



# **Joint Sub-committee on Quality Assurance**

## **Report to the Full Committees**

### **Academic Policy, Planning and Research Committee**

### **Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy**

The Subcommittee met on 6 November 2023 and submits the following report to the full Committees.

#### **1. Membership and Chair for 2023-2024**

Marcia Annisette, Vice-Provost Academic (ex officio)  
Alice MacLachlan, Dean and Vice-Provost Graduate, Graduate Studies (ex officio)  
Regina Lee, Lassonde  
Theodore Peridis, Schulich (Chair)  
Mina Singh, Health  
Paul Szeptycki, Science  
Qiang Zha, Education

Cheryl Underhill (APPRC) and Pamela Persaud (ASCP) serve as the Subcommittee's secretaries. Additional support is provided by Jennifer Bethune and Nina Unantenne (Office of the Vice-Provost Academic).

#### **2. Designation of Chair**

Being the sole volunteer for the Chair's position, Theodore Peridis was acclaimed.

#### **3. Overview of the Sub-Committee's mandate and composition**

The Chair provided an overview of the subcommittee's mandate, including the responsibility to ensure that established government and University related guidelines are followed in the review of Final Assessment Reports (FARs).

### **Legislative and Administrative Matters**

#### **4. Revisions to York University Quality Assurance Procedures (YUQAP) in response to Quality Assurance Framework updates**

Following are changes made to the YUQAP to align with Quality Assurance Framework updates.

Virtual site visits that were limited to certain programs will now be institutionalized as an option for all programs. Under the new arrangement, a virtual visit can only take place if

# **Joint Sub-committee on Quality Assurance**

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both the vice-provost academic and the external reviewers agree to it. The vice-provost academic is required to document clear written justification for virtual visits.

Another material amendment is the requirement for a “monitoring report” between a new program launch and the related cyclical program review, which typically takes place in the first four years of a program. York will institute monitoring reports starting this fall/2023. The reports will not progress to JSQA.

A final editorial change was made for clarification purposes. References to “desk audit” were replaced with “desk review”, to address the interchangeable use of the terms throughout the YUQAP.

### **5. Annual Reports to Quality Council**

The 2022-2023 *Report on Major Modifications* was submitted in July, and the 2022-2023 *Report on Final Assessment Reports and Follow-up Assessment Reports* were submitted in August. Quality Council had no follow-up questions on the Reports.

### **Completed Cyclical Program Reviews (CPRs)**

### **6. Final Assessment Reports (FARs)**

Once review documentation is assembled, and the Vice-Provost has provided a draft Final Assessment Report along with an Implementation Plan, full dossiers are assigned to individual members (and the secretaries) who are then responsible for attesting to the completion of the review in accordance with the YUQAP, identifying issues of specific relevance, and making recommendations as to whether it is necessary or appropriate to convene a meeting with representatives of a program and the relevant Dean(s) / Principal to address concerns. This delegated approach has worked well, and it is normally not necessary to arrange face-to-face encounters.

The Subcommittee received documentation for the following CPRs:

Nursing (Graduate): Resumed from 2022-2023  
Music (Undergraduate and Graduate)

The Sub-Committee determined it not necessary to invite members of the programs to discuss the CPRs. The FARs, including Implementation Plans for the Nursing Practitioner program and the undergraduate Music program, have now been finalized to reflect discussions at the meeting and are appended to this report.

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Given that the FAR review and resulting recommendations for the graduate Nursing program were completed by the interim Dean of Health, the new Dean was afforded the opportunity to review the documentation. The Dean concurred with the report and recommendations of the interim Dean, resulting in no required alterations to the FAR. The Subcommittee concurred with the responses provided by the unit and the Faculty.

The Subcommittee concurred with the responses provided by the undergraduate Music program but noted the need for the program to streamline its offerings while maintaining distinctiveness.

The Subcommittee determined that the FAR should be returned to the Graduate Music program unit for further discussion and clarification on the program's implementation plan. The vice-provost academic's office will follow up with the program.

### **7. Follow-up Reports**

The Sub-Committee received and reviewed the 18-month follow-up report from:

Science and Technology Studies (undergraduate)

The Sub-committee is satisfied that the program paid due regard to recommendations arising from the CPR process and is making good progress toward implementation.

T. Peridis, Chair



# **Joint Sub-committee on Quality Assurance**

## **Report to the Full Committees**

### **Academic Policy, Planning and Research Committee**

### **Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy**

*The Sub-Committee met on 4 December 2023 and submits the following report to the full Committees.*

#### **1. Completed Cyclical Program Reviews (CPRs)**

At this meeting, the Sub-Committee received documentation for the following CPRs:

Music (Graduate)

Chemistry and Biochemistry (Undergraduate and Graduate)

Social Work (Undergraduate and Graduate))

At its prior meeting, on 6 November, the Sub-committee determined that clarification of some aspects of the Implementation Plan for the graduate program in Music was needed. A revised Plan and Final Assessment Report was received and finalized by the Sub-committee at the 4 December meeting.

The Sub-Committee determined it not necessary to invite members of the Chemistry/Biochemistry and Social Work programs to discuss the CPRs. The FARs, including Implementation Plans, have now been finalized to reflect discussions at the meeting and are appended to this report.

With several program review reports scheduled to come forward this year, a focus for the Sub-committee will be to reflect on emerging or recurring trends observed and recommendations made that have academic planning and / or resource dimensions to share with the parent Senate committees.

#### **2. Legislative and Administrative Matters**

Over the course of both meetings this term, the Sub-Committee received and discussed an orientation presentation on its mandate and the Quality Assurance processes. It also reviewed and provided feedback on a new template for the external reviewers' report being implemented on a trial basis this year to enhance this aspect of the program review process. The template draws on best practices in use at peer universities. Together with the Vice-Provost Academic, the Sub-committee will monitor its effectiveness in subsequent program review assessment reports.

T. Peridis, Chair

**YORK UNIVERSITY**  
**Final Assessment Report**

**Nursing, MScN & MScN Primary Health Care  
Nurse Practitioner (PHCNP)**

**Faculty of Health**

**Cyclical Program Review – 2013 to 2020**

This Final Assessment Report (FAR) provides a synthesis of the cyclical review of the programs listed below.

**Program(s) Reviewed**

MScN

MScN-Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner (PHCNP)

**Reviewers appointed by the Vice-Provost Academic**

Dr. Nancy Carter, Assistant Dean, Associate Professor, Graduate Nursing Program, School of Nursing, Faculty of Health Sciences, McMaster University

Dr. Judith Scanlan, Associate Professor, College of Nursing, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Manitoba

Dr. Joel Katz, Professor, Canada Research Chair, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Health, York University

**Cyclical Program Review Key Milestones**

Cyclical Program Review launch: September 16, 2020

Self-study submitted to Vice-Provost Academic: October 27-28, 2021

Date of the Site Visit: March 25, 2022

Review Report received: May 30, 2022

Program Response received: July 15, 2022

Dean's Response received: July 29, 2022

Implementation Plan and FAR received by Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance, May 2023.



Submitted by Lyndon Martin, Vice-Provost Academic, York University

This review was conducted under the York University Quality Assurance Protocol, August 2020.

## **SITE VISIT: March 25, 2022**

The virtual site visit for the graduate programs in Nursing at York University included meetings with the following individuals and groups:

- Vice-Provost Academic, Lyndon Martin
- Dean and AVP Graduate, Thomas Loebel
- Interim Dean, Susan Murtha
- Director of the School of Nursing (SON), Shahirose Premji
- Graduate Program Director, Jacqueline Choiniere
- Nurse Practitioner Coordinator, Mavoy Bertram
- Clinical Partnership Development and Practicum Coordinator, Nurse Practitioner Program, Rebecca Metcalfe
- Full-time faculty members
- Nurse Practitioner Clinical Faculty (part-time)
- Students in the MScN and MScN-PHCNP programs
- Administrative staff
- Learning Technologies Manager, Rob Finlayson
- York Libraries Associate Dean, Research and Open Scholarship, Jack Leon, and Ilo-Katryn Maimets, Health and Science Librarian.

## **OUTCOME:**

The Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance received the Program and Decanal responses to the recommendations and has approved an implementation plan.

A report on the progress of the initiatives undertaken in response to recommendations in general and as specified in the implementation plan will be provided in the Follow-up Report which will be due 18 months after the review of this report by the York University Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance (in May 2025).

The next Cyclical Program Review will begin in the Fall of 2028 with a site visit expected in the Fall of 2029 or Winter of 2030.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:**

In 2005 the first students were admitted to the Master of Science in Nursing (MScN) at York University. The program describes its focus as follows:

“At its inception, the program integrated human science and relational principles with theoretical knowledge on transformational and organizational leadership, caring and narrative pedagogies, global and local health policies, and human health experiences. The core of this comprehensive perspective remains, but in response to recommendations during the 2012-2013 Cyclical Review, and strong faculty support, we have broadened beyond specifying Human Science as the primary,

philosophical/theoretical core of the program, and instead recognize it as one of many, relevant philosophical/theoretical perspectives. “

The MScN - Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner (PHCNP) program was established in 2007 and offers both a part-time and full-time option for students. The program is one of nine universities belonging to the PHCNP consortium that has a mission, described in the self-study document, to “contribute to quality health care for Ontarians by educating and preparing Registered Nurses across Ontario for advanced practice as Nurse Practitioners and leaders in Primary Health Care, in English or French, through a student focused, blended teaching and learning model.” A common, provincial-level curriculum of seven courses, developed in French and English, covers the full range of PHCNP competencies at the entry-to-practice level as required by the nursing regulatory body (the College of Nurses of Ontario).

The School of Nursing approved a new vision, mission and core values document in September 2020, for both the undergraduate and graduate nursing programs, that underscores the core values of Relational Practice, Transformational Leadership, and Diversity.

Based on a review of the self-study report, materials, meetings with students, faculty and administration, and their experience in other Canadian graduate nursing programs, the reviewers made the following recommendations.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES:**

### **Recommendation 1**

Student Communication and Engagement: Students want more communication and engagement with faculty members, and clearer communication from the program. Synchronous communication is particularly important for students in on-line programs who often feel disconnected to their fellow students and their faculty. The reviewers made five specific suggestions:

- a) Virtual orientation sessions including staff and faculty;
- b) Synchronous class time at the start, mid-way point and end of term for all classes;
- c) Posted live office hours;
- d) Assignment of faculty advisors for all students with requirement for initial meetings prior to start of the program, as well as ongoing communication between faculty advisors and students throughout the program;
- e) More regular and timely communication from the Program Office, including live “town hall” type meetings and program orientations.

### **Recommendation 1a: Virtual orientation sessions including staff and faculty**

#### **Program Response**



Mandatory orientations for all graduate programs have been in place since 2013. Prior to Covid-19, orientations were face-to-face two-day sessions, which was particularly important for MScN programs given the largely online asynchronous nature of the courses. Since Covid-19, these mandatory sessions have been held synchronously online. In Fall 2022 the orientations will return to the face-to face format. Faculty, staff and the students already in the program are included in the sessions. The first-year student survey results in 2021 evaluated the online orientation very highly.

### **Dean's Response**

The Interim Dean agrees with the recommendation for orientation sessions and suggests that the materials from the sessions be made available to students throughout the program.

### **Recommendation 1b: Synchronous class time at the start, mid-way point and end of term for all classes**

#### **Program Response**

The program notes that since the introduction of Zoom at York, most of faculty members include synchronous online classes during their courses. Some faculty members offer the same synchronous course twice in the same week to accommodate students who do full and part-time nursing shifts in hospitals while also attending the Master's program. Prior to Covid-19, some faculty worked with students' schedules to arrange one or two face-to-face classes and/ or live online classes to support students in learning of more complex course concepts. The program continues to encourage synchronous sessions at the beginning, mid-way and at the end of all classes.

### **Dean's Response**

It is important to consider what may be done during these synchronous class times to encourage student engagement with faculty and peers. The program is encouraged to work with educational developers to enhance online engagement.

### **Recommendation 1c: Post live office hours**

#### **Program Response**

Several faculty members have already adopted the practice of holding live office hours and the program will encourage faculty members to continue with this practice. In addition, faculty offer to meet with students by appointment to accommodate the many students who do nursing shift work and for whom set office hours are not always accessible.

### **Dean's Response**

The Interim Dean agrees with this recommendation as students desire a connection

with faculty members. Every course director should post regular/by-appointment virtual office hours or information for how to make an appointment in the course materials. It may be helpful to inform students that in addition to course content, students may also discuss academic goals, career options or ways to collaborate on projects, for example.

**Recommendation 1d: Assignment of faculty advisors for all students with requirement for initial meetings prior to start of the program; as well as ongoing communication between faculty advisors and students throughout the program.**

### **Program Response**

The program identifies advisors for incoming graduate students in September each year and notifies those continuing graduate students who are linked to new advisors (in the case of faculty retirement or, in some cases, sabbatical). The program works to maintain advisor continuity. For this coming year (2022-23), the program will inform students about their advisors (and faculty about their advisees) prior to the start of the term. The program has prepared and circulated the document *Faculty Guidelines for Advising MScN Students among faculty*, which outlines effective approaches for advising students. Specific strategies for advising will be discussed during the Fall 2022 retreat.

Student engagement is an ongoing key issue for this primarily asynchronous online program. The program notes that students did rate the quality of graduate student-faculty relationships as good to excellent. Although it appears that the students who met with the reviewers were less satisfied, the program wonders if the pressures and stresses of the pandemic may be one reason for the difference. These differences in satisfaction are noted not to counter the recommendation but rather as important context to offer a complete picture of student opinion.

