



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

Program(s) Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Architectural Studies, B.A. (Hons.): Maj• Visual Studies, B.A. (Hons.): Spec, Maj, Min• Master of Visual Studies, M.V.S.
Division/Unit Reviewed:	Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design – Architecture and Visual Studies programs
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Professor Bruce Barber, Professor & Chair Media Arts, Nova Scotia College of Art & Design University2. Professor Jonathan Massey, Dean of Architecture, California College of the Arts3. Professor David Smiley, Assistant Director, Urban Design Program, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Columbia University
Date of Review Visit:	February 23-24, 2016
Date Reported to AP&P:	November 1, 2016

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

Undergraduate Program

Architectural Studies, B.A. (Hons.): Maj; Visual Studies, B.A. (Hons.): Spec, Maj, Min

- Objectives
 - ▶ Programs are undergoing significant change, reflecting the Faculty’s critical engagement with design in a liberal arts context
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ “One Idea” application question asks students to be both creative and pragmatic and is a useful means of evaluating candidates for admission
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Strong output from Design and History/Theory students
 - ▶ Unique History/Theory courses that reflect the leading edge of historical and theoretical scholarship in architecture, landscape, and urbanism
 - ▶ “Whiteboard” is valuable extension of Blackboard and other course management tools, supporting collaborative and peer-to-peer learning
 - ▶ Core + Specialization structure recognizes the delicate relation between skills; professionalization and liberal arts
 - Very promising new specializations across the traditional disciplinary boundaries to create new means of participating in the larger socio-spatial world
 - The joint first two years of the BAVS and BAAS programs create shared visual and spatial discourse among the diverse students and faculty
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Consistent with comparable programs
 - ▶ BAVS alumni highly satisfied with detailed feedback and commentary they received
- Students
 - ▶ Students produce sophisticated work
 - ▶ Students value the critical thinking and analytical capacities they develop

Graduate Program

Master of Visual Studies, M.V.S.

- Objectives
 - ▶ Multi- and interdisciplinary approach to architecture, design, urban planning and art making
 - ▶ Innovative program in line with contemporary ideas and current trends in architecture, urban and landscape design and visual art
 - ▶ Studio and curatorial practice and history, theory and criticism combine to help students think critically about their creative work
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Centred on independent studio research and art production
 - ▶ Four-person advisory committees guide work in each year of the program

- ▶ Curriculum reflects the research and art practice of highly qualified and accomplished regular and sessional faculty
- ▶ Multiple opportunities for learning beyond the classroom, including visits to galleries, urban tours, etc.
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Students satisfied with the evaluation and appeal process
- Quality indicators
 - ▶ 100% graduation rate, almost always achieved within two years
 - ▶ Excellent quality students and work
 - ▶ Graduates have success with employment, exhibiting and curating creative work, and receiving awards
- Student funding
 - ▶ Graduate funding guarantee is one of the top available in Canada
 - ▶ General funding appears to be good, and packages will be increased for 2016-17
- Support
 - ▶ Impressive levels of advising and support

Faculty/Research

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Impressive complement with strong range of faculty research and national/international recognition
 - ▶ High quality recent appointments, including teaching stream, will have a positive impact in the short and long term
- Research
 - ▶ Students at all levels benefit from participation in research activities
- Faculty
 - ▶ Visual Studies faculty feel supported and valued after the programs' merger with FALD
 - ▶ Faculty and staff have been encouraged to upgrade their professional qualifications and obtain additional experience to enhance their professional and pedagogical skills as a result of the merger
 - ▶ Well-qualified sessional faculty enhance program offerings

Administration

- Relationships
 - ▶ Very good morale among faculty, students, and staff
 - ▶ Opening of One Spadina is a “once-in-a-lifetime” academic event with the potential to enrich the ways students and faculty interact with and contribute to the public
 - ▶ Undergraduates pursue minors in other fields and departments
 - ▶ BAAS program has local impact through studio content related to local, national and global issues, and via local practicing faculty
 - ▶ BAVS program is connected to the gallery system beyond the school and the University

- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ High quality decanal and staff leadership
 - ▶ Appropriate and sustainable finances and resource allocation
 - ▶ BAAS program director and faculty curriculum task force group provide clear and effective leadership
- Planning / Vision
 - ▶ New building and the re-shaped curriculum will challenge the role of architecture, and of design more broadly, as a vital component of an increasingly diverse and complex social and physical landscape
 - ▶ One Spadina project and the naming of the Faculty attest to the effectiveness of development work
- Reputation / Profile
 - ▶ Daniels undergraduates are highly regarded in graduate level applications to top schools in the U.S.
 - ▶ Successes of faculty, alumni, and students complement the University's well-deserved high place in world rankings

