sector, the public's interest in such learning and professional pathways and the fact that comparable and competitor institutions have sought to adapt their program offerings to the intellectual currents of the times.

b) **Recommendations:** While the external review of the program was overwhelmingly positive, identifying SFI as one of the top programs in the world, several concerns were raised. Given the relatively small number of core faculty and the program's heavy reliance on part-time/sessional and other tenure-track faculty, there is the issue of being able to continue to provide the highly personalized, student-focused and time intensive culture of advising. Each student in the program writes a culminating document the generation of which is defined by close advising. It remains to be seen if the current model of advising can be sustained.   Another concern raised in the external review was the fact of the separation of the two cohorts of the program (part-time and full-time) and its implications and consequences. The separation of these groups is tied to the structural capacity of the program to deliver its curriculum to individuals (or groups of individuals) with different life circumstances. However, while the duplication of curriculum is of concern (especially in the context of resource management) the more pressing issue is the idea that the immensely talented students in each cohort do not have the opportunity in the course of their education to learn together and to share ideas.   As to the realities of the classroom instruction, there were concerns raised about the benefits of implementing what were called "graduate tutorials" and teaching assistantships in the program. Given the volume and complexity of the intellectual materials presented in the curriculum the benefits of instituting a mentoring system in which second year students and alumni would take on (remunerated) roles as tutorial instructors were seen to be real. However, while it is likely that there would be educational benefits from the implementation of such a pedagogical model, the budgetary implications would be considerable.

Part 3: Implementation Plan and Conclusion:

a) **Implementation Plan:**

Recommendations

Academic and Strategic Priorities "Build Reputation" / Program Promotion

The need to build on the successes of what is a highly differentiated program remains critically important: The work of building the program's much respected reputation (a result of the profile of alumni and faculty) obviously must continue but in such a way so as to promote growth and stability. Centrally important, the means by which the program's work is communicated to the wider world (both institutional and private sector) Clearly the program has gained its reputation for scholarly excellence because of its innovative model of applying design thinking to social analysis, forecasting and what can be called problem solving. To maintain this critical advantage, the issues of faculty expansion, renewal and retention will need to be addressed in realistic and actual ways. In similar ways, issues of decolonizing the curriculum, sustainability, and working towards enhancing 'innovation' are of central importance.

Admissions, 'targeted recruitment' and retention

The SFI program has consistently demonstrated in intellectual relevance and what can be called market appeal. Applications for admission are consistently abundant and the admissions process is highly competitive. There are, however, enrolment issues involving the part time cohort that are worth noting. These students, in large part, work full-time and they often need to take leaves of absences. A consequence of this stepping away from a course of study (one already elongated) means that there may be vulnerabilities around the attainment of timely and relevant expertise.

Faculty Development

For the high calibre education and academic advising that defines the program to be maintained, it will be necessary to address issues of the ratio of instructors to students and the issues of the need to augment the ranks for the professoriate and qualified individuals contracted to delivery instruction.

Quality of educational experience

Students understand and support the rationale for the distinctive pedagogical model/structure, but seek a more fulsome explanation about its operations. To this end, the organizational logic of the program and its communication to students (and other stakeholders) needs to be made clearer.

Physical Resources requirements

The program currently operates out of somewhat constrained spaces at 205 Richmond. There are designated program spaces (offices and flexible learning spaces) that are well used but which are always under strain. A review of program space is needed.

Curriculum development

The faculty and leadership of the SFI program has admitted that there exists the need to make the collaborative materials and methods that define the pedagogical principles of the program more "visible" in the curriculum and more "explicit" to the students. Doing so will result in more effective teamwork, improved opportunities for learning, an improvement in the quality of work and the cultivation of a stronger, more effective intellectual community.

As noted by the external review, there needs to be an integration of the full time and / part time cohorts. The segregation of these two groups of students not only removes the promise of shared learning and engagement but also raises questions about the allocation of resources. The collaborative opportunities for the MRP need to be investigated. The model is in place and students have expressed an interest in this model of research/knowledge creation. A consideration of what can be called matchmaking exercises aimed at helping students find collaborators and shared topics of interest.

Given the interdisciplinary overlap or areas of common interest across and between certain other graduate programs in the university, there would be great benefit for students from forming /building better relationships with their peers in other graduate programs at the university as well as to benefit from the opportunities to enroll in courses (electives) in another graduate programs.

