

Undergraduate Program Review

Art History, BFA & BA Executive Summaries

The review was done in November 2010. The two external reviewers were Prof. Barbara Louder (NSCAD University) and Dr. John Osborne (Carleton University), and the internal reviewer was Dr. Deborah Barndt (Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University).

Following receipt of the unit and decanal responses to the consultants' report, members of the Senate Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance met with the following program/Faculty representatives on January 25, 2012 to review progress toward implementing recommendations and opportunities for program enhancement:

Barbara Sellers-Young, Dean, Faculty of Fine Arts
Judith Schwarz, Chair, Department of Visual Arts

The reviewers were impressed with the quality of the BFA and BA (Art History) degree programs. They offered detailed recommendations for the different programs, and the Department of Visual Arts has provided a detailed response for each recommendation. The Joint Committee is satisfied with the response of the academic unit and the Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts.

Recommendation for implementation:

Several highlights of the review that are being undertaken by the unit and the Dean include the following:

- Attention to the general morale of the unit and the steps that the current Dean has been taking to ensure broad consultation on decisions that affect the unit including resources, as well as the importance of the Chair of the Department to schedule open meetings
- Working with the Dean on the recruitment strategy for the degree programs with the aim of strengthening admissions and the GPA for the BFA including continual improvement of the website
- Strengthening services to students including on-line registration and improved enrolment procedures
- Effectively transitioning new technologies particularly the integration of digital technology
- Enhancing other student services and academic supports including specific attention to first year



- Additional support for teaching assistants
- More strongly integrating alumni

The Department also noted that many of the recommendations pertaining to the BFA curriculum have already been addressed with recent changes that the unit had implemented particularly in respect to the structure of the program and the degree requirements. The unit will want to assess the impact of these changes over the next few years. More generally, all programs at York have been clarifying their degree level expectations, required competencies and student learning outcomes. The unit continues to explore various specific ideas proposed by the reviewers.

It is also noteworthy that the dean has also taken up the issue of student service support for the entire Faculty. There is also a more general issue pertaining to the addition of art history courses as general education courses which may warrant broader discussion by the General Education Committee.

Rhonda Lenton, Vice-Provost Academic
November 2012