3 Opportunities for Program Enhancement

Curriculum & Program Delivery

- The reviewers noted the competitive environment in which the M.V.S. is situated. They encouraged enhancing program marketing and considering a change of name to an M.F.A. degree to better represent the current program, while looking at U.S. accreditation models for such programs.
- The reviewers encouraged clarification of undergraduate programs' learning outcomes, including the degree to which the programs prepare student for professional practice and provide a broad liberal arts background.
- The reviewers recommended adding more experiential learning and community engagement opportunities for undergraduate students.

Students

- The reviewers stressed the importance of strengthening the advising offered to students, and encouraged more advising to be done by faculty and area coordinators.
- The reviewers recommended increasing the financial support packages offered to graduate students.
- The reviewers observed that as the program enrolment and class sizes expand, so will the demand for qualified TAs. The reviewers encouraged enhancement of the TA training offered to graduate students so that they can better assist with program delivery.

Relationships

- The reviewers observed that the programs would benefit from enhanced relationships with both internal cognate units and external organizations, such as professional organizations.

4 Implementation Plan

Immediate Term (6 Months)

Clarification of Learning Outcomes and Degree Learning Expectations

- With the passing of the major modification template, these will be clarified and have gone through the governance cycle. Fall 2016

Increased Undergraduate Advising Support

- Within six months, the Faculty will have an embedded Career Advisor and will hire someone dedicated to both national and international Recruitment. The Faculty will also name coordinators for the new streams in the architectural studies program and examine the administrative organization of both undergraduate programs. We anticipate bringing a new administrator on board to assist the Director of the Undergraduate Program in Architectural Studies with matters related to academic programming and curricular renewal. Winter 2017

Medium Term (1-2 Years)

Experiential Learning and Community Engagement

- By the 2017-2018 academic year, as outlined above, new courses and initiatives that specifically address these concerns will be launched. Fall 2017

Situating the MVS Program in a Competitive Landscape

- By 2017, together with the anticipated Faculty name change mentioned above, we anticipate completing the degree name change process, allowing the program to be more visible and competitive in an international setting. We will simultaneously be developing recruitment materials to better communicate the uniqueness of these two programs and will be redoubling efforts to market the program at related portfolio days and graduate program recruitment events (OCAD, CCA, National Portfolio Day, etc.). Fall 2017

Quality of Teaching Assistants and Teaching Assistant Training

- Over the next academic year, we will work closely with faculty and the Daniels Writing Centre to develop TA specific tutorials and materials to improve the quality and training of our teaching assistants. The anticipated PhD program will also bring a community of scholars who are anticipating future careers in teaching into the cohort of available teaching assistants. We have already revamped the application process for teaching assistants to better ensure that those with the required skills for the undergraduate courses are more properly matched to courses that play to their strengths and, by next year, will have a body of TA evaluations to further refine this process. Efforts to streamline the timetable for 2017-2018 will also help in this regard as it will coordinate the graduate and undergraduate

schedules and guarantee that the most qualified students are available for the most demanding roles.

Longer Term (3-5 Years)

Enhanced Relationships with Internal Cognate Units and External Organizations

- With the onboarding of a new staff person dedicated to recruitment and through ongoing conversations with units such as Aboriginal Studies, History of Art, and the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering, we will continue to broaden our network of potential collaborators. As the new specialist streams become more robust, we are confident that new potential relationships will emerge and our students will continue to benefit from a rich network of friends and neighbours who are similarly engaged in questions of the relationship between design, art, and the world.

5 Executive Summary

The spokesperson for the Reading Group reported that the summary covered the full review. The Group agreed that the Dean's administrative response overall addressed the identified issue and that the review was very positive. One concern the reading Group raised related to the high number of faculty at the associate professor rank in the Department.

Dean Sommer noted the Faculty was almost closed in the 1980's, and very few hires in Architecture were made in the intervening years, resulting in the lack of a senior cohort. Many of the Visual Studies faculty had strong, ongoing careers as practicing artists, and thus have part-time faculty appointments. The Faculty is attending to the promotions of this Group.

No follow-up report was requested.