

Art History

College of Arts

Dean's Summary

Submitted by:

Dr. Sylvie Murray, Dean, College of Arts

Accepted by:

Senate in February 2023

Academic Planning and Priorities Committee in January 2023

MEMORANDUM

Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

APPC Chair: James Mandigo

APPC Assistant: Melinda Saretzky

TO: Gerry Palmer, Vice Chair, Senate

FROM: James Mandigo, Chair, Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

CC: Sylvie Murray, Dean, College of Arts
Claire Carolan, Associate Director, Program Development and Quality Assurance

DATE: January 26, 2023

RE: Art History Program Review

The Art History Program within the College of Arts, Faculty of Humanities underwent a program review in 2021-22. The Academic Planning and Priorities Committee reviewed all of the documentation related to the program review and accepted them at its January 25, 2023 meeting and recommend to Senate for approval.

The external reviewers noted that the program is doing very well and appreciated how the program has integrated 21st century work into the program and notes that there is a potential for collaborative work between Public History and Art History. The program working group was commended on their work to Indigenize the program. It was noted that the extended minor will be assessed if a major in the program was established.

SUGGESTED MOTION:

THAT Senate accept the Dean's Summary Report of the Art History Program Review as presented.

Attachments:

- Memo to APPC
- Dean's Summary Report

Remainder of the documents located:

- UFV Drive: H:\UFVinfo\APPC
- Blackboard: COM-APPC (Senate Committee – APPC)

Dean's Summary Report, Art History Program Review, School of Creative Arts

Dr. Sylvie Murray, Dean of Arts, January 6, 2022

Introduction

Program review for the Art History program occurred in 2021-2022, in accordance with Policy 189, and culminated with a site visit on May 27 and 28, 2022. The External Review Report (ERR) was received in early June and the unit response was provided in early November.

The Program Review was informed by the Dean's scope letter and a self-study conducted by the School director and two Art Historians. The External Review Committee (ERC) met with several stakeholders during the site visit, including the School director and administrative staff, Art History faculty and students, the Dean and Associate Deans, the Vice-Provost, Academic, the AVP, Research, Engagement and Graduate Studies, the AVP, Institutional Research and Planning and a Research Analyst, the Senior Advisor to Indigenous Affairs, an Academic advisor, a Teaching and Learning Specialist, and the Liaison librarian responsible for the program.

The Art History program is administered by the School of Creative Arts within the Faculty of Humanities, College of Arts. The program is delivered by four permanent faculty members.

Programs under review are the Art History minor and extended minor.

The School and the Dean wish to express their sincere gratitude to the external reviewers for their time, energy and thoughtfulness. The external reviewers noted that the program "is a credit to the institution" and they commended the self-study group for offering "a well-documented, articulate and thoughtful analysis of the current standing of the unit". They presented a positive assessment of the program's current strengths, including faculty research, teaching and service record, and strong course enrolment. They recommended an ambitious growth plan that would see the program reconfigure itself with a focus on visual culture, visual studies, and visual literacy, with potential to serve students in other Humanities disciplines (including but not limited to Visual Arts), and lead to the development of a Major over the next 5-8 years. The external reviewers also noted the strong focus on Indigenization/Decolonization and anti-racist pedagogy, and the further development of more global, inclusive perspectives to emphasize Indigenous and non-Western art across the curriculum.

I commend the School director and Art Historians for their rigorous and strategic response to the recommendations presented by the external reviewers. I support the long-term reconfiguration and development of the program into a Major with an explicit visual studies/literacy focus, as supported by careful planning and curriculum revision, and gradual increase in the number of declared Minor and Extended Minor students.

What follows is the detailed response provided by the unit and the School Director, and an action plan, which I endorse.

Art History

Response to External Review Report and Action Plan

Submitted to Sylvie Murray, November 7, 2022

Summary

The area appreciates the positive assessments of its strengths and potential for future growth. The external reviewers have made some recommendations that are quite ambitious, and which must be undertaken gradually and strategically. Significant directional changes must also incorporate new faculty and take into account how the area will shift as faculty retire and new faculty join the area. In addition, the area can develop a plan to convert its extremely healthy enrolments into an increase in program declarations in the Minor and Extended Minors, laying the groundwork for the development of a Major in the future.

