

YORK UNIVERSITY

Final Assessment Report – Executive Summary

FRENCH STUDIES

Liberal Arts and Professional Studies

Undergraduate Programs (BA, iBA)

Certificate of Proficiency in French Language

Cyclical Program Review – 2012 to 2020

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

Program(s) Reviewed:

BA, iBA

Certificate of Proficiency in French Language

Reviewers appointed by the Vice-Provost Academic:

Dr. Normand Labrie, Interim Dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), Professor, Department of Curriculum Teaching and Learning, University of Toronto

Dr. Maria João (MJ) Dodman, Chair, Department of Languages, Literatures & Linguistics, Associate Professor, York University

Cyclical Program Review Key Milestones:

Cyclical Program Review launch: September 19, 2019

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

Date of the Site Visit: October 4, 2021

Review Report received: December 17, 2021

Program Response received: March 21, 2022

Dean's Response received: May 30, 2022

Implementation Plan and FAR confirmed by Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance, September 2022.

Submitted by Alice Pitt, Acting Vice-Provost Academic, York University



This review was conducted under the York University Quality Assurance Protocol, August 2013.

SITE VISIT: October 4, 2021

The visit was organized around a set of virtual interviews with multiple stakeholder groups that included:

- Vice-Provost Academic Lyndon Martin
- Dean of LA&PS JJ McMurtry, Associate Dean Programs Sean Kheraj, and Associate Dean Teaching and Learning Anita Lam
- Associate Dean Research and Open Scholarship and Librarian (University Libraries) Jack Leong
- Chair of the Department Marilyn Lambert-Drache
- Undergraduate Program Director Luke Arnason
- Full-time and contract faculty members
- Staff
- Students

The visit was conducted entirely via Zoom as a result of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. As such no facilities were seen by the reviewers.

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 February 2024).

The next Cyclical Program Review will begin in the Fall of 2027 with a site visit expected in the Fall of 2028 or Winter of 2029.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND STRENGTHS:

The undergraduate program in French Studies (BA; Honours Major BA; Honours Specialized Major BA; Honours Double Major BA; Honours International BA or Honours Minor BA, plus a Certificate in French Language Proficiency) is anchored in language learning and requires that students also receive an introduction to both linguistics and literature. Each domain ensures that students acquire a solid foundation in the discipline of French Studies. The language courses are mainly offered in the lower years and the linguistics and literature courses in the upper years.

The mission of the Department of French Studies, as presented in the Self Study, is “to excel in preparing students to be effective life-long learners of French, to acquire the skills in critical thinking and effective communication that will prepare them to face the complexity of the future while benefiting from the quality of faculty members’ research and scholarship, innovative teaching, and participation in service to York University”

(Self Study, p.7). The department conducted a re-visioning exercise in 2018-2019 that provided an opportunity to build on the above and articulate a vision that highlights the importance of a) offering programs that meet students' personal, professional and academic objectives for the 21st century and b) promoting French and the knowledge of francophone cultures and societies as essential skills for Canada's citizens and global leaders of today and tomorrow.

The reviewers commented that the mission and vision of the Department of French Studies are well defined and could serve as an inspiration for the further development of the program in the years to come. They believe that ongoing development to realize the vision could make it a thriving program, especially if a strong focus is put on the goal of meeting students' personal, professional, and academic objectives.

In spite of the enrolment challenges facing the program, the quality of incoming students remains very strong. The program is still attracting high quality students. The reviewers also noted that students expressed appreciation for the small class format, the sense of connectivity and community, and the range of skills they acquire in the program. Students also value the program's broad representation of the francophone world, the diversity of the faculty members, and as well as the encouragement offered to students by the professors.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The chart below lays out the implementation plan approved by the Joint Sub-Committee at its meeting in September 2022.