The program needs to provide certain types of workshops or other training mechanisms that covers sustainability principles and strategies.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommendation and Proposed Actions	Outcomes and Indicators	Responsibility and Other Stakeholders	Implementation Date/Timeline
Academic and Strategic Priorities "Build Reputation"/ Program Promotion: • The work of building the program's much respected reputation (a result of the profile of alumni and faculty) must continue but in such a way so as to promote growth and stability	The result of initiatives around broadening (national and international) public awareness would be an increase in applications to the program, expressions of interest in collaborations and partnerships. SFI is already widely cited as a model program defined by design thinking being applied to social problems. The enhanced promotion of	Dean/ Graduate Studies / Graduate Program Director / Marketing and Communication	2017-2018 / 2018-2019/ 2019-2020

	the program will yield myriad results.		
Admissions, 'Targeted Recruitment' and retention Initiatives will be undertaken to refine the creation of more focused and specialized cohorts: • A working group from the program faculty will be struck to investigate how the program can better serve its working professionals	The working group will ensure enrolment levels and the successful completion of degree requirements for both full-time and part time students.	Graduate Program Director / SFI Admissions Committee and Marketing and Communication	2017 / 2018-2019 / 2019-2020
Faculty Development It will be necessary to address issues of the ratio of instructors to students and the issues of the need to augment the ranks for the professoriate and qualified individuals contracted to delivery instruction: • Consultations will be undertaken with the Provost and the Dean of Faculty of Design in order to ascertain hiring priorities for the program, strategies for faculty development and retention and the advising needs of the program	In consultation, hiring priorities for the program, strategies for faculty development and retention and the advising needs of the program will be ascertained.	Dean, Graduate Studies / Provost, Dean, Faculty of Design	2017-2018 / 2018-2019
Physical Resource Requirements If the plans for target growth are to be realized in manageable (and accountable) ways, then a review of the space allocations and space needs of the program must be undertaken.	Assessment of current	VPA Finance, Dean / Graduate Studies /Graduate Program Director	2017-2018

• Review of space in 205 Richmond Street and at the university in general must balance COU Mandates and the realities of institutional capacity.	space allocation and usage may reveal either adequate offering or provide guidance as to where changes and./or improvements are required.		
Curriculum development/ Quality of Educational Experience There is a need to make the collaborative materials and methods that define the pedagogical principles of the program more "visible" in the curriculum and more "explicit" to the students. • A detailed consideration of student concerns about the curricular structure (its organization and the way that information is communicated) will be undertaken. This review will focus on the issues raised by students during the external review.	The SFI Graduate Program Committee will review the curriculum and adjust course details (descriptions, learning outcomes, assessments, etc.) to ensure the visibility and explicitness of the pedagogical principles are met.	Graduate Program Director / Program Committee	2017-2018 2018-2019
There needs to be an integration of the full time and / part time cohorts. The collaborative opportunities for the MRP need to be investigated. • The issue of the integration of the part time and full time cohorts will be addressed (in fact, open registration in both sections has already commenced)	Part time and full time cohorts' integration experiment should be surveyed and analysed to determine whether to continue and/or how to improve on these efforts.	Graduate Program Director / curriculum Committee / Graduate Studies Curriculum Committee / and Senate Graduate Studies Curriculum Committee	2017-2018
There would be great benefit for students from forming /building better relationships with their peers in other graduate programs at the university as well as to benefit from the opportunities to enroll in courses (electives) in other graduate programs. • A consideration of how better to allow students access to	Ability for graduate students to take electives in other graduate programs should increase student satisfaction with curricular offering and increase breadth of opportunities open to SFI students.		2017-2018

the course offerings of other programs will be undertaken. The program needs to provide certain types of workshops or other training mechanisms that covers sustainability principles and strategies. • Consideration will be given on how to provide these recommendations			2017-2018

b) **Conclusion:** The Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) was provided with the documents pertaining to the Strategic Foresight and Innovation cyclical review, including the Self-study brief; the responses of the Interim Dean, Graduate Studies and the Vice-President, Academic and Provost; the External Reviewer Report; and the program review team's Internal Response Report. In their review of this final report they provided suggestions to strengthen the document and with those considerations recognized, recommended the report to Senate for approval. The report received approval from Senate on October 30, 2017.