



University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP) Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan

Program Reviewed:	Master of Science in Biomedical Communications (MScBMC)
Division/Unit in which program is housed:	Institute of Medical Sciences
Commissioning Officer:	Professor Trevor Young, Dean, Faculty of Medicine Professor Amy Mullin, Vice-Principal and Dean, University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM)
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	1. Professor Steven Harrison, Department of Medical Illustration, Georgia Regents University 2. Professor Bonnie Sadler Takach, Department of Art and Design, University of Alberta 3. Professor Nadine Wathen, Faculty of Information and Media Studies, The University of Western Ontario
Date of review visit:	February 25-26, 2015
Date reported to AP&P:	October 27, 2015

1 Outcome

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) concluded that the Decanal response adequately addressed the review recommendations.

2 Significant Program Strengths

- Excellent, interdisciplinary professional program that fills a key niche
- Effective program structure and curriculum
- Faculty are fully engaged in innovative program delivery

- Good student funding for a professional program
- Excellent student completion rate at par with or better than comparator programs
- Satisfied alumni find interesting, well-paid employment, become entrepreneurs, and hire program graduates
- High level of faculty scholarly output and collaborative research
- Very strong morale among all stakeholders

3 Opportunities for Program Enhancement

The reviewers recommended that the following be considered:

- Aligning assessment methods with learning outcomes
- Enhancing the Program's research culture
- Strengthening information technology support for the program at UTM
- Maintaining the program's presence within the Faculty of Medicine
- Seeking additional advancement opportunities

4 Implementation Plan

The Dean undertook in consultation with the Program to support the following changes:

- Immediate Term (6 months)
 - Aligning assessment methods with learning outcomes
 - The Program has initiated a series of strategic and curriculum planning retreats to address this issue; this would include a comprehensive review of DLEs to map learning objectives to curricular implementation and assessment.
 - The Program will more clearly indicate on its website that a potential non-standard application path exists for visual studies students.
 - The Program is currently reviewing and exploring revisions to its curriculum, and will seek to bring forward themes relating to legibility, readability, and typographic design considerations.
 - Enhancing the Program's research culture
 - The Program plans to discuss the feasibility of options for doctoral level study, including a professional doctorate, at upcoming curriculum planning events.
 - The Program is also discussing ways to encourage more MScBMC students to pursue the evaluation option within the existing Master's program.
 - Strengthening IT support
 - The Dean's Office will seek improved IT support, either centrally delivered or via increased funding within the program. The Program is also looking into digital archiving options existing at U of T.
 - Maintaining a presence in the Faculty of Medicine
 - The Program currently enjoys a very close working relationship with Biology (UTM), Institute of Medical Science, and the Division of Anatomy, and strong relationships with Surgery, Immunology, and Human Biology, which it will seek to maintain as a priority.

- Medium Term (1-2 years)
 - Seeking additional revenue generating opportunities
 - The Program plans to propose a new undergraduate major program in the next 1-2 years.

The Dean's Office will follow up annually with the Program to assess progress.

5 Executive Summary

The reviewers identified the program's strengths as its position as an excellent, interdisciplinary professional program that fills a key niche; the effective program structure and curriculum; the full engagement of faculty in innovative program delivery; good student funding for a professional program; the excellent student completion rate at par with or better than comparator programs; satisfied alumni find interesting, well-paid employment, become entrepreneurs, and hire program graduates; high level of faculty scholarly output and collaborative research; and very strong morale among all stakeholders. The reviewers recommended that the followings issues be addressed: aligning assessment methods with learning outcomes; enhancing the research culture; strengthening information technology support; maintaining a presence in the Faculty of Medicine; and exploring further revenue generation. The Program has initiated a series of strategic and curriculum planning retreats to address assessment methods, including a comprehensive review of DLEs to map learning objectives to curricular implementation and assessment. The Program is also discussing ways to encourage more MScBMC students to pursue the evaluation option within the existing Master's program. The Dean's Office will seek improved IT support, either centrally delivered or via increased funding within the program. The Program plans to propose a new undergraduate major program in the next 1-2 years. The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) concluded that the Decanal response adequately addressed the review recommendations.