The area will develop a strategic plan, which will outline its succession planning, strategies to increase the number of program students in its current Minor and Extended Minor, and a phased approach to curriculum changes, with the development of a visual studies/visual literacy “spine” that serves both the VA programs and Art History students as a first priority (to ensure sufficient enrolment in the spine). At this time, we suggest a “spine” that includes: 100 level introduction to visual studies, 200 level writing about visual culture, 300-level research methods and theories of visual culture, 400-level seminar in visual studies. This spine could provide a way for the AH Minor to be reconfigured with a focus on visual culture and visual studies and could be a requirement for the AH Extended Minor and VA programs as well. The area will also need to articulate for itself and for students what differentiates between 100, 200, and 300 level courses.

In order to develop a Major, even within the 5-8 year timeframe suggested by the reviewers, the area will need to demonstrate that there is sufficient demand for a Major. The area will first develop a strategy for how to convert its high numbers of enrolments into program declarations. The area is in a very good position to begin this process, because there is clearly high demand for AH courses at all levels. At the same time, the area will need to complete an environmental scan considering the details of existing programs, both to consider comparable programs and potential competition and to consider how non-spine curriculum can be gradually updated.

The area agrees with the reviewers’ recommendations around updating curriculum to have a more global, inclusive perspective and to emphasize Indigenous and non-Western art across the curriculum. A strategic approach to hiring new faculty must be considered alongside this goal.

The area also agrees that in order to decolonize courses and the program, faculty should consider how to create opportunities for students to engage in anti-racist, decolonizing, and social justice work, while ensuring that institutional demands for curricular change do not infringe on academic freedom. This work will be introduced at the 100-level, and we plan to incorporate this into the “spine” to ensure that students are exposed to decolonizing and anti-racist pedagogy throughout their programs. It is important to note that almost all AH courses have recently been significantly revised, so the area will need to assess this revised curriculum before undertaking significant changes at the course level.

Recommendation	Response
1. UFV should support this unit to come into its own as an entity that offers Major programming, as well as guiding this unit on its way to becoming a strong area within SOCA over time.	Strongly agree; to be developed over 5-8 years, alongside new faculty hires. It will be important to develop a Major over time, in a way that incorporates both the expertise of current faculty and the contributions new faculty can make.
2. Build upon existing strengths with a faculty renewal plan to replace retiring faculty over the next 5-8 years. Department needs to have a clear vision about new hires that will sustain and support the program going forward.	We agree that developing a strategy to address future retirements is essential.
3. Hiring should emphasize individuals who are committed to creating a cohesive, collegial, supportive unit within SOCA	We agree.
4. Begin a programmatic curriculum design process, with a clear vision of core competencies for undergraduates in AH at each stage of their learning, from initial entry to capstone. Include an evaluation of how many courses should be offered at each level.	We agree.
5. Develop a capstone class to meet the professionalization needs of students majoring in AH, perhaps to culminate in a group research fair (e.g., student conference or research poster) to attract families, relatives and friends.	This is not a feasible recommendation to undertake at this time, given the low number of program students; however, this is an excellent recommendation to incorporate into any future Major.
6. Envision the area as not only support for Visual Arts but as a leader in global and national interdisciplinary course programming, providing visual literacy skills across UFV, and as a model of how to decolonize Western knowledge systems.	This is an inspiring idea for the area to keep in mind as it undertakes future planning. It is critical to emphasize that the majority of AH enrolments are not VA students but are students in other humanities programs.
7. Make it desirable for students in History and other related disciplines to minor in Art History and Visual Studies in terms of the proper professional standards for image	We will set up a meeting with faculty/heads of cognate disciplines to discuss what AH might add to their students' skills/knowledge.

