

## Closure of an Undergraduate or Graduate Program

### I. Program Information

Name and Type of Program	European Studies / Interdisciplinary BA programs
Home Academic Unit	Department of Humanities, LA&PS
Year Program Established	1999

### II. Enrolment Data

Insert in the table below the enrolments in the program the past three academic years.

2018-2019	6
2017-2018	7
2016-2017	6

### III. Reasons and Impact

#### 1. Rationale for program closure

The program approaches the study of Europe from an intercultural perspective, defining Europe as broadly as possible to include Eastern and Central Europe, the Balkans, south-eastern Europe, Russia and Turkey, as well as Western Europe and considers European developments over a broad chronological sweep from the Middle Ages onwards. Since European Studies is a linked Honours Interdisciplinary BA program in the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies (LA&PS), majors *must also declare a Major in a free-standing discipline* in LA&PS and must complete at least six full-course equivalents (36 credits) in their other Major and at least six full course equivalents (36 credits) in European Studies, as well as a language requirement. In addition, they must meet General Education, distribution and other degree requirements that LA&PS prescribes for Honours students. Specific degree options include an Honours (Double Major) Interdisciplinary BA, an Honours (Double Major) iBA program, and an Honours (Minor) BA.

While early assessments of the program suggested it worked, the European Studies degree program has failed to attract the number of majors that would ensure its sustainability. There are currently six majors enrolled in the degree program, two of whom are in the final year of their studies. The program has attracted only one new Year 1 student in each of the last four years. Since issues of historical and theoretical import to Europe are ubiquitous across the Humanities curriculum, and given that European Studies is not a traditional discipline that needs to be offered as a separate program, faculty members affiliated with

the program agree that European Studies should be closed and course offerings related to Europe be integrated into a new, carefully rethought Humanities Major to strengthen the academic traditions of interdisciplinary humanities and culture studies for which the Department is well known.

This proposal was approved by the Department of Humanities on October 15, 2018. (18 votes in favour, 2 abstentions.)

## 2. Alignment between program closure and Faculty and University academic plans

The University Academic Plan (2015-2020) emphasizes, among other priorities, enhanced quality in teaching and student learning, a student-centred approach, and a commitment to innovative, quality programs—all priorities shared by the Department of Humanities. While the Department continues to provide a number of high-quality small programs, there is concern that students are not best served in very small programs where they are unable to form a cohort that can support and strengthen their educational experience. As the UAP points out, given declining enrolment trends, it is also becoming increasingly important for humanities disciplines to help translate the “role of liberal arts education in a knowledge-based society” (8). The Department has, therefore, established a “Rethinking the Humanities Working Group” with a goal of increasing the diversity of the Department’s offerings to make its curriculum more relevant to students and responsive to changing local and global needs. The closure of the European Studies major provides an opportunity to rethink our European Studies offerings within a refreshed and rethought Humanities Major.

## 3. Impact of program closure on other units

There would be no impact on other units as courses forming part of the degree in European Studies are already part of the degree programs offered in other units.

## 4. Impact on courses established specifically to support program learning outcomes

One core course, *HUMA 2195 Defining Europe: Introduction to European Studies*, was established specifically to support the learning outcomes in the program. Due to low enrollment, the course has not been offered since 2016-2017. Given the wide breadth of other courses available to Humanities majors, the possible loss of this course would not affect the Department’s ability to support its overarching learning outcomes.

#### 5. Impact of closure on students currently enrolled in the program

The six students currently enrolled in the European Studies degree program will have the opportunity to complete the degree or select another major. For students who elect to continue in the degree program, completion of the degree program will be made possible through enrolment in program courses that will continue to be offered or through approved course substitutions. Advising of continuing European Studies majors will be undertaken by the Department of Humanities Undergraduate Program Director with support from faculty members who have previously taught in the program. Future students who wish to concentrate in European Studies will be able to do so through a combination of the Humanities major and electives in other units.

#### 6. Impact on faculty members affiliated with the program?

There would be no impact on faculty members in European Studies in Humanities as their courses would continue to be offered as part of the degree major in Humanities.

#### 7. What are the general implications for the diversity and availability of academic programming?

Since courses related to the European Studies program also count toward the Humanities major, the program closure bears no implications for the diversity and availability of academic programming within the department. New approaches to academic programming and diversity form a key component of the work of the "Rethinking the Humanities Working group," which is tasked with identifying new areas of creative, innovative approaches to training in the humanities.