### **Dean's Response**

The Interim Dean agrees in principle with this recommendation. It is a good idea to provide opportunities at least once a term to meet with the advisors to go over progress and address questions, challenges, and concerns. In addition to faculty advisors, engagement and a feeling of belonging for students may be augmented as well through having opportunities to connect with peers. Educational developers in the teaching Commons and in Health have created a graduate student peer mentorship group that could be used for nursing, and the School might further benefit from having a designated nursing graduate faculty liaison who may connect needs of students to what faculty advisors can offer. Education developers may be able to suggest other ways to facilitate student engagement and connection. Evaluation of the impact of regular advisor meetings or other initiatives can provide important insights.

**Recommendation 1e: More regular and timely communication from the Program Office, including live "town hall" type meetings and program orientations**

### **Program Response**

The program has held several town halls over the past 2-3 years, some of which have been related to Covid-19-induced program changes or shifts in the program as well as meetings in the lead up to the practicum for students entering into this last phase of the program.

For MScN students, synchronous online town hall sessions are held to assist them in preparing for advanced nursing practice placements. Additional sessions were held during the pandemic.

The program intends to continue with live online town hall meetings as students are situated across Canada and internationally.

### **Dean's Response**

The Interim Dean agrees with the recommendation and with the Schools' plan and suggests recordings of sessions may be made available to students who were not available to attend.

### **Recommendation 2**

Review of Program Requirements and Courses Offerings. Some modifications are needed to program requirements and course offerings as indicated below.

**Recommendation 2a: Undertake purposeful strategizing to respond to Calls to Action of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and incorporate concepts about Indigenous health throughout the curriculum.**

### **Program Response**

This critically important issue has been under discussion in the School of Nursing (SoN) over the last few years. In fulfillment of the program learning outcome "*Model diversity, equity, inclusivity and social justice practices to enhance health and quality of life,*" several MScN courses have incorporated a focus on Indigenous health concepts, including how to think differently about how to do research. For example, instead of conceptualizing research as conducted "on" people, research is done "with" people (community based, participatory action research, etc.). Other topic areas include the reciprocal relationship between researcher and participant, the goals of self-determination, decolonization, the direct benefit to the community, and the potential for learning and healing.

In addition, and in fulfillment of the program outcome "*Critically examine institutional practices, challenge systemic values, assumptions and structures that limit human health*", Indigenous health issues and their upstream foundations, are incorporated into several of elective courses.

The SoN has been trying to hire a professorial Indigenous nurse scholar and has experienced three failed hiring cycle searches over the past three years. At the next program retreat, strategies to incorporate more concepts about Indigenous health throughout the curriculum will be a key topic.

### **Dean's Response**

The Interim Dean agrees with the recommendation and notes that the School is making every effort to hire an Indigenous scholar. In light of the issue of there being few highly qualified PhD RN candidates available, the program should carefully consider the qualifications for an Indigenous nursing position and whether the requirement of formal educational credentials are required when excellence in research can be demonstrated. Support and mentorship for any individual hired will be essential as will be creating ways of teaching suitable for decolonizing the curriculum.

**Recommendation 2b: Review intensive research courses for NP students; consider development of an applied research course, which includes quality improvement and program evaluation in place of quantitative and qualitative research. These changes will better reflect PHC NP practice.**

### **Program Response**

One of the final core courses taken by PHCNP students, just prior to the Integrated Practicum (IP) 5880 (*Nurse Practitioner Research Development & Knowledge Mobilization*) is an applied research course. The focus is on preparing nurse practitioner students to undertake clinical-researcher functions in the health-care system, and it builds on the research methodologies and theoretical inquiries taken in earlier courses to facilitate students' exploration, analysis, synthesis, and discussion of research questions and proposal development.

The School considers knowledge of the research process to be essential to evidence-informed PHCNP advanced clinical practice, and critical to effectively engaging in program evaluation and quality improvement in PHCNP professional practice. This expertise cannot be reserved for only those wanting to proceed into a PhD program as the knowledge and skills are key for a MScN program, and expected at the 'advanced nursing practice level' (Master's level) as specifically identified in the Canadian Nursing Association's document *Advanced Nursing Practice: A Pan-Canadian Framework* (CNA, 2019).

An issue that has arisen over the past few years is related to a few MScN - PHCNP students wanting to complete a thesis. Given the requirements and time constraints of the MScN-PHCNP program, this has not been feasible but the School plans to discuss and propose ways the program could accommodate pursuit of a thesis. This will include a review of the overall research methods courses within the MScN-PHCNP stream.

### **Dean's Response**

The Interim Dean agrees with the reviewers that the School needs to review the focus on research for NP students and how these skills can be achieved in the program. In order to remain sustainable and competitive against other graduate nursing programs in the catchment area and continue to attract great students, the MScN-PHCNP program must evolve and adapt to the needs and demands of students. The program could consider which NP students are interested in building statistical and research skills, then instead of a program requirement for all, those select students could mentor with research faculty and enrol in different research/statistics courses electives, perhaps those offered in other graduate programs.

**Recommendation 2c: Add a capstone project to the coursework option in the MScN program**

**Program Response**

The capstone course in the course-based MScN program is NURS 5500 and it requires students to synthesize the knowledge and skills learned in the previous required and elective courses (theory, research methodology and advanced nursing practice practicum) to prepare them for advanced clinical practice, further education, professional roles they will have in health administration/leadership, and ongoing health and health care knowledge production. Discussion of this course and any potential changes will be included in the graduate program retreat to be held in Fall 2022.

**Dean's Response**

The Interim Dean acknowledges that it is good to have a capstone course for the MScN non-thesis students, and related to recommendation 2b), consideration has to be given to how students may be best prepared for this capstone experience.

**Recommendation 2d: Consider the creation of a leadership course in lieu of several underutilized nursing electives**

**Program Response**

The School of Nursing notes that leadership includes both administration/management as well as policy and advocacy as key leadership concepts. The School offers a number of leadership courses and leadership concepts are also incorporated into a number of core courses.

The program has reduced the number of MScN electives offered each year and will monitor the uptake of electives going forward to ensure adequate electives are offered so students can complete their programs on time.

**Dean's Response**

The SoN has provided evidence of their offering of leadership skill development across a variety of courses, so there is no need for an additional for credit course.

**Recommendation 2e: Encourage students to take electives from other units/faculties in lieu of underutilized nursing electives****Program Response**

Students are encouraged to review the electives that are offered by other units in the Faculty of Health as well as other faculties. However, in light of student preference for online courses, there have been limited options. This situation changed during the pandemic.

**Dean's Response**

The Interim Dean agrees with the concept of giving students an option to enroll in electives outside of the School of Nursing and reducing the number of electives offered in the program. However, the Interim Dean also acknowledges the preference for online courses and notes that there may be more hybrid offerings post-pandemic.

**Recommendation 2f: Increase class sizes and reduce total number of both sections and courses offered****Program Response**

Nursing is a heavy program with multiple courses. Students are required to learn the knowledge, critical decision-making and psychomotor skills to provide effective health care for communities, and patients and their families across the life span (preconception to after death). Large classes with hundreds of students are not conducive, often not feasible (such as in clinical teaching at the bedside), nor effective for the type of experiential education that is needed. Nursing education, like most professional programs, is more expensive to deliver than most BA and BSc non-professional programs.

**Dean's Response**

The Interim Dean agrees with the reviewer's recommendation to increase graduate class size and reduce multiple sections, where possible for five reasons.

1) These class size caps are much smaller than other nursing programs in the catchment area. 2) Enrollment in the courses are not meeting their cap, and in fact enrollments are decreasing. Instead of having two sections of low enrolled courses, offer one section of slightly higher enrollment. 3) There is no evidence provided to support the statement that research will be impacted negatively by increasing enrollments by small numbers in the graduate courses. 4) Where there is concern about having to complete more grading, faculty could consider alternate assessment methods. This concern could also be addressed in other ways such as by using grading rubrics and peer to peer assessment for feedback on early drafts, etc. 5) There may be issues other than class size that are impacting research capacity of faculty members that can be mitigated in other ways.

At the Fall 2022 retreat, the program should discuss ways to increase class size and reduce sections. Advice may be sought from the Associate Dean of Learning, Teaching, Academic programs and educational developers can provide suggestions regarding alternate assessment methods. To augment enrollments, the program should consider opening courses to other programs as much as possible. The program may also wish to consider team teaching to allow researchers to teach the same components for multiple sections of a course and free up teaching preparation time for research.

### **Recommendation 3**

Develop strategies to increase research productivity of faculty and students: More funding success and research productivity is needed to attract successful graduate students and fulfill requirements for faculty.

#### **Recommendation 3a: Reduce courses and sections offered, and redirect resources to research development**

##### **Program Response**

As discussed in the previous section, increasing class sizes without reducing the number of courses assigned would not in itself increase research productivity.

##### **Dean's Response**

See responses to 2f, 3b, and 3c.

#### **Recommendation 3b: Develop a “research culture” within the School and the Faculty to take advantage of all opportunities and partnerships offered at the University and externally.**

- **Do strategic planning and involve other disciplines and schools**
- **Develop and mentor new faculty**
- **Engage with York and national funding competition structures**

##### **Program Response**

The program is developing a three-year strategic plan and research intensification is included in these plans. Most graduate faculty members are involved in interdisciplinary research. The Fall 2022 graduate program retreat will identify and prioritize other research enhancing initiatives.

The School's Scholarship & Professional Development committee has mentoring initiatives as one responsibility. Additionally, the Tenure & Promotions Committee members mentor faculty regarding successful T&P actions. The Faculty Research & Awards Committee is undergoing changes in order to increase the profile of faculty research in the School as well as in the Faculty of Health. The School plans to



implement a mentor-mentee system to support new faculty.

The School's faculty members are involved in University research competition structures and the GPD is a member of the Graduate Program Committee, which adjudicates Faculty of Health funding competitions. Members of the School of Nursing also sit on CIHR funding review committees/decision bodies.

### **Dean's Response**

The Interim Dean notes that it is important to have a research culture that facilitates the development of faculty research programs. Through the Office of Research Services (ORS) in the Faculty of Health, a staff contingent is available to assist faculty to find funding sources and prepare and submit research proposals. The ORS offers a full training and orientation session for all new faculty members. Faculty members can often find supports by joining one or more Organized Research Units (ORUs) related to areas such as child and adolescent health, global health, vision, neuroscience, and healthy aging. The VP of Research and Innovation (VPRI) Office offers individual programs to assist researchers to prepare proposals for each of the Tri-Councils. The Research Commons offers a set of workshops that provides mentorship and collegial fellowship to assist faculty members with submitting a grant application to the appropriate Federal Research Council - SSHRC, NSERC or CIHR (or similar caliber external agency where more appropriate). See for details at [researchcommons.yorku.ca](http://researchcommons.yorku.ca).

Research culture would also be enhanced by recruiting more full-time students into the thesis stream (see 3c) and the requirements for the thesis stream should be reconsidered.

The Interim Dean applauds the participation of nursing faculty in the Faculty of Health research related committees and suggests that other opportunities outside of the Faculty continue to be explored.

Formalizing a mentor-mentee system to support new hires and early career researchers would help ensure that they understand their position requirements and develop understanding of expectations, which ultimately could also facilitate the new hires' support of their graduate students.

### **Recommendation 3c: Set goals for recruitment and retention of full-time Master's thesis students**

#### **Program Response**

Plans are underway for focused sessions to increase MScN student interest in pursuing the thesis stream, including making this an important aspect of the Open House and at the mandatory orientation in August/September where details regarding the faculty support that is available are described. Further strategies for recruitment and retention will be discussed at the graduate faculty retreat in Fall 2022.



### **Dean's Response**

The Interim Dean agrees with this recommendation and notes that the School has plans to address this recommendation. The Interim Dean also supports continued exploration of other ways to recruit new high quality graduate students and retain them. As noted above, a review of program requirements for students in the thesis stream should be undertaken.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The chart below lays out the implementation plan approved by the Joint Sub-Committee at its meeting in November 2023.