research, copyright, intellectual property, citation and usage (and so much more!)	
8. Leverage opportunities at the local and regional levels to form community partnerships on projects, building a culture of networking and professionalization that will enhance students' experience at the institution and better prepare them for entry into culture sectors jobs, as well as university placements for advanced training. However, this must be built with sustainability, bearing in mind just how much capacity the institution has to support new initiatives.	This is underway and we will work with the new external liaison coordinator in the Dean's office to build practicums and other work-integrated learning opportunities. One area to explore could be a City Studio project. We will also explore how classes might work more closely with local and regional organizations (e.g., incorporating projects using collections at local galleries in classes like AH 230).
9. Address outstanding workload issues with administrative staff so that the programming in place across the academic year is sustainable. Increasing staff contract hours would help to build a stronger culture in the unit.	The School conducted a value audit in August-September 2022 to address this at a School level. We assessed activities, events, and committees to ensure that we have a sustainable plan moving forward. We recommend increasing one staff position from 80 to 100% in the VA program review, to allow for the gallery to become student run.
10. Make clear distinctions between the pathway and core courses required for the Minor versus the Extended Minor. Establish scaffolding to expand the Extended Minor into a Major over the next 5 to 8 years.	This recommendation will be a focus of the action plan. Given the small number of students in each program, we will need to be strategic and coordinate with VA to ensure the revised program requirements are sustainable (i.e., ensure that courses enrolments in AH spine will be supported by inclusion in VA program requirements when possible).
11. Offer surveys that allow for reframing for EDI and Indigenization/decolonization.	We agree with this recommendation.
12. Gradually reduce the number of 2nd year courses and ensure that these are clearly introductory-level offerings that attract students to AH. These could be survey-style courses, or broadly thematic offerings	We agree that 100 and 200 level courses need to be differentiated so that students understand why courses are positioned at the level they are. We do not necessarily think reducing the number of 200-level courses choices is needed: if we offer students more choices at the 200-level, we may attract more students to the program (rather than drawing students into 300-level electives).

<p>13. Diversify 300-level courses to move beyond western canonical traditions and ensure that students can differentiate between 200 and 300 level courses.</p>	<p>We agree.</p>
<p>14. Design a 300-level core course that addresses students need to become disciplinary experts in Art History and Visual Studies. This could be Methods and Approaches to Art History and Visual Studies, but it must not be Western-focused. Could include project-based learning, with experiential assessment units that draw students’ attention to what it means conceptually and practically to work in this discipline.</p>	<p>We agree. Developing such a course will require care and collaboration, to ensure it serves both VA and AH’s distinct program outcomes.</p>
<p>15. Encourage students to showcase research through competitions and showcases offered by the Research Office.</p>	<p>This currently occurs, although there is always room to better promote such opportunities. The School’s Awards and Scholarships Committee can include this in its Terms of Reference, for the benefit of all SOCA programs.</p>
<p>16. Develop a dynamic capstone seminar offering for BFA and BA students that works with their research interests, and includes career preparation, a student conference or research poster fair, and connections with career counselors from the university.</p>	<p>Given the low number of students enrolled in the AH Minor and Extended Minor and the low number of graduates each year, this is only feasible right now if the capstone was also required for VA students.</p>
<p>17. Streamline course requirements for the extended minor and future Major to create more of a sense of community among AH students.</p>	<p>Both the “spine” and reviewing the number of electives offered at the 200- and 300-level may aid in this. The School needs to consider how to rebuild a sense of student community across its programs, particularly following the pandemic, thinking of having spaces for students to gather as “homes” and of the role a renewed student association might play in developing School and AH student culture. An additional strategy might be to bring in art historians as well as artists as guest speakers.</p>
<p>18. Investigate alternative methods of assessment using Universal Design and working with the Centre for Teaching and Learning.</p>	<p>The area will consider how accessible its methods of assessment generally are and will engage in discussions about UD and assessment.</p>

19. Craft the Minor as a Visual Literacy certification.	This is a very interesting direction for the faculty to explore.
20. Build a strong and supportive culture for faculty and sessionals to balance research, teaching, and service and maximize their strengths within existing university culture.	
21. The School, in partnership with upper administration, needs to conduct review sessions that allow the School and the unit of Art History Program Area to plan a successful, sustainable series of events - or committee commitments – on an annual basis (with provision also for biannual oversight for long term planning).	The School has drastically reduced its number of committees in 2022-23, moving from a committee to a project-based approach to service. The School conducted a value audit in August 2022 to assess the value of events and activities, with the goal of reducing activities to a sustainable level.
22. Part-time (80%) hiring allocation for administrative staff are not sufficient to meet the busy demands of their workload.	We recommend increasing one staff position (Events and Committees Assistant) from 80 to 100% in the VA program review, to allow for the gallery to become student run.
23. Rename and reframe Eurocentric courses that are identified through colonizing language. Terms like Baroque, Renaissance and Medieval have been largely discredited in the art historical community. Geographic location and time frame (Art in Italy 1400-1600) is one way of addressing this. There are also ways within these courses of shifting the narrative by looking at cross-cultural exchange as well as decentering whiteness/Europeanness and maleness from the idea of “progress”.	The area may wish to consult with Theatre, which has already done this type of work in its theatre history surveys. The next round of course revisions (in 5+ years) will be a good opportunity for new hires to exercise their visions for AH curriculum.
24. Develop a course that explores art and identity or intersectionality to provide an opportunity for students to explore race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, ableism and other forms of identity and open discussions about art as a means of reinforcing stereotypes or as a tool for critique of these social biases.	This is an excellent recommendation. The area will evaluate whether intersectional approaches in current AH courses and the new SOCA 301 (<i>Race, Place, and Space</i>) currently address this, or whether a new course is needed.