# Closure of an Undergraduate or Graduate Program

## I. Program Information

Name and Type of Program	United States Studies Degree Programs
Home Academic Unit	Department of Humanities, LA&PS
Year Program Established	2012

## II. Enrolment Data

Insert in the table below the enrolments in the program the past three academic years.

2018-2019	2
2017-2018	3
2016-2017	N/A

## III. Reasons and Impact

### 1. Rationale for program closure

United States Studies (US Studies) is the newest program in the Department of Humanities, established in 2012-2013. The program allows students to develop an in-depth understanding of the history and culture of Canada's nearest neighbor in an interdisciplinary program combining music, film, art, literature, history, and political science. Degree options include a Specialized Honours BA (120 credits), an Honours BA (120 credits) and a BA (90 credits) in US Studies and other possibilities such as an Honours Minor, an Honours Double Major and an Honours Major/Minor option linked to other programs at York University. Requirements for the 120-credit Specialized Honours degree in US Studies include 12 mandatory core credits plus 42 credits chosen from a list of US Studies courses both from within Humanities and from other departments such as History, Political Science, Sociology, and Social Science.

Established, in part, in response to the conviction that all major Canadian universities needed a US Studies program, the program has failed to generate the interest and engagement of students as an area of program study. There are currently two majors in the program and the total number of majors has never risen above three. The program received its only new Year 1 admit in 2017-2018.

This proposal to close the program was approved unanimously by the Department of Humanities on October 15, 2018.

## 2. Alignment between program closure and Faculty and University academic plans

The University Academic Plan (2015-2020) emphasizes, among other priorities, enhanced quality in teaching and student learning, a student-centred approach, and a commitment to innovative, quality programs—all priorities shared by the Department of Humanities. While the Department continues to provide a number of high-quality small programs, there is concern that students are not best served in very small programs where they are unable to form a cohort that can support and strengthen their educational experience. As the UAP points out, given declining enrolment trends, it is also becoming increasingly important for humanities disciplines to help translate the “role of liberal arts education in a knowledge-based society” (8). The Department has, therefore, established a “Rethinking the Humanities Working Group” with a goal of increasing the diversity of the Department’s offerings to make its curriculum more relevant to students and responsive to changing local and global needs. The closure of the US Studies program provides an opportunity to rethink our US Studies offerings within a refreshed and rethought Humanities Major.

## 3. Impact of program closure on other units

There would be no impact on other units as courses forming part of the degree in US Studies are already part of the degree programs offered in other units.

## 4. Impact on courses established specifically to support program learning outcomes

The core course *HUMA 2325 Introduction to US Studies* has not attracted enrollments and there is no full-time faculty available to teach it on a regular basis. It has not been offered since 2016-2017. In addition, given the small number of majors, the 3000-level core course, *HUMA 3920 6.0 Themes in US Studies*, has never been offered.

## 5. Impact of closure on students currently enrolled in the program

Students currently enrolled in the US Studies degree program will have the opportunity to complete the degree or to select another major. For students who elect to continue in the degree program, completion of the degree program will be made possible through enrolment in program courses that continue to be offered or through approved course substitutions. Advising of continuing US Studies majors will be undertaken by the Department of Humanities Undergraduate Program Director or the Chair. Future students who wish to concentrate in US Studies will be able to do so through a combination of the Humanities major and electives in other units.

## 6. Impact on faculty members affiliated with the program?

There would be no impact on faculty members in US Studies in Humanities as the courses they teach would continue to be offered as part of the degree in Humanities.

7. What are the general implications for the diversity and availability of academic programming?

Since any Department courses related to the US Studies program also count toward the Humanities major, the program closure bears no implications for the diversity and availability of academic programming within the department. New approaches to academic programming and diversity also form a key component of the work of the “Rethinking the Humanities Working group,” which is tasked with identifying new areas of creative, innovative approaches to training in the humanities.

# Closure of an Undergraduate or Graduate Program

## I. Program Information

Name and Type of Program	Multicultural and Indigenous Studies
Home Academic Unit	Department of Equity Studies
Year Program Established	2013

## II. Enrolment Data

Insert in the table below the enrolments in the program the past three academic years.