	Recommendation	Action	Responsible for Follow-up	Timeline
1.	That student communication and engagement with faculty members be enhanced through specific actions below.	<i>See 1a - 1e below.</i>		
1a.	Hold virtual orientation sessions that include staff and faculty.	The program should continue with existing orientation sessions. Orientation materials should be made readily available to students online throughout their time in the program.	Graduate Program Director	Materials for next orientation sessions in 2023 and ongoing to be made available to students.
1b.	Hold synchronous class sessions at the start, mid-, and end-of-term points for all classes.	The program should continue offering synchronous sessions throughout the term and encourage this practice in courses not currently doing so. Encourage faculty to work with educational developers to consider how to enhance online student engagement.	Graduate Program Director, Faculty members, educational developers	Synchronous sessions to be offered for Fall 2023 and ongoing
1c.	Post and hold live office hours.	The program should continue posting and holding live office hours in addition to those held by appointment and encourage	Graduate Program Director, faculty members	In place for Fall 2023 and ongoing

		adoption by faculty members not currently doing so.		
1d.	Assignment of faculty advisors for all students with requirement for initial meetings prior to start of the program; as well as ongoing communication between faculty advisors and students throughout the program.	Advisors should hold once-per-term meetings with students, and the program should consider other ways to engage graduate students. Piloting and evaluation of these initiatives can provide additional insights.	Graduate Program Director, faculty members, educational developers	In place for academic year 2023-2024
1e.	That regular communication come from the program through “town hall” type meetings.	The program should continue with its meetings and make available recordings for those students who can’t attend.	Graduate Program Director, Graduate Program Assistant	In place for next meeting in 2023
2.	That a review of program requirements and course offerings be undertaken.	<i>See 2a – 2f below.</i>		
2a.	That a purposeful strategy to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) be undertaken and that concepts about Indigenous health be incorporated throughout the curriculum.	The program should continue the hiring process for an Indigenous scholar and enhance program curriculum with concepts and content related to Indigenous health.	Director School of Nursing, Graduate Program Director, faculty members	Hiring process is ongoing. Curricular work in place for Fall 2023 and Winter 2024.
2b.	That intensive research-focused courses for NP students be reviewed and changes made to better	The program should review the research courses in the PHCNP program to ensure an applied focus and consider alternatives to	Director School of Nursing, Graduate Program Director,	Review to be completed by end of 2023 and proposals for changes to be made in time for 2024-2025.

	reflect the PHCNP practice.	its current requirements (e.g., research/statistical courses offered by other units or as electives, faculty mentorship in lieu of required courses, etc.)	Associate Dean Learning Teaching & Academic programs, Associate Dean Research & Innovation, faculty members	
2c.	That a capstone requirement be added to the course-based MScN program	The program already includes a capstone requirement which will be discussed at the graduate retreat in Fall 2022.	Director School of Nursing, Graduate Program Director, faculty members	Discussed in Fall 2022 - complete
2d.	That a leadership course be incorporated into the MScN program.	The program already offers a leadership course and incorporates leadership concepts in many electives. Students considering leadership positions should be made aware of courses and other networking opportunities.	Director, School of Nursing, Graduate Program Director	Increase awareness for Fall 2023 and ongoing
2e.	That students be encouraged to take electives from other units.	Students should be encouraged to consider electives outside of the School to reduce the number of low-enrolment nursing electives. For popular courses outside nursing, the program should investigate with the relevant GPDs whether offering the electives online is an option.	Graduate Program Director	Fall 2023 and ongoing
2f.	That class sizes be increased so sections and courses offered can be reduced.	The program should consider ways to maximize enrolments in a smaller number of courses and/or sections and how to support	Director School of Nursing, Graduate Program Director,	Planning underway in Summer/Fall 2023 and ongoing.

		faculty with increased enrolments.	Associate Dean Learning, Teaching, Academic Programs, educational developers, Faculty members	
3.	That strategies be developed to increase research productivity of faculty and students.	<i>See 3a – 3c below.</i>		
3a.	That courses and sections offered be reduced and resources be redirected to research development.	<i>See 2f, 3b and 3c.</i>	<i>See 2f, 3b and 3c.</i>	Discussions and planning underway in Summer/Fall 2023 and ongoing.
3b.	That a “research culture” within the School be developed.	The School should continue its participation in research-related committees and explore additional external opportunities. The School should also consider formalizing mentor/mentee support for new faculty and recruiting more full-time students into the thesis stream.	Director School of Nursing, Graduate Program Director, Associate Dean Research & Innovation, faculty members	Exploration underway in Summer/Fall 2023.
3c.	That goals for recruitment and retention of full-time thesis students be set.	The program should continue to engage with recruitment and retention strategies for thesis students and review the stream requirements.	Director School of Nursing, Graduate Program Director, Associate Dean Research & Innovation, faculty members	Explore and implement new approaches in Summer/Fall 2023, and ongoing

**YORK UNIVERSITY**  
Final Assessment Report

**Social Work, Undergraduate (BSW), 2012 to 2021**  
**Social Work, Graduate (MSW & PhD), 2016 to 2022**

**Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies**

**Cyclical Program Review**

This Final Assessment Report (FAR) provides a synthesis of the cyclical review of the programs listed below.

**Program(s) Reviewed:**

BSW

MSW, PhD

**Reviewers appointed by the Vice-Provost Academic:**

Dr. Donna Hardy Cox, Associate Vice-President (Academic) and Dean of Students, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland

Dr. Mehmoona Moosa-Mitha, Associate Professor, School of Social Work, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia,

Dr. Jennifer Stephen, Associate Professor, Department of History, York University, Ontario

**Cyclical Program Review Key Milestones:**

Cyclical Program Review launch: September 15, 2021

Self-study submitted to Vice-Provost Academic: August 17-26, 2022

Date of the Site Visit: October 24-26, 2022

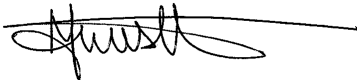
Review Report received: December 21, 2022

Program Response received: March 7, 2023

Dean's Response received: August 21, 2023

Implementation Plan and FAR confirmed by Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance, December 4, 2023.

Submitted by Marcia Annisette, Vice-Provost Academic, York University



This review was conducted under the York University Quality Assurance Protocol, August 2020.

## **SITE VISIT: October 24-26, 2022**

The virtual site visit included meetings with the Acting Vice-Provost Academic, Alice Pitt, Dean of Graduate Studies Thomas Loebel, JJ Mc Murtry, Dean, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies (LAPS), as well as the LAPS Vice Dean and Associate Dean Programs, Sean Kheraj, Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning, Anita Lam, and Associate Dean Research and Graduate Studies, Ravi de Costa. School administrators met with the reviewers, including Interim Director, Chris Chapman, Graduate Program Director, Anne O'Connell, Associate Professor, Maurice Poon, and Undergraduate Program Director Ruth Green. The reviewers also met with two University Librarians, administrative staff, and field education staff. The reviewers held discussions with small groups of students at each level of study, undergraduate, master's and doctoral.

## **OUTCOME:**

The Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance received the program and decanal responses to the recommendations and has approved an implementation plan.

A report on the progress of the initiatives undertaken in response to recommendations in general and as specified in the implementation plan will be provided in the Follow-up Report which will be due 18 months (June, 2025) after the review of this report by the York University Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance.

The next Cyclical Program Review will begin in the Fall of 2029 with a site visit expected in the Fall of 2030 or Winter of 2031.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND STRENGTHS:**

The School of Social Work degree offerings include the BSW, the MSW and the PhD. It is committed to critical social work and has, noted the reviewers, "a national reputation of offering programs that are social justice-oriented and reflect cutting edge scholarship in the area of anti-oppressive, anti-racist theories that is consistent with the changing requirements of social work practice in the field." However, in their report, the reviewers noted that that the School's mission statement lacks any reference to decolonial analysis, something faculty would like to see included. The reviewers recommend that the School work towards developing an updated mission statement and that students, field education staff, and alumni be included in the process.

The reviewers' report notes that for faculty, field education staff, and students alike, the undergraduate curriculum is highly regarded and valued. A number of students indicated that they would appreciate more opportunities to practice skills in their courses, a common theme across all Schools of social work nationally. Similarly, graduate students expressed concerns about the insufficient number of supervisors for the practice research paper and doctoral research. The reviewers noted that a lack of resources contribute to challenges in retaining field skilled practicum coordinators. In order to retain accreditation standards and further develop global agreements for practicum opportunities, the reviewers noted that additional support is required in the School. The report states, "Further building curricular and co-curricular experiential



learning activities into graduate and undergraduate courses will affirm to students -- through reflection -- the theory to practice connection: praxis.”

The reviewers noted that increasing the number of faculty, particularly Black and Indigenous faculty, will enhance the quality of the programs and were, “heartened to hear that York University has appointed two individuals who could potentially support cluster hires in the School.”

The reviewers made helpful suggestions for reducing perceived overlap in terms of course content for both the MSW and the BSW. Additionally, reviewers suggested that the School examine ways to address gaps in linking theory to practice, including formalizing the transition from classroom learning to the field practice experience.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In addition to six formal recommendations in the final section of their report, the reviewers made several thoughtful suggestions and informal recommendations in various sections of the report. The Department and the Dean have provided responses to these as part of the cyclical program review process; however, in this Final Assessment Report, only the program and decanal responses to the six formal recommendations are included. The Department and the Faculty are encouraged to continue their careful evaluation of the reviewers’ informal recommendations and suggestions and plan for implementation where feasible. The Implementation Plan identifies this as Recommendation A.

The reviewers’ formal recommendations for program quality and sustainability are below, along with the responses from the program and the Dean.

### **Recommendation 1**

Endorse the School’s plan to undertake the revision of the School’s mission statement and program objectives to further develop a collective vision of the School’s governance, teaching, and research.

### **Program Response**

This recommendation was originally on the agenda for a faculty retreat scheduled for January 2023 but the agenda for the retreat was modified and this item deferred to the next academic year (2023/2024). This allows the incoming Director and any new hires to be involved and have input on the process.

### **Dean’s Response**

The Dean supports the School’s plan to revise its mission statement. The School’s desire to better incorporate decolonial analysis into its curriculum aligns well with York’s

Decolonizing, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy, 2023-2028 (released May 2023), as well as earlier strategic documents, including the Indigenous Framework (2017). In addition to students, alumni, field education staff and faculty (tenured and contract, including new hires) outgoing and incoming Directors and UPDs should be involved.

## **Recommendation 2**

Immediate hiring of cluster hire of 4 Indigenous and Black faculty.

### **Program Response**

The School and the Dean's office are currently in negotiation in relation to hires for this year and next. Given the mandatory Indigenous courses for all BSW and MSW students, it has been agreed that Indigenous hires are currently a priority. Other priorities are for faculty complement will be discussed at the March 2023 Faculty Meeting.

### **Dean's Response**

The Dean's Office supports hiring in this area but notes that the Faculty's capacity for new hires in Liberal Arts and Professional Studies (LAPS) in any given year is subject to approval by the Provost, current enrollment trends, and the budget realities of the Faculty and University.

## **Recommendation 3**

Enhance the transparency of curriculum mapping and creation of prior learning assessment tools.

### **Program Response**

In relation to enhanced transparency of curriculum mapping, the program plans to offer a two-tiered orientation process for new faculty:

- a. The director will meet with new contract faculty and provide an overview of the BSW and MSW curriculum and the place of specific courses in the general map of the curriculum. This will supplement the orientations that the director already does with new faculty.
- b. A senior faculty member who is either teaching a course or has taught the course in the past will be designated as course coordinator. The coordinator will orient new instructors on the learning expectations and general content of a course.

The recommendation for prior learning assessment tools refers to students who request to be exempted from parts of the curriculum based on courses taken in previous programs. Requests of this kind are already addressed on a case-by-case basis by the BSW committee. The program does not feel a different process is needed at this time. These requests are assessed based on the specific requirements of a professional

program like Social Work in which courses from other programs may seem similar but do not address the specific learning outcomes expected from a BSW course.

### Dean's Response

The Dean's Office agrees that enhancing the transparency of curriculum mapping can help any program produce a coherent degree progress plan for students and provides comments on each "tier" of the plan. However, the external reviewers also recommended that the School explore software "to map curriculum and to support accreditation reporting." The School is encouraged to consult with the Lassonde School of Engineering and the Faculty of Health to see what resources they may already be using to track program learning outcomes and accreditation requirements for engineering and nursing respectively.

#### a. Director meetings with new faculty

Orienting new faculty members to the logic, sequencing, and content of the BSW and MSW curriculum should be a priority in order to optimize the student experience in both programs. At the same time, the Dean's Office notes that *existing* faculty should participate robustly in this exercise as well so that curricular overlap can be avoided and so that all members of the School understand the larger curricular vision of the two programs. Key documents like the curriculum maps for both programs should be shared on a departmental Teams site or other shared online space. For ideas about how to present curriculum mapping information in a user-friendly manner, assistance can be provided through the Associate Director, Faculty Curriculum in LA&PS, or the assigned Education Developer in Teaching Commons.

#### b. Senior faculty members as course coordinators

Given the reality that senior faculty members in the School have many demands on their time across the undergraduate and graduate programs, the Dean invites Social Work colleagues to consider other responses to ensuring the enhanced transparency of curriculum mapping. These could include using the established curriculum map for the Social Work program as a guiding document. Additionally, Course Directors who teach the required courses in the program can meet prior to the start of each term to coordinate lesson plans and ensure consistency of course learning objectives across all mountings of the course in question, relative to the established program learning outcomes and accreditation requirements.

On the question of prior learning assessment, the Dean's Office agrees that the School is positioned to review an applicant's previous academic experience in relation to the Social Work program. The reviewers suggest a thorough assessment of transfers from *other Social Work programs*. It is understood that the School reviews all transfer applications on a case-by-case basis and the Dean is assured that each applicant is provided with the maximum transfer credit possible (for both core and non-program courses), while upholding the academic integrity of the program and the student's chances for success.

#### **Recommendation 4**

Collaboration with the Office of the Vice Provost to undertake global agreements with practice agencies.

#### **Program Response**

Many of MSW students' desired placement sites, especially those in direct practice, school board or hospital settings, have established relationships with other MSW programs in the city which offer incentives such as research funding, professional development funds, adjunct professorships and so on. A University-wide strategy and integrated approach for establishing global affiliation agreements with placements in the City of Toronto or other government or provincial divisions, school boards, hospitals, and counselling agencies would absolutely enhance placement opportunities for York social work students.

The School has met with and requested support from the Provost's Office to develop pan-university global agreements for hospital partnerships; however, it is unclear who would take the lead in negotiating these global partnerships as they would involve more programs than the School of Social Work. The School recommends that a centralized division such as the YU Hub support the negotiation, development, and tracking of global agreements. The program further suggests a centralized system/database to track global agreements.

The School's Field Education Office continues to expand innovative and unconventional placement opportunities for students. In fact, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic (July of 2020), the Field Education Office received support from the Vice-Provost Academic for a pan-University placement strategy with internal York service providers to respond to the pandemic-related challenges in securing external degree-required placements. It is hoped this support can continue.

