

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

Program(s):	Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations, BA: Specialist, Major, Minor Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations, MA and PhD
Division/Unit:	Department of Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations, Faculty of Arts & Science
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Elizabeth Carter, Musa Sabi Term Chair of Iranian Studies, University of California, Los Angeles 2. Dr. Fred M. Donner, Professor of Near Eastern History and Director, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of Chicago 3. Dr. Piotr Michalowski, George G. Cameron Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Civilizations, University of Michigan
Date of review visit:	February 16-17, 2012
Date reported to AP&P:	October 29, 2012

1. Outcome:

- The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) requested a follow up report in one year on the renovations to the Bancroft Building.

2. Significant program strengths:

- High quality program in Department identified as “one of the premier units of its kind in the world today”
- Scope of faculty interests and teaching; vigorous faculty scholarship
- Alert and engaged undergraduate and graduate students
- Rich opportunities for learning outside the classroom
- High morale; harmonious environment

3. Opportunities for program improvement and enhancement. The reviewers recommended that the following be considered:

- Evaluating the capacity of existing faculty to meet the demands of all facets of the program; developing a plan to increase faculty complement
- Improving clarity and consistency around graduate comprehensive examinations
- Looking at times to completion which exceed University of Toronto norms but are lower than disciplinary norms
- Addressing the quality of physical space to protect the archeological collections in the Department’s care

4. Implementation Plan

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

- Immediate Term (6 months)
 - Evaluating the capacity of existing faculty to meet the demands of all facets of the program
 - i. The Department will redeploy its teaching resources to accommodate the delivery of gateway courses that are central to the program
 - Improving clarity and consistency around graduate comprehensive examinations
 - i. The Department clarified that the graduate program’s two approved fields of study legitimately have slightly varying comprehensive examination requirements, which are communicated annually in the graduate student handbook and orientation, and are also available online; the Department’s graduate coordinator, who chairs all comprehensive examinations, ensures that all exams are administered in a consistent and rigorous manner
- Medium Term (1-2 years)
 - Looking at times-to-completion
 - i. The University’s minimum funding commitment for doctoral students has already helped to lower times-to-completion, which are already lower than disciplinary averages, and will help to further reduce times-to-completion

- Addressing the quality of physical space
 - i. The Dean has requested a comprehensive building review of Bancroft Hall for 2012-13 that will address the Department's infrastructure needs and propose strategies to utilize space more efficiently
- Longer Term (3-5 years)
 - Developing a plan to increase faculty complement
 - i. The Department is committed to staffing the language programs of its five core program areas and creating interdisciplinary appointments that transcend historical and geographical areas; the Department will seek to make appropriate hires as faculty retire over the next five years and is working with the Faculty's Advancement Office to establish endowed positions to augment the complement

The Dean's Office will follow up annually with the unit on these plans.

5. Executive Summary

The reviewers identified the programs' strengths as scope of faculty expertise and teaching, alert and engaged students, rich opportunities for learning outside the classroom, vigorous scholarship and high morale in a Department that is "one of the premier units of its kind in the world today." The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: faculty capacity and plans to increase complement, clarity and consistency around graduate comprehensive examinations, times-to-completion and quality of physical space. The Department is committed to redeploying teaching resources to support the gateway courses central to the curriculum and will replace faculty as they retire to support core program and interdisciplinary areas. In conjunction with the Faculty's Advancement Office, the Department will seek to augment the faculty complement through one or more endowed positions. The Department clarified that the graduate handbook, Department website and annual orientation ensure clarity regarding comprehensive examination processes and the graduate coordinator's chairing of all examinations ensures rigour and consistency. The Department expects that the University's minimum funding commitment for doctoral students will continue to reduce times-to-completion, which are already lower than disciplinary norms. The Dean has scheduled a comprehensive building review of Bancroft Hall for 2012-13 to address the Department's infrastructure needs and propose strategies for efficient utilization of space. The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) requested a follow up report in one year on the renovations to the Bancroft Building.