2017/18	[ # enrolled ] 20
2016/17	[ # enrolled ] 12
2015/16	[ # enrolled ] 26

## III. Reasons and Impact

1. Provide the rationale for the closure of the program.

In response to enrolment declines and the changing environmental climate related to student demand and interests, and taking into account ongoing collegial discussions since 2014 and various decanal interests and requests, the Department of Equity Studies (DES) has sought to increase the clarity and coherence of its programs as well to better differentiate program offerings. Accordingly, DES has been pursuing major curricular reform by introducing a new program of Indigenous Studies and embarking on a restructuring of the Multicultural and Indigenous Studies (MIST) and Human Rights and Equity Studies (HREQ) programs through a collegial and consultative process.

The proposed closure of the MIST program, the transfer of former MIST courses to the HREQ program, and the creation of a stand-alone Indigenous Studies (INDG) program will support new and progressive ways of thinking; excellence in teaching; a commitment to inclusivity and diversity; leadership in innovation and socially relevant research; outreach and partnerships both locally and globally; and a compelling commitment to interdisciplinarity and social responsibility. The proposed changes incorporate the MIST courses on diaspora, race, and multiculturalism into the HREQ program, creating a more balanced Human Rights and Equity program overall. Additionally, strengthening the equity component of HREQ not only provides a logical focus but serves to differentiate HREQ courses from those in law, anthropology, social work, education, sociology, humanities, etc. These changes will enhance innovative pedagogies and greater student engagement in learning. Overall, these reforms are consistent with the recommendations from the former and current dean related to simplifying curriculum and program complexity.

2. Comment on the alignment between the closure and Faculty and/or University academic plans.

The closure of MIST and realignment of its courses into clearly articulated HREQ and Indigenous Studies offerings reflect and enhance the commitment by York University and the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies to social justice. This sharpening of curricular focus on contemporary issues of equity and social justice is in keeping with the university's commitment, as outlined in the Strategic Research Plan, 2013-2018, to "[advance] social justice and [provide] a lasting legacy of benefits to cultures and societies". It also reflects a commitment to "forging a just and sustainable world," one of the university's six key research themes. As well, the range of disciplines that these revised curricular offerings engage with support the 2010-2015 University Academic Plan's (UAP) "deep and thoroughgoing commitments to interdisciplinarity" (p. 3). Lastly, the closure of MIST to allow for a stand-alone Indigenous Studies program aligns with the principles of *The Indigenous Framework for York University: A Guide to Action* (2017).

3. Does the closure affect other programs / units? If yes, describe the impact of the closure on them.

The closure strengthens HREQ and INDG but does not affect other programs. The closure and incorporation of courses provides strength, academic integrity, balance, and a clear definition of our two distinct programs. The impact is positive, creating a well-defined program of Human Rights and Equity Studies whereby both 'equity' and 'human rights' are equally emphasized.

4. Are there courses that were established specifically to support the learning outcomes of the program? If so, describe the status of those courses after the closure of the program.

Because the majority of MIST courses were created prior to the program learning outcomes exercise of 2012, there are few if any offerings that were established specifically to support the MIST learning outcomes. However, many of these former MIST offerings will cover off major credit requirements in both the HREQ and INDG programs.

5. Describe the impact of the closure on students currently enrolled in the program, including an outline of the provisions for students to complete it, the timelines and availability to transfer credits to other programs.

The impact of the MIST closure on students is negligible; in some instances, MIST majors are welcoming the opportunity to transition into a stand-alone Indigenous Studies program. Overall, the number of MIST majors is extremely small and DES will accommodate these individuals by grandparenting, as well as via transfer credits and directed readings.



6. What is the impact on faculty members affiliated with the program?
7. What are the general implications for the diversity and availability of academic programming?

The diversity and availability of academic programming is not only preserved but enhanced with the closure of MIST and the transfer of courses to HREQ and INDG. HREQ was bereft of equity courses with a preponderance of human rights courses. The incorporation of the MIST courses into HREQ and Indigenous Studies is pedagogically sound. As the CPR Reviewers commented:

“...for ... HREQ reform to be successful, and for MIST’s reincarnation as Indigenous Studies to provide a coherent program of study, both programs need to return to basics and reflect on their core mission, their central and sustaining themes, the types of students they hope to attract, and the likely trajectory of those students through their York experience and beyond. Individual pieces of the programs’ structure – courses, streams, minors and majors, the contents of honours, and so on – will only make sense within a stronger defining framework”.

With the closure of MIST, the launching of INDG, and the revitalization of HREQ, our goal is to provide students with precisely the “stronger defining framework” they need to develop their skills as social justice practitioners, critical thinkers, and equity champions in a world that increasingly needs such expertise.