#### **Dean's Response**

The Dean's Office supports the development of practicum opportunities and notes that the LA&PS Office of Experiential Education can be an additional resource as the School develops its work-focused placements. In addition to the internal placements secured during the pandemic, external opportunities for students should be explored, bearing in mind the requirements under accreditation of field placement supervisors to hold a BSW at a minimum.

#### **Recommendation 5**

Build stronger affiliations with centralized University student support resources.

#### **Program Response**

Representatives of the Office of Student Community Relations (OSCR) and the Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support and Education, as well as a representative from the Writing Centre, attended the School's Faculty Meetings in 2022-2023. In addition, the School has been developing stronger ties with Central Advising and now has a dedicated person in both Advising and the Student Accessibility Office for Social Work. This is an area that the School is actively working to strengthen.

### **Dean's Response**

The Dean's Office supports the School's outreach to student support services to improve the integration of existing resources and suggests that a process for sharing information with students on a regular basis be established.

### **Recommendation 6**

The School's leadership team to work with the University's Division of Equity, People and Culture to support the School's commitments to equity and diversity.

### **Program Response**

The School welcomes support and additional resources that could assist with a curricular review. There are three new groups are envisioned at the School: a Black Social Work Alumni Network (BSWAN), a group of Black social work graduate students, and a working group to explore and address anti-Black racism. This last group will initially be composed of full-time faculty with a likelihood of involving students once initial plans are established. The School has been supporting BSWAN's development for the past year (2022-2023) and has offered to provide some initial funding to the student group while they do the work to become incorporated and therefore access funding as a York student group.

The School hopes that collaboration between these three groups will lead to important steps to address issues identified.

### **Dean's Response**

This recommendation appears to be in response to concerns expressed by students about systemic racism and a lack of diverse representation among the School's faculty. Recognizing that universities in general are spaces that tend to replicate white, able bodied, heteronormative privilege, The Dean's Office supports the School's formation of a working group to address anti-Black racism. This aligns with similar responses at the Faculty and University-level, including the creation of a LA&PS Special Advisor on Black Inclusion. Social Work colleagues are encouraged to avail themselves of resources established and shared via these initiatives.

University-wide, Social Work colleagues are encouraged to draw on the resources of the Centre for Rights, Equity, and Inclusion (REI) within the portfolio of the Vice President of Equity, People and Culture. REI offers online and in-person professional

development, including the REDDI workshop series. Training is also offered through the Place of Online Learning for the Adjudication of Researchers Inclusively and Supportively (POLARIS) initiative. Successful completion of the six core modules of POLARIS is now required of all hiring committee appointees, but the portal is also open to all members of the York community seeking more information on promoting inclusivity.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The chart below lays out the implementation plan approved by the Joint Sub-Committee at its meeting in December 2023.

	Recommendation	Action	Responsible for Follow-up	Timeline
A.	That the School of Social Work, as part of their ongoing plans for enhancement of programs, consider the thoughtful additional suggestions provided by the reviewers throughout the body of their report.	The School will consider and act upon on these suggestions, as feasible. The Follow-up Report should summarize actions taken on these items.	Chair, Undergraduate Program Director, Graduate Program Director	Summary of actions undertaken to be included in the Follow-up Report due in May 2025.
1.	That the School's mission statement and program objectives be revised.	The School will revise its mission statement, incorporating decolonial analysis and referencing the University's strategic documents. Staff, students and faculty members will be included in the process and input from the outgoing director and program level directors will be sought.	Director, School of Social Work	Consultations should be undertaken through Fall/Winter 2023/24 with consultation and discussion completed by Fall 2024.

2.	That there be an immediate hiring of four faculty Black and/or Indigenous faculty members (ideally two Black faculty members and two Indigenous faculty members).	The School will continue to prioritize the recruitment of Indigenous and Black faculty as positions are authorized, including cluster hires.	Director, School of Social Work Associate Dean, Faculty Affairs, LAPS	Ongoing
3.	That the curriculum map for programs be updated, prior learning assessment tools be created and mechanisms for communicating program learning outcomes and program maps be implemented.	The School will explore working with curriculum developers to review and revise programs learning outcomes and maps for the BSW and MSW, as well as establishing fixed course objectives for all core courses in alignment with accreditation requirements of the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE). The School will explore tools for tracking accreditation requirements, in consultation with other Faculties as appropriate. The School will continue its practice of assessing prior learning to ensure that maximum transfer value is awarded. The School will develop mechanisms for ensuring	Undergraduate Program Director, BSW committee, Course Directors,  Associate Dean Programs (for consultations with Lassonde and Health)	Curriculum mapping and program learning outcomes to be revised by the Fall 2024, after new mission statement is finalized.  Consultations about accreditation tracking through to Fall/Winter 2024/2025.



		that program learning outcomes and curriculum mapping are shared with all faculty.		
4.	That global agreements with practice agencies be established.	The School will continue to work with the relevant offices to secure work-focused placements, bearing in mind the accreditation requirements that supervisors hold a BSW at a minimum.	Director, School of Social Work BSW and MSW Field Education Coordinators	Fall 2023/204 and ongoing.
5.	That stronger affiliations with centralized University student support resources be built.	The School will continue to educate colleagues about the range of support services available at the university. The School will explore processes for sharing information about available services with students and establish a mechanism for this by Fall/Winter 2023/24.	Director, School of Social Work Undergraduate Program Assistant Individual Faculty Members	Fall/Winter 2023/2024 establish information sharing process for students. Education of faculty and students about available services is ongoing.
6.	That the School's leadership team work with the Division of Equity, People and Culture to support commitments to equity and diversity.	The School will continue with the establishment of equity and diversity-oriented groups identified, drawing on the resources provided at the Faculty level as well as university-wide services, as appropriate. The School's Executive Committee and student representatives will meet with the LAPS Special	Director, School of Social Work Executive Committee, School of Social Work.	Fall/Winter 2023-2024

		Advisor on Black Inclusion. All faculty members will complete Place of Online Learning for the Adjudication of Researchers Inclusively and Supportively (POLARIS) modules.		
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**YORK UNIVERSITY**  
Final Assessment Report

**Music, Graduate (MA, PhD)**

**School of the Arts, Media, Performance and  
Design**

**Cyclical Program Review – 2012 to 2022**

This Final Assessment Report (FAR) provides a synthesis of the cyclical review of the programs listed below.

**Program(s) Reviewed:**

MA  
PhD

**Reviewers appointed by the Vice-Provost Academic:**

Dr. Kevin Swinden, Associate Dean, Faculty of Music-Planning and Curriculum,  
Associate Professor, Music Theory, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario

Dr. Lori Burns, Full Professor, School of Music, Faculty of Arts, University of Ottawa,  
Ontario

Dr. Molly Ladd-Taylor, Full Professor, Department of History, Faculty of Liberal Arts and  
Professional Studies, York University, Ontario

**Cyclical Program Review Key Milestones:**

Cyclical Program Review launch: September 15, 2021

Self-study submitted to Vice-Provost Academic: January 17, 2023

Date of the Site Visit: April 10-11, 2023

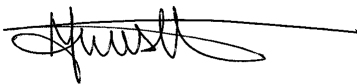
Review Report received: May 17, 2023

Program Response received: July 20, 2023

Dean's Response received: August 23, 2023

Implementation Plan and FAR received by Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance,  
November 6, 2023' revised version confirmed on December 4, 2023.

Submitted by Marcia Anisette, Vice-Provost Academic, York University



This review was conducted under the York University Quality Assurance Protocol,  
August 2020.

## **SITE VISIT: April 10-11, 2023**

The virtual visit was organized around a set of interviews with the following individuals: Vice-Provost Academic, Lyndon Martin, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies, Thomas Lobel, AMPD Dean, Sarah Bay-Cheng, AMPD Associate Dean Academic Michael Darroch and Associate Dean Research, Laura Levi, Music Chair, Karen Burke, Graduate Program Director, Stephanie Martin, and two University librarians. The reviewers met with full-time faculty in the undergraduate and graduate programs, a group of part-time (contract) faculty, undergraduate students and a group of MA and PhD students. Discussions were also held with departmental administrative staff.

The reviewers were not able to tour the physical spaces for ensemble rehearsals, teaching studios, labs or performance spaces.

## **OUTCOME:**

The Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance received the Program and Decanal responses to the recommendations and has approved an implementation plan.

A report on the progress of the initiatives undertaken in response to recommendations in general and as specified in the implementation plan will be provided in the Follow-up Report which will be due 18 months (June, 2025) after the review of this report by the York University Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance.

The next Cyclical Program Review will begin in the Fall of 2029 with a site visit expected in the Fall of 2030 or Winter of 2031.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND STRENGTHS**

The Department of Music is one of seven academic units within the School of Arts, Media, Performance and Design (Dance; Design; Digital Media; Film; Theatre; Visual Arts and Art History). The Music Department was formed in 1969 and the undergraduate program operates interdependently with the Graduate Program in Music. The Graduate Program in Music offers an MA and a PhD with six fields: Composition, Ethnomusicology, Jazz, Musicology, Performance, and Popular Music Studies. However, the program currently understands its offerings as falling into two major thematic strands: composition and studies (musicology/ethnomusicology) The MA was first offered in 1975 and the PhD was implemented in 1993. Students may also pursue a joint MA/MBA with the Schulich School of Business.

The reviewers highlight several strengths, noting that “One of York’s most distinguishing and differentiating opportunities is the enviable collection of world music instruments and access to authentic instruction on these instruments.” As well, the reviewers also note that the Department very clearly supports EDI initiatives.

The reviewers’ report also included some opportunities for improvement. The reviewers note that that the programs reflect an interest in the social and cultural aspects of music as well as the capacity for advanced technologies; however, they suggest that clarity is required for how the formally approved streams, pathways, thematic strands, and

concentrations are connected. The reviewers recommend that the program's "graduate fields should be consolidated and perhaps reimagined based on professorial expertise of the current faculty complement." Future hiring plans would consider how to bolster and support these fields. The reviewers' report also provides insight into potential clusters to which all current faculty could contribute.

There is an opportunity to review enrolment data and establish a list of courses that are grounded in strategic clusters. The reviewers suggest course offerings could be concept-or method-driven and draw on a variety of repertoires. This approach may reduce the reliance on independent studies to complete program requirements. Clarity about the fields of study would also alleviate this strain which, while providing flexibility for students, is not sustainable.

While the reviewers note that the Major Research Paper (MRP), "is well conceived as a common requirement for all MA students," clearer communication about the timelines for completion for students would be helpful. The reviewers further note that PhD students appear to be challenged to complete the program within 6 years.

Noting that "it is not reasonable for all courses to accomplish all outcomes," the reviewers encourage the graduate program to review the graduate program learning outcomes and analyse how actual courses and course assessments contribute to the learning outcomes.

The reviewers suggest the Department explore additional links to performance and composition-based organizations in the GTA. They state, "Alliances with external partners could lead to an enhance series of visitors to the program," and note that this may enhance the recruitment of students.

Noting the downwards trend in admissions for both programs, the reviewers indicate that admission requirements for both the MA and PhD are well defined and standard. Admission to the PhD has been paused for 2023 and 2024 and is of concern to some students in the MA program.

In terms of staffing and workload, the reviewers note in their report that, "supervision is not evenly distributed across faculty members and there are many early career scholars who should be given the opportunity to begin supervision." While the administrative staff appear to operate as a strong collegial unit, the reviewers note a gap in the support for the recent growth in intersecting labs for the performing Arts courses, Digital Music and Music for Media. The report suggests that consistent support should be provided by a technologist rather than faculty if this is a direction that is to be maintained and expanded.

Finally, the review report notes the difficult budgetary situation that forces the department to mount concerts in "an acoustically impoverished lounge space," because

the Department's finances do not allow for the cost of using the Faculty recital hall for faculty and student performances.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

As a preface to the list of formal recommendations below, the external reviewers make the following observation:

“The York graduate music programs attract a diverse and engaged student body that is supported by highly motivated faculty members. Students strive for expertise in specialized areas and the professors rise to the challenge by offering unique independent studies in order to meet student interests. For the sustainability of this important graduate department, the following recommendations call for a streamlining of the concentrations as well as the course offering. Common experience rather than highly individualized studies would contribute to a stronger sense of community, bolster peer support, and enhance research culture.”

### **Recommendation 1**

The concentrations and pathways identified for the graduate programs should be revisited to maximize the unique potential of York's faculty and areas of excellence. This should mean that all resources are galvanized around the strategic concentrations. The current scope of the areas of study is vast, and consequently, some areas are ill-defined and lacking in course and supervisory support. Future hiring should strategically consider how these reimagined fields should be bolstered and supported.

#### **Program Response:**

The current graduate executive understands the program to have two major fields of concentration: ethno/musicology and composition.

Within the concentration of ethno/musicology, and consistent with how the disciplines are understood more broadly, students can further focus on jazz studies and popular music studies. Community music has also been considered under the larger title of ethno/musicology until recently and considers many similar issues. The composition concentration includes an emphasis on contemporary composition, including digital activities, sonic studies, production, and film music composition. Moving forward with curricular revision (see recommendation 2), all courses will work towards preparing graduate students to complete their degrees and engage in post-graduation opportunities in these two concentrations.

Faculty support in composition and ethno/musicology has always been strong at York. The program currently has eleven faculty who can support students in composition and eight who can support students in ethno/musicology. Given the very recent loss of two ethnomusicologists, as well as two part-time popular music scholars, the graduate program is pleased that the department has indicated that the next hire will be an ethnomusicologist, which has traditionally been a strength of the department.