<p>25. Develop upper-level courses that address internationalism. In the department succession plan, it would be beneficial to consider new hires who are qualified to teach art beyond Europe and North America, and who could develop new courses for the department. It would also be possible to rethink Eurocentric course titles to include a more global emphasis.</p>	<p>We agree with both the course-level recommendation and with this hiring direction. We would be cautious about simply changing titles of courses without addressing whether content is Eurocentric and larger changes needed to course content.</p>
<p>26. Consider developing a course on art and the environment with partnerships with other departments such as Environmental studies and community groups such as local Indigenous groups and farmers.</p>	<p>AH 270 does this, but the area should promote this course more broadly when it is offered.</p>
<p>27. Provide community-based opportunities for students to acquire practical skills in archiving, curatorial work and research. Students should not have to pay for practicums or internships at local institutions. This needs to be renegotiated, as in the case of the Reach Gallery. Other local arts organizations such as the Abbotsford Arts Council could be approached about possible student positions on boards and committees. There is a great opportunity to involve students in cataloguing the university’s art collection, which is currently being done by administrative staff.</p>	<p>We agree and plan to increase the number of practicum opportunities; however, the area (and School) do not directly arrange practicums with employers, so can only encourage changes to fee structure. We strongly believe that students should not pay tuition for practicums and would strongly endorse arrangements with practicum organizations that has organizations providing a student “scholarship” equivalent to tuition (practicums at the Reach follow this kind of model). We might consider areas like archiving, curatorial work, and AH research when making new AH/SOCA hires.</p>
<p>28. Consider manageable ways to encourage students to participate in international exchanges, work/study, and research opportunities.</p>	<p>We will continue to do this.</p>

Action Plan

Action	Recommendation	Timeframe
Develop a strategic plan for AH that includes: hiring and succession planning, curricular directions, external engagement/practicums/work-integrated learning, program growth, especially around increasing the number of Minors and Extended Minors. This plan should also include the steps needed to develop a Major, with benchmarks of when to proceed to the next step in the plan.	2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 19, 24	Summer and Fall 2023
Map out a “spine” for AH programs	4, 10, 14, 16, 19, 24	Winter 2024
Revise calendar copy for all programs to include “spine”		Approved by AH faculty by Spring 2024, School Curriculum Committee in Fall 2024, send to CACC with course outlines (below)
Revise course outlines/create new course outlines for “spine”		Winter 2025
Differentiate between 100, 200, and 300 level courses; streamline offerings at 200 and 300 level, consider creating new offerings focusing on intersectionality, internationalization, environmental art, etc.	10, 12, 13, 14, 17, 24, 25, 26,	Winter 2025
Revise survey courses to further incorporate EDI and decolonization across curriculum	11, 23	Winter 2025
Meet with colleagues in history and other cognate disciplines to discuss how AH (or visual studies) could contribute to students’ experiences	7	Fall 2023
Work with external liaison, City Studio, etc. to increase opportunities for students to take practicums, and incorporate work-integrated learning into courses as they are revised	8, 27	ongoing

Discuss staff positions with Dean's office and HR	9, 22	Winter 2023
Include promotion of research showcases/competitions to students in TOR of SOCA Awards and Scholarships Committee	15	Fall 2022
Offer PD training in accessible methods of assessment, including UD	18	By end of Spring 2023
Discuss how to encourage students to participate in more international opportunities, at School level and with students.	28	By end of Spring 2023