	Recommendation	Action	Role Responsible for Follow-up	Timeline
1.	Connect the areas of scholarship of future hirings to the new orientations the program might take.	Complete the faculty complement plan in consultation with the Associate Dean, Faculty Affairs	Chair, French Studies; Associate Dean, Faculty Affairs	December 2022: Complete faculty complement plan
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt future curricular innovation needs to students' and labor market needs Reduce the structural rigidity of the program Offer more flexibility for students Ground programs in evidence-based knowledge of emerging student populations and labour market needs. 	Proceed with the structural changes to the sequencing of courses and credits to address degree progress and completion time, and re-think the program using student-centered curriculum design, introducing career-relevant skills, and meaningful work-integrated learning opportunities.	Chair and UPD, French Studies; Associate Dean, Programs, Associate Director, Faculty Curriculum; Associate Director, Experiential Education; Director, Teaching Commons; Director, Career Education & Development	<p>December 2022: Chair and UPD to consult with Associate Dean, Programs and Associate Director, Faculty Curriculum on potential program changes</p> <p>Department to submit program modifications for structural changes to sequencing of courses and credits</p> <p>Program to have arranged consultations with Teaching Commons, Career Education & Development, and LA&PS Experiential Education</p>

3.	<p>Consider strategies for streamlining the language certificates and/or consider a new certificate that provides professional language and cultural competence in-line with recent government calls for micro-credentials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue current curriculum development work on certificates • Formally close certificate in French for Business • Proceed with expansion of online courses in French Studies and consult with Director of Strategic Enrolment Management on future course planning and online learning • Consult with Associate Dean, Programs and Associate Director, Faculty Curriculum about micro-credentials and standalone certificate options 	<p>Chair and UPD, French Studies; Associate Dean, Programs; Associate Director, Faculty Curriculum; Director, Strategic Enrolment Management</p>	<p>October 2022: Consult with Associate Dean, Programs and Associate Director, Faculty Curriculum regarding micro-credentials and standalone certificate programs (including online certificate in Professional French).</p> <p>November 2022: Consult with Director, Strategic Enrolment Management regarding online course planning (via normal course planning exercise).</p> <p>December 2022: Submit proposal for French for Global Leadership minor program to Faculty curriculum committee.</p>
4.	<p>Establish French as a career-ready program by offering internships, placements and co-ops, and paid summer-term and short placement opportunities within Canada.</p>	<p>Collaborate with colleagues from other language programs on the development of a work-placement course to provide students with work-integrated learning opportunities and help bridge the skills that they gain in the French Studies program with practical work experience. Explore whether the course could</p>	<p>Chair and UPD, French Studies; Associate Dean, Programs, Associate Director, Experiential Education.</p>	<p>End of Fall 2022: French Studies program should discuss potential development of cross-listed work-placement course with other language programs and consult with Experiential Education Office.</p>

		also be used to expand career relevant skills.		<p>Potentially apply for LA&PS Experiential Education Development Fund support.</p> <p>End of Winter 2023: Submit new course proposal to Faculty curriculum committee.</p>
5.	Develop targeted recruitment strategies specific to French in order to highlight not only the role of a second language, but in particular the role of French as an official language in Canada.	Consult with the Associate Dean, Programs, the Director, Strategic Enrolment Management, and the Assistant Director, Student Recruitment to review recruitment opportunities and develop additional recruitment tactics.	Chair and UPD, French Studies; Associate Dean, Programs; Director, Strategic Enrolment Management; Assistant Director, Student Recruitment	End of Fall 2022: Chair and UPD, French Studies to meet with Associate Dean, Programs, the Director, Strategic Enrolment Management, and the Assistant Director, Student Recruitment to discuss recruitment tactics.
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider making new hires to bring renewed energies and fresh ideas to the program that could complement the work of more seasoned colleagues. Include part-time faculty in collegial governance and establish strategies to create a sense of inclusion 	<p>Create multi-year DFS hiring plan and participate in annual call for complement requests.</p> <p>Proceed with the measures outlined in the program response, that:</p> <p>a) The governance document be amended in order to bring clarity on the questions of committee membership, voting rights etc.;</p>	<p>To be led by Chair DFS in consultation with Dean's Office.</p> <p>To be led by Chair and UPD, French Studies; possible consultation with Associate Dean, Faculty Affairs</p>	<p>End of 2022: Create hiring plan and participate in annual call. Amend department governance documents</p> <p>End of Winter 2023: Hold department retreat Hold first team-building meeting</p>

		<p>b) A retreat (mandatory for all DFS members) be organized on “inclusivity in the workplace”;</p> <p>c) Contract faculty be invited to contribute to all initiatives to enhance the virtual presence of DFS;</p> <p>d) Contract faculty be invited to participate in ‘projects’ and activities directly related to their experience;</p> <p>e) Team-building meetings be organized on an annual basis, preferably before the beginning of the F/W academic session.</p> <p>Optionally, the Department can also reach out to the Associate Dean, Faculty Affairs to consult and obtain feedback based on the experiences of other units.</p>		
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