Increased support for graduate students in grant-writing, conference presentations and publications and a thorough revision of all public documentation about the program will further cement an understanding of a York University Graduate Program in Music with concentrations in ethno/musicology and composition within the broader scholarly communities.

**Dean's Response:**

The Dean recommends that the first step for the Department is to develop a high-level strategic plan and vision, including the distinctions of its graduate program among other programs, with a clear focus on professional outcomes for its graduates. This will also set the context for future faculty complement requests in the priority areas. The Dean fully supports the development of additional supports, including a focus on grant-writing, and suggests that these be priorities in future hiring.

**Recommendation 2**

Revisit the graduate course offerings to streamline them according to the announced concentrations, which are currently ethno/musicology and composition. Enrolments should improve based on this consolidation. Some courses should be reconceptualised to speak across themes and approaches in scholarly discourse; some should be offered in rotation. Independent studies should be reserved for very specific cases. Students should be encouraged to have common experiences in a cluster of courses that build skills and critical tools. Learning outcomes should be more clearly established for the graduate programs, with courses serving specific purposes in achieving those outcomes.

**Program Response:**

The Graduate program agrees that a curricular review of graduate course offerings is necessary, and the plan is to implement this review in the academic year 2023/24. At the same time, the program believes that the observations of the reviewers do not necessarily reflect the reality of the course offerings for various reasons: some course descriptions are out of date and do not reflect the way they are currently being taught, and some foundational courses were thought to be optional. In addition, course enrollments have fluctuated along with the graduate student intake.

The two newest graduate courses (Music for Social Change, Transcultural Jazz), created and offered by recent hires and young rising scholars reflect a new trend in course offerings within the department, which is towards courses that are concept/method driven and support our two concentrations in ethno/musicology and composition.

The graduate program commits to the following courses of action, even before the curriculum review is completed:



- ensure that course descriptions available are up-to-date;
- work with a pedagogy specialist from the Teaching Commons to align the program's learning outcomes and the courses;
- retire some courses that are no longer relevant; and
- create a 5000 level 3.0 methodology course that will be offered every other year to fill a gap in the students' preparations for their MRP and dissertation.

The review committee recommends that the program reduce as much as possible the number of independent studies that are offered in the graduate program. The Graduate program believes that by revising the course offerings, encouraging students to seek relevant courses in other departments (within AMPD and beyond), and developing interdisciplinary courses in collaboration with other departments, the need for independent studies courses can be reduced. At the same time, the program realizes that some students will need to go deeper on some music topics for their dissertation research than we are able to accommodate within the course offerings, and so independent studies remain a final option for meeting students' needs.

### **Dean's Response**

The Dean supports the Department's response and some of the proposed courses of action, noting that the curricular revisions and any new courses need to be considered in the context over a larger framework, i.e., total course offerings. Aligning new courses with enrolment and faculty is important, as is the identification of courses that are to be discontinued. Setting clear priorities in the context of a Department vision and strategic plan will support this process.

The Dean does not support creating a new MA methodology course offered in alternating years. This will not be efficient for supporting the major research paper (MRP) preparation and could risk disadvantaging some students. Rather, the program is encouraged to consult the Graduate Council and Associate Dean, Research, who have developed a pan-AMPD PhD course/colloquium. It may be that a shared graduate methods course or courses could support the MA studies and address the need to reduce independent studies, consolidate course offerings and provide greater community and collaboration among graduate students in Music and other programs in AMPD.

### **Recommendation 3**

Consolidate the graduate requirements around the MRP, comprehensive exams, and dissertation, and revise the language requirements. Communications should be consolidated into a graduate student handbook and orientation/town hall sessions should be offered each term.

### **Program Response:**

There is considerable support within the department for removing the language

requirements in the graduate program. This change will be processed as soon as possible.

The GPD is currently working with FGS to make the requirements for the MRP, dissertation and comprehensive exams clearer for students, including more detailed written documents as well as open meetings with students to discuss the requirements.

Finally, the program plans to create a Graduate Student Handbook (online) and resume the Graduate Student Newsletter (online) that will go to all current students and alumni.

**Dean's Response:**

The Dean fully supports the reviewers' recommendation that "communications should be consolidated into a graduate student handbook and orientation/town hall sessions should be offered each term." This recommendation should be implemented immediately with the goal to have a full graduate student handbook by the end of the 2023/24 academic year.

**Recommendation 4**

Faculty engagement with the graduate program is evident in individualized supervision of students; however, a research culture for the Department could be further developed. A stronger emphasis should be placed on grant applications and research programs that further a vision for strategic research areas in the Department.

**Program Response:**

The current graduate executive is planning to provide grant writing workshops, encourage and support students' attendance at academic conferences, and promote student writing and publication. The graduate program will encourage students to become associates of Organized Research Units (ORUs) at York (eg., CFR, YCAR, CERLAC, etc.), which will further support their research interests and exposure to scholarly opportunities. Colleagues within the department will be urged to include graduate students in their own scholarly and creative endeavors to provide students with experience, modeling and contacts.

**Dean's Response:**

The Dean supports increased emphasis on collaborative and collective research activities in Music, as well as the commitment to increasing research intensity as models for graduate student. Student could also consider participating in the AMPD based ORU, Sensorium, where appropriate.

Faculty members in Music can apply for internal research grants, as well as external grants, including tri-council funding, among others, and include graduate students in this process. These grants can be used to support graduate research development. The

Associate Dean Research can facilitate connection and collaboration in research activities.

### **Recommendation 5**

More strategic partnerships could be developed with institutions and organizations within the GTA as well as with international university music programs so that students can select mobility options during their program.

### **Program Response**

This recommendation is worth investigating; however, given the priority of and time commitment demanded by the first four recommendations, it is a longer term and less urgent action. The program's connection with the Carswell Chair in Community Music has provided many opportunities for grad students to practice grant writing, developing and implementing projects with a particular stakeholder (Toronto Community Music Schools), managing of a budget, presenting their research to a less academically-oriented audience and preparing out-going reports. Further relationships of this kind are welcomed and can become a longer-term goal for the program.

### **Dean's Response:**

The Dean supports this recommendation, and notes that it should be aligned with a clearer vision and identity for the Department as forthcoming in a vision and strategic plan. Once this is completed, a list of potential partners and priority connections can be created.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS WITH RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Department-wide, relating to both undergraduate and graduate programs)**

### **Recommendation 6a**

The relationship with the Tribute Communities Recital Hall represents a seriously underfunded element of the critical academic programming in the Department of Music. The review team recommends strongly that this shortfall be addressed as soon as possible, either from within university resources or a designated development campaign to raise ongoing funds to support concerts open to the students on the wider campus and general public.

### **Program and Dean Response**

This is primarily a concern of the undergraduate program. See the Undergraduate Music FAR.

### **Recommendation 6b**

Until proper funding is secured to bring access to the Tribute Communities Recital Hall up to the bare minimum acceptable level of access, retrofitting the Martin Family Lounge for performance is a high priority.

**Program and Dean Response:**

This is primarily a concern of the undergraduate program. See the undergraduate Music FAR.

**Recommendation 7**

That appropriate resources be found to support the Digital Music initiative.

**Program Response:**

The program notes that this is primarily a concern for the undergraduate program.

**Dean's Response:**

Digital Music is the focus of a Canadian Research Chair, jointly appointed in Music and Computational Arts. Further, with the significant changes in virtually every area of Music, a greater focus on digital distribution (beyond digital creation) would be of benefit to students seeking to understand and gain competence in this changing landscape music. Potential areas of inquiry include both contemporary music production (or many genre and styles) as well as historical analysis aligned with new research methodologies in the digital humanities. Indeed, the Department of Music greatly expanded its own capacity for digital recording, production and dissemination of music during the pandemic. New areas of expertise as needed can be incorporated into the Department's vision and strategic plan and included in future complement planning.

**Recommendation 8**

The Reviewers recommend moving a position of academic advisor with music expertise into the department, to function alongside the music department staff, and to fully integrate this advisor into the fabric of the music department.

**Program Response:**

This is primarily a concern of the undergraduate program. The GPD advises graduate students and there is no need for an additional academic advisor.

**Dean's Response:**

The Dean notes that for the graduate program there is a need for clearer communications, including a graduate student handbook and regular orientations and town hall sessions.

**Other Considerations: PhD Program Pause**

The external reviewers' report notes ongoing discussions in the Music Graduate Program about the current pause on the intake of new PhD students but did not include a formal recommendation. The program and Dean provided the following comments.

**Program Comments:**

The program proposes that the two-year pause on the intake of PhD students be reduced to one year, and that a small number of excellent PhD candidates be admitted for 2024-25. The program believes it is in a good position now to continue to develop the program. First, the completion times of PhD students will be reduced by eliminating the language requirement and by making sure that the process and requirements for comprehensive exams are made clearer to students in multiple ways. Secondly, enrollment in the undergraduate program in Music has increased substantially in the past year because of sustained effort from within the department and AMPD. As of 2023-2024 there are not enough PhD students to fill all of the necessary TA positions. Finally, issues around imbalanced supervisory capacity are being addressed, as noted above.

The Department is concerned that two-year pause in PhD student intake will have a far-reaching impact on plans refocus and revitalize the Graduate Program in Music. The program is certain that within the next three years, it can regain its status as a leader in graduate education in Music .

**Dean's Comments**

The pause on PhD admissions was made in response to several factors including time-to-degree for PhD students and a lack of supervisory capacity, among others. The efforts described here to address these are very much appreciated, as are the Department's efforts to increase undergraduate enrolments and ensure that there is a reasonable balance in faculty teaching across both undergraduate and graduate teaching and supervision. The efforts so far are encouraging but need to continue for at least another year before the program can reopen. Further, if the program proposes to reopen PhD admissions and to reestablish itself as a leader in graduate education in Music, there will need to be evidence of more robust faculty research funding and contribution to major initiatives at the University. Graduate students in Music will need both support and examples of collaborative research and to be included in funded research by faculty.

Given the program's desire to restart PhD admissions, the program should prepare an outline for the specific actions the program will undertake to achieve its goal to be a leader in graduate Music education in the next three years, including both those suggested by the Department and noted by the Dean.

The chart below lays out the implementation plan approved by the Joint Sub-Committee at its meeting in December 2023.

	Recommendation	Action	Responsible for Follow-up	Timeline
1.	That the fields in the graduate music programs be consolidated to maximize York's faculty and areas of excellence.	The graduate programs will contribute to the articulation of a Departmental Strategic Vision and Plan, outlining the priorities and key areas of development, with a focus on the consolidation and streamlining of its graduate offerings, the distinctions of its graduate programs among other programs, and professional outcomes for graduate students. .	Graduate Program Director	Fall 2023/2024 and continuing as needed.
2.	That learning outcomes for the identified options in the graduate program be established and courses reviewed and refined to serve the advancing of those outcomes.	Once areas of focus have been clarified and learning outcomes refined as part of the Strategic Visioning process, the program will review and/or revisit course offerings to ensure alignment with the updated learning outcomes. Courses to be discontinued will be identified. The program will explore ways to capitalize on existing graduate offerings in the department and make more use of existing resources, including, for	Associate Dean Research, AMPD Graduate Program Director Graduate Executive	Immediate start in Fall 2023/2024

		example, the existing pan-AMPD research course / colloquium. .		
3.	That graduate requirements for the MRP, comprehensive exams and dissertation be consolidated, and language requirements be revised. Communications with students should be consolidated into a graduate student handbook.	The program will, through its Strategic Visioning exercise, consolidate requirements for the MRP, comprehensive exams, and dissertation, and develop a mechanism (for example, a graduate handbook) for clearly communicating these and other program requirements, expectations, and timelines. to students.	Graduate Program Director	Immediate start in Fall 2023/2024; completion by June 2024.
4.	That a stronger emphasis on research, including grant applications, be fostered in the Music Department.	The program will explore and report on efforts to enhance the research culture in the program, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increasing research intensity to provide models for students</li> <li>• offering grant-writing workshops</li> </ul>	Graduate Program Director Associate Dean Research	Immediate start and increasing through Fall/Winter 2023/2024

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing support for students for academic conferences and publishing</li> <li>• including students in research and other scholarly activities</li> <li>• encouraging students to join associated ORUs</li> </ul>		
5.	That additional strategic partnerships within the GTA and with international music programs be established.	Partnerships will be considered as part of the Department's strategic plan and vision exercise, after which a potential list can be developed.	Graduate Program Director Music Department Executive	List prepared to allow outreach to begin in the 2024/2025 academic year.
6.	<b>Recommendations that relate to both graduate and undergraduate programs</b>			
6a)	That support for student concerts in an appropriate space be a priority.	Refer to Undergraduate FAR	n/a	n/a
6b)	That The Tribute Communities Recital Hall be made accessible and the martin Family Lounge be retrofitted for performance.	Refer to Undergraduate FAR	n/a	n/a
7.	That the Digital Music Initiative be appropriately supported.	New areas of expertise (such as digital music and digital distribution) will be considered in the development of the Department's vision and	Graduate Program Director Associate Dean Research Director, Sensorium	To begin in 2023/2024 and ongoing.



		<p>strategic plan and included in future complement planning.</p> <p>The program will determine available resources for Music graduate students in this area, consulting with the Associate Dean, Research and the Sensorium Director as appropriate.</p>		
8.	That an academic advisor with music expertise be relocated in the Department.	Communications with graduate students will be enhanced. (see Recommendation 3)	See Recommendation 3 above	See Recommendation 3 above
9.	That the program continues efforts to support PhD students with a goal to resuming admissions to the PhD program.	In addition to the efforts described by the program, the Dean will provide guidance about additional action related to research and supervisory goals for new and continuing faculty.	Dean, Graduate Program Director	To begin in Fall 2023 and continue.

**YORK UNIVERSITY**  
Final Assessment Report

**Music, Undergraduate (BFA, BA)**

**School of the Arts, Media, Performance and  
Design**

**Cyclical Program Review – 2012 to 2022**

This Final Assessment Report (FAR) provides a synthesis of the cyclical review of the programs listed below.

**Program(s) Reviewed:**

Bachelor of Fine Arts Honours (BFA Hon)  
Bachelor of Honours (BA Hon)  
Bachelor of Arts (BA)

**Reviewers appointed by the Vice-Provost Academic:**

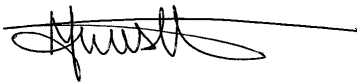
Dr. Kevin Swinden, Associate Dean, Faculty of Music-Planning and Curriculum,  
Associate Professor, Music Theory, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario  
Dr. Lori Burns, Full Professor, School of Music, Faculty of Arts, University of Ottawa,  
Ontario  
Dr. Molly Ladd-Taylor, Full Professor, Department of History, Faculty of Liberal Arts and  
Professional Studies, York University, Ontario

**Cyclical Program Review Key Milestones:**

Cyclical Program Review launch: September 15, 2021  
Self-study submitted to Vice-Provost Academic: January 17, 2023  
Date of the Site Visit: April 10-11, 2023  
Review Report received: May 17, 2023  
Program Response received: July 20, 2023  
Dean's Response received: August 23, 2023

Implementation Plan and FAR confirmed by Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance,  
November 6, 2023.

Submitted by Marcia Annisette, Vice-Provost Academic, York University



This review was conducted under the York University Quality Assurance Protocol,  
August 2020.

## **SITE VISIT: April 10-11, 2023**

The virtual visit was organized around a set of interviews with the following individuals: Vice-Provost Academic, Lyndon Martin, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies, Thomas Lobel, AMPD Dean, Sarah Bay-Cheng, AMPD Associate Dean Academic Michael Darroch and Associate Dean Research, Laura Levi, Music Chair, Karen Burke, Graduate Program Director, Stephanie Martin, and two University librarians. The reviewers met with full-time faculty in the undergraduate and graduate programs, a group of part-time (contract) faculty, undergraduate students and a group of MA and PhD students. Discussions were also held with departmental administrative staff.

The reviewers were not able to tour the physical spaces for ensemble rehearsals, teaching studios, labs or performance spaces.

## **OUTCOME:**

The Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance received the Program and Decanal responses to the recommendations and has approved an implementation plan.

A report on the progress of the initiatives undertaken in response to recommendations in general and as specified in the implementation plan will be provided in the Follow-up Report which will be due 18 months (May, 2025) after the review of this report by the York University Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance.

The next Cyclical Program Review will begin in the Fall of 2029 with a site visit expected in the Fall of 2030 or Winter of 2031.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND STRENGTHS:**

The Department of Music is one of seven academic units within the School of Arts, Media, Performance and Design (Dance; Design; Digital Media; Film; Theatre; Visual Arts and Art History). The Music Department was formed in 1969 and the undergraduate program operates interdependently with the Graduate Program in Music.

The undergraduate program creatively weaves jazz, non-Western and Western classical music into a curriculum that balances performance with scholarship and composition, which leads to a Bachelor of Fine Arts Honours (BFA Hon), Bachelor of Arts Honours (BA Hon) and Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree.

The Department self-study states that, “the undergraduate curriculum is based on performance, studies, and composition in the areas of jazz, Western art music, and world music, also including courses in contemporary improvisation, digital and film composition, music education and popular music. Rather than defining sets of prescribed paths for music majors (e.g., jazz performance), the program allows students to follow their own pathway following two years of core requirements in theory/musicianship and an overview of the cultural study of music.”

The reviewers note that the program honours principles of diversity and inclusion, introducing world music courses from the first year to decenter Western art music as the only pathway for academic study. The reviewers note, “The department’s institutional proposition to decenter western classical music within a broader study of global musics is laudable, and the infrastructure and exceptional resources of world music instruments and practitioners that the department has built over time is enviable.” The reviewers state, “York has a program that is uniquely poised in Ontario, and perhaps in the Canadian landscape, to deliver an exceptional and forward-looking music curriculum,” and recommend “that York intentionally...devote its energy and resources in a way that will position York as the model for what a diverse and decolonized music curriculum can be.” They further note, “one of York’s most distinguishing and differentiating opportunities is its enviable collection of world music instruments and the access to authentic instruction on these instruments that is available in the GTA. This is a critical differentiator for York and a resource that needs to be supported, even if there are costs associated with the delivery of the world music ensembles.”

The reviewers note that greater clarity could be provided to students to ensure that student’s expectations are well-aligned with the program’s offerings. The efforts to sustain the nine to eleven distinct specializations described by the Department are not sustainable, even though some are only minimally differentiated from each other. The reviewers suggest creating clusters as a way to reduce the number of streams and creating foundational course requirements addressing common elements of several specializations.

Regarding the three research chairs in community music, jazz, and music and computational arts, the reviewers note that these offer excellent opportunities for the Department and suggest that they be adequately mobilized and supported to attract research in these areas. New hires in the department should be supported to seek membership in the Faculty of Graduate studies and begin supervisory activities with graduate students. At the same time, the reviewers suggest that senior faculty members engage further with the undergraduate program.

In their summary, the reviewers stated, “York is blessed with an exceptional faculty complement who are deeply committed to their students and to the stewardship of a long-standing and important music program in Ontario,” noting also that part-time faculty are just as highly engaged.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The reviewers note that additional context on each recommendation can be found in the body of their report.

### **MAJOR CURRICULUM RECOMMENDATION**

#### **Recommendation 1**

The department should move toward a small set of clearly defined areas of study with additional and specific degree requirements. The areas should be broad enough in their conception to support the eclectic student body that the department values, but also with boundaries that will provide some intentionality and focus to the degree. The 24-credit core curriculum should be examined along with other course offerings.

### **Program Response**

The Department agrees that the undergraduate program should move toward more clearly defined areas of study, *short of streaming*, in order to maintain its distinctive nature. This work was begun in May 2023 and will continue while maintaining the unique, flexible nature of the degree programs. Pathways are currently visible on the website and the process of reorganizing the courses to clarify how to navigate the program will continue. The Department will examine the 24-credit core curriculum over the next two years.

### **Dean's Response**

The Dean supports the recommendation for a clearer focus and area of distinction, which was included in the previous Music CPR (2015). Given the rapid changes ongoing in the field, it will be important for the focus and future direction of the Department to align with the field more broadly and, perhaps even more importantly, with student interest and demand. This will include outlining clearer and more streamlined pathways not only through the program but also to clear career options after graduation. For example, the courses facilitated by the Music Technology hire are full in Fall/Winter 2023/24. These courses will also support other areas of the Department in terms of recording, content creation and skills needed to support a variety of potential career paths related to music.

The Department first should articulate a Departmental Strategic Vision and Plan, outlining the priorities and key areas of focus and development, focusing on a small number of clearly defined areas of study.

This process should take priority over all other actions and recommendations. With the support of the Associate Dean, Academic, it should be completed before further revisions are made to the core undergraduate curriculum or other substantial curricular revisions, including requirements regarding ensembles, future program offerings, etc.

## **MINOR CURRICULUM RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendation 2**

Ensure that all students are able to develop a portfolio of work, as outlined in Program Learning Outcome 7, perhaps by way of a required capstone experience.

### **Program Response**

Program Learning Outcome 7 is as follows: *Demonstrate a portfolio that includes evidence of work related to 21st century career paths in music, including those in education, community engagement, and/or entrepreneurial opportunities.*

The department will re-examine Program Learning Outcome 7 to potentially include a range of capstone experiences from which students may choose. These opportunities could take the form of a recital, MRP, Practicum, volunteer project, recording project, etc. The recent reduction of the requirement for courses outside of Music may create room for a required capstone experience. The Department will also consider broadening the current career development course to include relevant materials for non-jazz and non-performing-oriented students.

### **Dean's Response**

The Dean supports this recommendation. Colleagues in Music may wish to consider greater participation in existing capstone opportunities, such as the York-wide C4 course, collaboration with the Helen Carswell Chair for Community-Engaged Research in the Arts, and collaboration with the Faculty of Health. The Department can also encourage students to take advantage of the new e-portfolio in development for all AMPD students. The Music Technology position may also be able to help support students in developing their portfolios as audio recordings. These opportunities would allow Music students to document their progress throughout the program and to showcase achievements and culminating performances.

### **Recommendation 3a**

The reviewers support the department's proposal to develop a large ensemble course fully. Consideration might be given to expanding the aspiration to require ensemble participation across the first two years of the program to fully realize this potential.

### **Program Response**

The Department notes that the plan to add a three-credit ensemble requirement has been approved to begin in Fall 2023, along with the proposal to reduce the credits required from outside of the department. Over the coming year, the department will explore expanding the ensemble requirement across the first two years of the program.

### **Dean's Response**

The decision to reduce interdisciplinary studies in favour of requiring small ensembles will necessarily reduce the kind of interdisciplinarity that distinguishes Music at York and may also create curricular impediments that make it difficult for students to navigate the program requirements efficiently, a condition that has been identified as a persistent challenge for the Department, noted elsewhere in this report. This change is also at odds with the principles in the AMPD Strategic Plan, 2020-25, which was approved by

the Faculty in 2020 and serves as the guiding document for curriculum development. Enrolments should be carefully monitored and unintended effects, including graduation patterns reviewed.

The Department should consider other interdisciplinary study options, including General Education courses in AMPD, to provide the kind of well-rounded education that the Department promises.

### **Recommendation 3b**

With the addition of required ensemble courses in the core program requirements, the already minimal differentiation between the Specialized Honours BFA and the Specialized Honours BA will become even smaller. The department will realize structural efficiency and greater clarity in graduation requirements by eliminating the Specialized Honours BA and offering only the Specialized Honours BFA and the 90-credit BA program.

### **Program Response**

The department continues to lean in the direction of making greater differentiation between our BFA and BA programs and appreciates the need to make the difference between these programs more readily apparent to students. The Department's goal is to strengthen the studies aspect of BA degree, in contrast to the BFA. The recent addition of a required ensemble course to the BFA, along with the corresponding reduction in course requirements outside of Music will, in fact, increase the difference between the two degrees.

### **Dean's Response**

The Dean supports the reviewers' recommendation. It is not clear that there is sufficient demand for a separate BA music studies program, who would take this, or what the specific career outcomes would be. Reducing the program offerings to the BFA and the 90-credit exit degree option would support the streamlining and efficiency of the program recommended elsewhere. This issue should be carefully reviewed and plans for future action included in the Department's vision and strategic plan, which are to be submitted by September 2024.

### **Recommendation 4a**

Collaborate with AMPD departments to design and offer cross-coded inter-departmental courses that build on the synergies available in the larger Faculty, to satisfy requirements for courses outside of Music but within AMPD in a more meaningful way for students.



### **Program Response**

The Department recognizes the advantages of collaboration with other AMPD departments and is currently exploring potential collaborations and/or inter-departmental courses beginning with Dance, Theatre and Cinema Media Arts. Ideas for new collaborations will begin with smaller interactions as we work towards new cross-coded inter-departmental courses.

### **Dean's Response**

The Dean is supportive and encourages a proactive timeline in light of the need for learning outcomes to align with changing employment opportunities for Music students. How Music will contribute to such an initiative should form part of the Department's strategic vision plan.

### **Recommendation 4b**

Resolve the institutional barrier that prevents Music from offering Gen Ed courses and develop or identify existing courses suitable to satisfy a Gen Ed requirement.

### **Program Response**

The Music Department offers several courses that are popular and open to non-Music majors, large service '1500' series of courses taught primarily by full-time Music faculty. The Department believes that offering Gen Ed courses would offer financial stability.

### **Dean's Response**

In principle, the Dean of AMPD enthusiastically supports this recommendation. Music education is a proven benefit to university studies, in both immediately adjacent fields such as Music and Education, and Music for Health and Wellness, as well as supporting seemingly disparate areas.

General education requirements at York are determined collegially through University Senate with specific requirements outlined in a University document, and program-specific requirements set by full-time faculty members in other Faculties. The Department could work with other Departments to form a working group to develop courses and proposal for consultation with other Faculties and consult with other Faculties about potential interest.

## **RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

### **Recommendation 5a**

In consideration of improved recruitment outcomes, the reviewers recommend clarifying the message and value proposition of a York education, and continuing efforts to connect York's excellent faculty directly to potential students in the region through

outreach and inviting high-school students in for high-impact events—hearing the faculty perform live and making a personal connection is a powerful recruitment tool.

### **Program Response**

Since returning to in-person instruction recruitment levels and conversion rates have improved greatly due to the program’s collective efforts which most recently have included inviting high-school students in for several high-impact events. The Department will lean into these practices and look to continue this successful trajectory in both recruitment and conversion.

### **Dean’s Response**

These activities should be integrated into new departmental messaging, actions arising from the Department’s Strategic Plan, and AMPD recruitment strategies.

### **Recommendation 5b**

In consideration of improved retention, the department leadership is encouraged to conduct exit-surveys of all students who do not return year-over-year to better understand the push-factors that drove individual students from the program and the pull-factors that enticed them elsewhere. Results of these surveys should be examined and changes made as required to improve retention.

### **Program Response**

The faculty in the Music Department are stretched ‘very thin on the ground’ for administrative support and so while there is agreement in principle that conducting exit-surveys of students could be helpful, resources would be required both to implement, examine and make the changes required.

### **Dean’s Response**

Given the historic trends in Music, the Department should gather the relevant data on retention. Examples of feedback options include town halls and individual conversations between faculty and students, incorporating questions into short class surveys about current experience and future plans could provide insights. The Division of Students can provide assistance with retention data best practices and the development of a plan, which should be incorporated into the Strategic Vision document.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS WITH RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Department-wide, relating to both graduate and undergraduate programs)**

Recommendations six through eight are common to both the undergraduate and graduate programs.

### **Recommendation 6a**

The review team recommends strongly that the funding shortfall impacting programming in the Tribute Communities Recital Hall shortfall be addressed as soon as possible, either from within university resources or a designated development campaign.

### **Program Response**

The Music department could not agree more with this recommendation. Faculty performances constitute research; faculty performances for students constitute pedagogy; and student performances constitute a wholistic education. The Department wants to work with AMPD and Performance Facilities to find creative ways to bring down the tech personnel costs and create a protocol for faculty to use the Tribute Communities Recital Hall (TCRH) for teaching, with and without tech support.

### **Dean's Response**

Unlike other departments in AMDP, Music does not have its own dedicated performance space outside of the shared performance facilities supported by unionized staff. This results in relatively high use of the recital hall. In a typical year, the Department of Music is the largest user of the recital hall, presenting approximately 180 performances and Music-related events. Each of these requires a certain number of unionized technical staff with compensation determined accordingly.

The Dean's Office is currently conducting a review of the budget model and funding for performance facilities, including how these are supported by the Faculty and how the spaces are used by the performing arts departments, including Music. The Office is collecting data from peer institutions regarding usage of facilities for comparably sized and structured departments of Music. These data can inform our future decision-making and any future proposal for how to allocate the resources for performance facilities in the University and for the respective departments' use. These efforts may include dedicated fundraising to support facilities access or other strategies to ensure student access to facilities. The function of the Martin Family Lounge can also be reviewed in this context.

Performing at York for faculty colleagues and students has significant value for the community, including not only pedagogically but also in facilitating community spirit. However, faculty recitals for the Department community should not substitute for expectations of work in venues outside the University which can be judged in the larger professional context.

It does seem smart to create experiential education opportunities for students in music technology and audio engineering to support the highest priority uses of the recital hall, including not only Music events, but also the other uses of the facilities.

### **Recommendation 6b**

The reviewers recommend that retrofitting the Martin Family Lounge for performance be a high priority, while the issue raised in Recommendation 6 a is being resolved.

## **Program Response**

The program agrees this should be a priority. However, while the Martin Family Lounge may be appropriate for amplified music, it is not a substitute for an acoustically designed space. Un-amplified music requires specific spaces for students to properly learn how to create and project sound and this must be learned in appropriate conditions.

## **Dean's Response**

It is not clear from the review report what activities reviewers recommend holding in the Tribute Communities Recital Hall, beyond the typical 180 events presented there currently. The recent Space Audit in AMPD highlighted the need for additional student space, a need that the Martin Family Lounge (MFL) currently serves. It would be helpful to consider any proposal for changes to the MFL along with the more comprehensive plan for the Department and the interconnected resource needs in all of the performance and studio spaces. This could be included in the Department's vision and strategic plan document.

## **Recommendation 7**

If the department is committed to moving in the direction of Digital Music, appropriate resources need to be found or reallocated from existing or underperforming programs to support this initiative.

## **Program Response**

The Music Department agrees that area of Digital Music represents an opportunity for York in the Ontario landscape. It should not however be at the expense of existing programming but rather integrated and supportive to the entire program. Some additional equipment resources are immediately needed: acoustic treatment and baffles, larger microphone/stand/cable inventory. A refurbished and live sound set up for the Martin Family Lounge is noted as a priority and would also support opportunities for experiential education for those students enrolled in live sound production courses.

One major gap noted by reviewers in the core administrative team was a Designated Technologist. The Music Department urges that appropriate and sufficient resources be directed to support this initiative. A professor of music production has been hired, but maintaining resources isn't an appropriate use of that faculty member's time. A staff technologist would be very useful since the only full-time studio resource coordinator available already supports three performing arts departments.

## **Dean's Response**

The Dean agrees that resources – faculty, staff, financial – need to be allocated to this strategic direction, especially noting the changes that AI is already having in the field.

Ideally areas of collaboration and opportunities for shared will be found with Theatre, Cinema & Media Arts, Computational Arts. Increased enrolment and investment in this area with strategic budget reallocation from under-performing areas of the Department could support sustainable growth. The Department should consider this in the Strategic Vision and Plan.

In the Graduate Program Final Assessment Report, the Dean notes that Digital Music is the focus of a Canadian Research Chair, jointly appointed in Music and Computational Arts. Further, with the significant changes in virtually every area of Music, a greater focus on digital distribution (beyond digital creation) would be of benefit to students seeking to understand and gain competence in this changing landscape music. Potential areas of inquiry include both contemporary music production as well as historical analysis aligned with new research methodologies in the digital humanities. New areas of expertise as needed can be incorporated into the Department's vision and strategic plan and included in future complement planning.

### **Recommendation 8**

The reviewers recommend moving a position of academic advisor with music expertise into the department, to function alongside the music department staff, and to fully integrate this advisor into the fabric of the music department.

### **Program Response**

The Music department wholeheartedly agrees with this recommendation. An academic advisor with music expertise and a thorough knowledge of the music courses working alongside the music department staff is essential.

### **Dean's Response**

The Dean notes that this recommendation is not possible within current resourcing, nor does it follow the model of best practices for integrated student services, particularly with regard to the diverse needs of students, including not only academic but also social, financial and mental health supports among others. Other recommendations here regarding the need to streamline curriculum, outline clearer pathways, and reduce areas should help with advising.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The chart below lays out the implementation plan approved by the Joint Sub-Committee at its meeting in November 2023

	Recommendation	Action	Responsible for Follow-up	Timeline
1.	That the program move towards a set of clearly defined areas and review the core requirements as well as other courses that contribute to the program.	The Department will articulate a Departmental Strategic Vision and Plan, outlining the priorities and key areas of focus and development, focusing on a small number of clearly defined areas of study.	Department Chair, Executive Committee, Department faculty members (undergraduate and graduate) Associate Dean Academic	Strategic Vision Document to be submitted to Dean's Office by September 2024.
2.	That all students be assured of the opportunity to develop a portfolio of work.	The program will explore York-wide capstone opportunities and collaborations with other Faculties as well as the Carswell Chair for Engaged Research in the Arts. Students should be advised of the new e-portfolio being developed for all AMPD students, as well as the option for audio recording through the Music Technology position.	Chair, Department of Music Area Coordinators, Music Associate Dean Academic Carswell Chair	Information to be shared with students in Fall 2023, other developments through 2024/2025.
3. a)	That the program proceed with the required ensemble course.	The program will monitor enrolments and other student outcomes in light of the new required ensemble course. Interdisciplinary study options (other than the "in/out" credits) will be explored and	Chair, Department of Music Dean's Office.	September 2024 for initial review of outcomes. Annual review over degree cycle (four years) ongoing.

		reported on by September 2024.		
3. b)	That the program consider streamlining degree options to offer only the Specialized Honours BFA and the 90-credit BA studies program.	The program will consider streamlining the degree options as part of its strategic visioning process. .	Chair, Department of Music Music Department Executive Associate Dean Academic, as needed	Strategic Vision plan due by September 2024; implementation of potential changes to be effective Fall 2026.
4. a)	That AMPD design meaningful inter-departmental courses.	The Department will explore collaboration with other AMPD departments regarding the development of collaborative and/or interdepartmental courses. This will be included in the Strategic Vision and Plan	Chair, Department of Music Music Executive Other AMPD Department Chairs	Strategic Vision Plan due by September 2024; Implementation in Fall 2025 or as soon as approval process permits.
4. b)	That the barrier preventing Music from offering Gen Ed courses be removed.	The program will explore the possibility of collaborating with other AMPD departments to develop proposals for General Education courses to be presented to other Faculties.	Various AMPD Departments, department members Other Faculties	Proposal within 2 to 3 years, assuming there is interest from other Faculties.
5. a)	That recruitment efforts include high impact events for potential undergraduate students with a focus on personal connections.	The Department will continue recruitment efforts that have demonstrated success and work to include key messages from the new Strategic Vision and Plan.	Chair, Department of Music Chair, Audition/Recruitment Committee AMPD Communications team	2023/24: continue recruitment efforts and incorporate new messaging from Strategic Vision and Plan into recruitment efforts for Fall 2025 (activities through 2024/2025)
5. b)	That relevant data on retention be gathered through exit surveys of	The Department will explore methods for collecting retention data, including the	Chair, Department of Music Dean's Office, AMPD	Plan for inclusion in Strategic Vision and Plan, September 2024;

	student who leave the program.	possibility of consultation with the Division of Students. A plan for collecting retention data will be included in the Strategic Vision and Plan.	Division of Students	implementation through to 2025/2026.
6. a)	That funding for programming in the Tribute Communities Recital Hall be reviewed.	The Dean's Office will collect and share comparative funding models at other universities and review implementation options with Music and other performing arts departments. A plan will be created for the integration of music technology and audio engineering students to support performance facilities.	Chair, Department of Music Faculty members Dean's Office Head of Facilities Executive Officer	Information gathering and sharing through 2023/2024. Integration of plans into the Strategic Vision Plan for implementation in 2025/2026
6. b)	That the Martin Family Lounge be retrofitted for performances.	The Department will include suggestions for the Martin Family Lounge in the Strategic Vision and Plan, after consulting with other performance programs and the Dean's Office.	Chair, Department of Music Dean's Office Other performing arts programs	Information gathering and sharing through 2023/2024. Incorporate suggestions for the MFL Strategic Vision plan for Fall 2024.
7.	That resources to support Digital Music be reallocated from existing or underperforming programs.	As part of the Strategic Vision and Plan, the Department will consider how Digital Music fits with the range of program areas offered.	Chair, Department of Music Executive Committee, Music Others as determined by the plan	Strategic Vision Plan for Fall 2024; implementation of initiatives identified through 2025/2026.
8	That an academic advisor with music expertise be located in the Department.	The streamlining of programs associated with the Strategic Visioning will reduce	n/a	n/a



		confusion and facilitate clear communicationA dedicated advisor is not feasible and does not fit with recognized best practices for holistic advising.		
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**YORK UNIVERSITY**

Final Assessment Report

**Chemistry, BSc, MSc, PhD  
Biochemistry, BSc**

**Faculty of Science**

**Cyclical Program Review – 2013 to 2021**

This Final Assessment Report (FAR) provides a synthesis of the cyclical review of the programs listed below.

**Programs Reviewed:**

Chemistry, BSc, MSc, PhD

Biochemistry, BSc

**Reviewers appointed by the Vice-Provost Academic:**

Dr. Kim Baines, Distinguished University Professor, Department of Chemistry  
Western University, Ontario

Dr. Louise Dawe, Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry, Wilfrid Laurier  
University, Ontario

Dr. Mark Hayward, Associate Professor, Department of Communications and Media  
Studies, York University

**Cyclical Program Review Key Milestones:**

Cyclical Program Review launch: September 15, 2021

Self-study submitted to Vice-Provost Academic: December 1-12, 2022

Date of the Site Visit: March 13-14, 2023

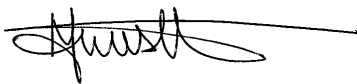
Review Report received: May 11, 2023

Program Response received: July 14, 2023

Dean's Response received: August 14, 2023

Implementation Plan and FAR confirmed by Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance,  
December 4, 2023.

Submitted by Marcia Annisette, Vice-Provost Academic, York University



This review was conducted under the York University Quality Assurance Protocol,  
August 2020.

### **SITE VISIT: March 13-14, 2023**

The virtual site visit was organized around a set of meetings with the following individuals and groups: The first meeting was with Vice-Provost Academic Lyndon Martin and the Dean of Graduate Studies, Thomas Loebel, followed by a meeting with the Chair of the Department, Jennifer van Wijngaarden, the Undergraduate Program Director, Derek Jackson, and the Graduate Program Director, Dr. Robert McLaren. The reviewers also met with Rui Wang, Dean of Science and subsequently, the Associate Dean Curriculum and Pedagogy, Hovig Kouyoumdjian, and Associate Dean Students, Mike Scheid, and the Associate Dean, Research and Partnerships, Vivian Saridakis. Meetings were held with University Librarians, Departmental administrative staff and with a group of technical staff, including the Senior Laboratory Technician, the NMR Specialist, and 5 other laboratory technicians. Faculty members focused on first year courses met with the reviewers, followed by those focused on the undergraduate program, and then those involved with the graduate program. An additional meeting slot for Faculty members was also held. Undergraduate students and graduate students met in separate groups with the reviewers. The reviewers note in their report that an in-person visit would have been preferable and that in future, meetings should be arranged with faculty teaching mandatory undergraduate program components in the Biology Department, as well as staff members. At the request of the reviewers, a written statement from Robert Tsushima, Chair of the Biology Department was provided.

### **OUTCOME:**

The Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance received the Program and Decanal responses to the recommendations and has approved an implementation plan.

A report on the progress of the initiatives undertaken in response to recommendations in general and as specified in the implementation plan will be provided in the Follow-up Report which will be due 18 months (July, 2025) after the review of this report by the York University Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance.

The next Cyclical Program Review will begin in the Fall of 2029 with a site visit expected in the Fall of 2030 or Winter of 2031.

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND STRENGTHS:**

The Department of Chemistry offers a variety of BSc Degree options in Chemistry and in Biochemistry (with Biology). In addition to the Specialized Honours BSc options in Chemistry and Biochemistry, the Chemistry Department offers a Pharmaceutical and Biological Chemistry Stream which the reviewers describe as “unique, and as such, also highlights innovative programming”. The reviewers noted, “The Specialized Honours programs are accredited by the Canadian Society for Chemistry. The goal of these programs is the development of professional chemists with broad foundational knowledge and depth in their specialized area. The second goal of these programs is to

provide experiential research activities to prepare students for lab-based post-degree programs or careers.” The Honours major and 90-credit BSc degree options offer students greater flexibility and are suited to students who may wish to pursue professional degrees in dentistry or law.

The reviewers state, “Creative and appropriate assessments are used at all levels. Special credit should be noted for the first-year teaching team, which is committed to providing students with opportunities to demonstrate problem-solving skills by including “long answer” problems on tests and final exams.” They note that the professional skills program accompanying the 4<sup>th</sup> year research course is innovative but needs further development.

Challenges were acknowledged with the Honours and Specialized Honours Biochemistry options in terms of academic advising, the matching of supervisors for fourth year research course (CHEM/BHM 4000), the scheduling of volunteer lab work required prior to that course, and the opportunity to engage in co-op placements that are coordinated through the Faculty of Science rather than the Department.

The Graduate Program in Chemistry offers MSc and PhD degrees that have been in existence since 1965. The master’s Program offers a full-time master’s degree by Research Thesis and a part-time master’s degree by course work. Generally, the master’s by Research Thesis is the predominant stream chosen by >95% of entering master’s students. The Doctoral degree in Chemistry is a full-time research program.

The reviewers note that the graduate program requirements and learning outcomes are clear and that the major research requirements support the program learning outcomes well. They noted, “The primary method for assessing graduate student achievement is through annual research evaluations which are carried out in the spring in conference-style presentations and subsequent evaluations. This style of evaluation is innovative and unique.” The preparation for these may be stressful for students, but the benefits of preparation for their defense, self-reflection on progress through the degree, enhanced presentations skills and the building of community benefit both MSc and PhD candidates. The reviewers indicate that a clear delimitation of graduate program expectations, including the time to completion, should be laid out clearly for students.

The reviewers note that faculty members should emphasize the development of professional and leadership skills, a critical component of the program for graduate students. There is generous support from the Faculty of Science and the TA union and support from supervisors.

The reviewers suggest the Department develop clearly articulated objectives for each undergraduate program. In addition, both the undergraduate and graduate program objectives related to equity, diversity and inclusivity should be developed.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout the review report, the external reviewers made thoughtful “considerations for development,” in addition to their formal recommendations. While the Department and the Dean have provided responses to these considerations, the Final Assessment Report includes only the formal recommendations and their departmental and decanal responses. The Department and the Faculty are encouraged to continue their careful evaluation of the reviewers’ considerations for development and plan for implementation where feasible. The Implementation Plan identifies this as Recommendation A. The formal recommendations and the responses from the program and the Dean are below.

The reviewers state, “The development of the three recommendations below should help to address enrolment and retention problems. Students (and staff and faculty) will see themselves reflected and valued in York’s community and will be successful at York and beyond.”

### Internal action:

#### Recommendation 1

Building on the ideas described in the Self-Study reports for the Undergraduate and Graduate Programs, the department is encouraged to develop an academic plan in consultation with stakeholders complete with a vision, mission objectives and specific action items which will guide the department over the next five years. In addition to addressing how to accomplish the actions already identified by the department, the plan should also address the following:

##### Recommendation 1a)

In consultation with external sources, develop strategic actions which will enhance the diversity of the people in the department (from students to faculty).

##### Program Response:

The Program agrees that the development of a comprehensive academic plan is a central priority now that the new Chair is in place. While the Chair established an *ad hoc* EDI committee soon after arrival, the Department will now formally establish and expand this group as the departmental Decolonization, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (DEDI) committee with a mandate to develop and lead initiatives in the Department. Members of this committee will work closely with other groups including the student recruitment committee, seminar committee, teaching committee, search committees and the student-led Working for Inclusivity (WIC) group to expand the incorporation of DEDI principles into all activities.

Dean’s Response: The Dean supports the steps taken to formally establish the new DEDI committee and suggests collaborating and coordinating with the Faculty EDI

committee.

### **Recommendation 1b)**

Embed EDI and decolonization initiatives into program learning outcomes.

Program Response:

The program agrees that this is an area in which the Department could improve. While individual faculty members have pursued DEDI principles in their classes and/or research programs, department-wide strategies will now be developed. The Department's newly struck DEDI committee will follow the published guidance on decolonizing a chemistry department (Dessent et al. 2019 J Chem Educ 99:5-9) and work to advance other aspects of equity, diversity, and inclusion within the department.

Dean's Response:

The Dean welcomes the specific actions suggested by the department. In addition to the guidance noted above, the Department should draw from the York University DEDI Strategy 2023-2028 ([Decolonizing, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy | York University](#)). All instructors should be encouraged to adopt/use the EDI-enhanced "Introductory PPT slides" and the "EDI Syllabus" for all courses, which were developed by Faculty of Science in 2022-23.

### **Recommendation 1c)**

- i. Develop one or two capstone experiential activities over and above the lab experiences offered by the current undergraduate curriculum.

Program Response:

The Department agrees that stronger partnerships between the Department and the Faculty of Science are needed to develop meaningful experiences for students. The Department supports this recommendation and suggests that it should be implemented across the Faculty of Science with other departments doing the same. The Chair of Chemistry will recruit a faculty member to serve as liaison between industry contacts, alumni and the Faculty's Experiential Learning Coordinator as part of their collegial service.

Dean's Response:

The Dean strongly endorses this significant initiative of the Department of Chemistry. Regular meetings should be held, and clear targets and measurement metrics set, with ongoing monitoring.

- ii. Partner with York's Cross-Campus Capstone Classroom (C4;

<https://www.yorku.ca/c4/what-is-c4/>) to provide students with additional opportunities to develop transferable skills and to work collaboratively with students in other programs.

Program Response:

The C4 capstone project is a relatively new offering at York, initiated in 2019. It is managed centrally by a team of faculty and staff from many different Faculties at York. With the disruptions caused by the pandemic now over, the UPD will work with the C4 team at York to promote the benefits of the program to our senior Honours major students. The Department does not expect demand to be high for this program given that it will not satisfy fourth year degree requirements in any science major.

Dean's Response:

The capstone program's objectives are to facilitate the collaboration of students from diverse disciplines and to enhance students' experiential learning experience. Faculty members should be encouraged to collaborate and oversee chemistry-related projects, while ensuring the provision of necessary space and resources to ensure the success of these endeavors.

- i. Develop a consistent schedule of professional development opportunities for CHEM/BCHM4000.

Program Response:

A new course director has been assigned to this course for the 2023-2024 year and has met with the Chair to discuss implementation of professional skills training for the coming academic year. Following an initial pilot year, a consistent schedule of both in-class and additional training opportunities will be developed for subsequent offerings of CHEM/BCHM4000.

Dean's Response:

The Dean endorses the suggested avenues for professional development and recommends coordinating efforts with the Head of Bethune College, the Associate Dean Research and the Associate Dean Curriculum and Pedagogy. The Department should explore opportunities to develop micro-credentials when a university policy has been finalized.

### **Recommendation 1d)**

Develop a research experience at the 2nd or 3rd year level to attract more students into chemical research.



Program Response:

The Department currently offers a series of one-semester research opportunities for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students in any chemistry or biochemistry program whereby students can enroll up to six times in the practicum courses CHEM 220x and CHEM 320x (zero credit courses assessed as pass/fail) which requires commitment of five hours per week of lab time. There is very little uptake for these opportunities. The Department assumes the recommendation is to develop additional 'for credit' options for students. The Department leadership will consult with faculty and student stakeholders to explore the feasibility of this request but without additional resources it will be difficult to offer research experiences to more students without jeopardizing the high quality research experiences offered through CHEM/BCHM 4000 each year. The Department suggests the Dean and Provost prioritize funding to significantly expand the number of undergraduate summer research awards available each year. Currently, the Department can support only about a dozen students (across all years of our programs) and these awards are highly competitive requiring near perfect GPAs.

Dean's Response:

The Dean agrees that the Chemistry department should explore ways to raise awareness about the practicum options and to explore the possibility to develop additional for-credit research options for students.

**Internal and External Action:**

**Recommendation 2**

Revitalize the equipment in the undergraduate laboratories. Rather than do this on a piecemeal basis, it is recommended that discussions with the Dean of Science and the Provost be held to formulate a plan for a complete overhaul of the undergraduate equipment. This should be guided by the faculty instructors of the appropriate courses.

Program Response:

The senior lab technician currently maintains an extensive, regularly updated list of all undergraduate equipment going back to 1970 with the purchase prices and expected maintenance costs for each piece. This list provides an excellent starting point for the suggested discussions with the Dean and Provost. Input from both technical staff and faculty is needed for these discussions as together, they have a broad, comprehensive understanding of the laboratory curriculum from both a practical and academic side.

Dean's Response:

A comprehensive understanding of the current functional status of all Chemistry teaching lab equipment is required, as well as the budget scope for such an overhaul of equipment upgrade. The Department should submit a plan for comprehensive

improvements to the Dean's Office.

### **Recommendation 3**

Continue to develop space and opportunities to build community.

Program Response:

In early 2023, faculty members voted to provide open access to the former staff lounge to provide a bright, comfortable space within the Chemistry Building (CB) for students to gather. The Department will explore new initiatives with the Science Facilities and ITS teams in the coming year. Current plans include minor upgrades to brighten the entrance and main floor of CB and the installation of an information monitor to advertise news and opportunities within the Department. The Operations Manager will coordinate with the Science Facilities team to add more community spaces by including seating areas that encourage people to gather. The Chair will task the Department recruitment committee and student groups to maintain current information on the many bulletin boards.

Dean's Response: The Dean endorses these endeavors and feels that fostering a sense of community within the department would enhance the overall student experience.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The chart below lays out the implementation plan approved by the Joint Sub-Committee at its meeting in December 2023.

	Recommendation	Action	Responsible for Follow-up	Timeline
A.	That the Chemistry Department consider the thoughtful considerations for development provided by the reviewers in their report as part of their ongoing plans for enhancement of programs.	The Department will consider these considerations, and act on them as feasible. The Follow-up Report should summarize actions taken on these items.	Chair, Undergraduate Program Director, Graduate Program Director	Summary of actions undertaken to be included in the Follow-up Report due May, 2025
1.	That the Department develop an academic plan in consultation with stakeholders complete with a vision, mission objectives and specific action items. In addition to actions already identified by the Department, the academic plan should include the following:			
1a)	That the Department develop strategic actions to enhance the diversity of people in the Department (from students to faculty)	The Department will continue the implementation of the departmental Decolonization, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (DEDI) committee and collaborate with the Faculty of Science committee.	Chair, Chemistry Chemistry DEDI committee	Fall 2023 and ongoing
1b)	That the DEDI initiatives be embedded in Chemistry program learning outcomes.	The department will explore the development of department-wide DEDI strategies, drawing on	Chair, Chemistry Undergraduate Program Director, Graduate Program Director,	Discussions to begin in Fall 2023 and continue. Review progress in Fall 2024.

		York's DEDI Strategy 2023-28 and report on progress by Fall 2024. The department will encourage all instructors to use / adapt DEDI resources developed by the Faculty of Science.	Chemistry DEDI committee	
1c)_i	That capstone experiential activities, beyond lab experiences, be developed.	The Department will explore the development of experiential experiences for students through stronger liaison and partnership with the Faculty's Experiential Learning Coordinator, industry contacts and alumni and report on progress in this area by Fall 2024. The Department has indicated it will appoint a faculty member to focus on this initiative.	Chair, Department of Chemistry	Fall 2023 and ongoing Review of progress in Fall 2024
1c)_ii	That the Department partner with York's Cross-Campus Capstone Classroom (C4) to provide students with opportunities to develop skills and work with students in other programs	The program will ensure students are aware of this important opportunity, and faculty members will be encouraged to collaborate and oversee chemistry-related projects. The question of satisfying fourth year requirements will be explored for Chemistry and other Science programs.	Undergraduate Program Director Associate Dean of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Science	Ongoing

1c)_iii	That a consistent schedule of professional development opportunities be developed for CHEM/BCHM4000.	The course director will develop a consistent schedule, consulting with the Associate Deans of Research, and of Curriculum and Pedagogy.	Undergraduate Program Director Course director, CHEM/BCHM 4000 Associate Dean Curriculum and Pedagogy	Fall 2023 for pilot and then ongoing
1 d)	That research experiences for 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> year level students be established	The Department will continue to promote the practicum options and explore additional for-credit options for student research courses.	Chair, Chemistry Undergraduate Program Director	Ongoing
2.	That the undergraduate laboratory equipment be revitalized with a complete overhaul.	The Department will develop a comprehensive plan for revitalization of undergraduate lab equipment to the Science Dean's Office.	Chair, Chemistry Undergraduate Program Director Senior Lab Technician	Fall 2024
3.	That opportunities and space for building community continue to be developed.	The Department will continue enhancing existing space and explore additional gathering places. The Chair will consider tasking students and faculty members with ensuring that information posted for students is kept current.	Department, faculty, and students Chemistry Operations Manager	Winter 2024 and ongoing