



# BA and MA in Communication Studies

## Annual Implementation Report

Submitted by: Jonathan Finn  
On: May 7, 2014

**Recommendations from 2012-2013 Final Assessment Report**

<b>Recommendation: discuss resource implications of an expansion of the MA program and the establishment of a PhD program.</b>	
<b>Responsibility: Department, in consultation with the Dean of Arts and the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.</b>	<b>Implementation Date: September 2014</b>
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: The Department formed a committee in late Fall 2013 to produce a feasibility study around the prospect of a PhD program and/or the expansion of the MA program. Part of that study will include a full analysis of resource implications.	
FGPS Decanal Response: I look forward to receiving the results of this study and the decision of the program on whether to move forward with a doctoral program.	
PRS Comments: The committee looks forward to receiving an update on this in next year's report.	

<b>Recommendation: expand Department's multi-campus presence through discussions with Brantford programs, Journalism in particular.</b>	
<b>Responsibility: Department</b>	<b>Implementation Date: June 2014</b>
<b>Additional Notes: Provide Dean of Arts with written account of discussions.</b>	
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: We have yet to formally meet with representatives from Brantford. The Department is concerned with the development of programs in Brantford that have obvious overlaps with Communication studies, such as the switch from Journalism to Digital Media and Journalism and the newly proposed BFA program and advertisement for a tenured position in Game Design and Development. Dr. Jonathan Finn has arranged for meetings with Dr. Sue Ferguson, Coordinator of Digital Media and Journalism and Dr. Kathryn Carter, Inter-Faculty Associate Dean and author of the Game Design and Development proposal for May 2014.	
There is no written account of the discussions to the Dean at this stage.	
Arts Decanal Response: There needs to be an explanation of why consultation has not as yet taken place. Also, the department needs to be clearer about the nature of its concerns. "Overlap" might be seen as an opportunity for collaboration- or might be the basis for a	

"protecting my turf" claim. Which is it here?

PRS Comments: The committee acknowledges that these consultations may have taken place since the submission of this report and looks forward to hearing the outcome of the consultations and any subsequent action taken in next year's report.

<b>Recommendation: discuss possible expansion of fund-raising initiatives.</b>	
<b>Responsibility: Department, in consultation with Development and Alumni Relations.</b>	<b>Implementation Date: June 2014</b>
<b>Additional Notes: Provide written report to the Dean of Arts.</b>	
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: The Department discussed this after the release of the cyclical review report and while we are happy to assist people from Development and Alumni, we will let their office take the lead in this area as we failed to find evidence that identifies fund-raising as part of our job.	
The written report to the Dean is attached to this document.	
Arts Decanal Response: The CA does not prohibit faculty from fund raising, and so of course the recommendation is legitimate. Generally, all departments need to take a more active role in fundraising and I would recommend that the Department be asked to report on their fund raising initiatives annually.	
PRS Comments: The committee encourages the Department to communicate directly with the Dean with regard to this recommendation. Please provide an update in next year's report.	

<b>Recommendation: revise undergraduate orientation materials and expand initiatives in the areas of marketing and recruitment for the graduate program.</b>	
<b>Responsibility: Department, in consultation with Recruitment and Admissions and FGPS.</b>	<b>Implementation Date: June 2014</b>
<b>Additional Notes: Provide written report to the Dean of Arts.</b>	
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: We are participating in the Faculty of Arts various 'Think' campaigns and have also been active in contacting prospective students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels (via phone, mail and e-mail). The Department also developed the position of	

Social Media Officer – held by one of our MA students – to create and populate a Communication Studies Facebook Page and Twitter account. These are both now active.

The written report to the Dean is attached to this document.

Arts Decanal Response: The department has indeed cooperated and collaborated with the Dean’s Office in developing the Faculty’s new branding campaign. As well, setting up and maintaining a Facebook Page and Twitter account for CS students is an important step forward, and something that can serve as a model for other departments.

FGPS decanal response: We have not received a request for assistance with marketing and recruitment for the graduate program. The FGPS communication coordinator would be pleased to meet with the graduate coordinator.

PRS Comments: The committee recommends that the Department meet with the Communications Coordinator in the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Please provide an update on these initiatives in next year’s report.

**Recommendation: develop at least two online courses per year for the next three years.**

**Responsibility: Department, in consultation with the Dean of Arts.**

**Implementation Date: September 2014**

**Additional Notes: Some courses should be courses required for CS majors. Interim report on progress to Dean of Arts by June 2014.**

Progress to Date (check one):

Completed

In Progress

Other (please explain):

Unit Response: In a follow-up meeting with Dean Carroll, it was agreed that the Department should work towards developing one on-line course during the 2013-2014 year. Dr. Jeremy Hunsinger has been developing this course as a 300-level course on Internet Studies. That course will go through the formal curriculum committees of the Department, Faculty and Senate during the 2014-2015 year.

The Interim report is attached to this document.

Arts Decanal Response: My recollection is a bit different. I did say that if two courses/year was too much of a jump, we could slow things done for now and develop 1 course/yr for the first few years. I did expect, though, that one course would have been developed and finished in 2013-14 (and so by now) and that another would be underway by Fall 2014. I recommend that the department embrace a renewed commitment to online learning and commit to have 2 online courses developed and approved in time for Fall 2015, and another 1 or 2 developed and approved in time for Fall 2016.

PRS Comments: We look forward to an update on the progress made on this recommendation in next year’s report.

<b>Recommendation: review of elective courses offerings.</b>	
<b>Responsibility: Department</b>	<b>Implementation Date: June 2014</b>
<b>Additional Notes: Provide written report to the Dean of Arts.</b>	
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: The Department Curriculum Committee does this annually and has completed its examination of our elective offerings. The CS Curriculum Committee is developing a substantially revised list of electives to ensure that the courses listed are regularly offered and closely affiliated with our curriculum. The revisions will be put forward to the FoA Curriculum Committee in Fall 2014.	
Arts Decanal Response: Hard to evaluate until I see the suggested revisions.	
PRS Comments: The committee views this recommendation as "in progress" rather than completed and would like an update in next year's report.	

<b>Recommendation: discuss establishment of a peer mentoring program.</b>	
<b>Responsibility: Department</b>	<b>Implementation Date: June 2014</b>
<b>Additional Notes: Provide summary of conversations to the Dean of Arts.</b>	
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: The Department noted that we do have a peer mentoring program (though not formalized) through the use of 4 <sup>th</sup> year Instructional Assistants in our large first-year courses. A more formalized approach could be combined with a Residence Learning Community; however, after extensive discussion the Department has decided to suspend the RLC until we can address several problems with it that were identified over the past year. During the 2014-2015 year we will look to develop a more formal peer-mentoring program as possibly combined with a reimagined RLC.	
Decanal Response: I don't think that IA's are what the Reviewers had in mind in suggesting that the department establish a peer mentoring system, and would encourage the department to bring forward a proposal that is independent of IA's and a Residence Learning Community (which at best reaches only a very, very small percentage of CS Majors).	
PRS Comments: Please provide an update in next year's report.	

**Additional Recommendation from the Program Review Sub-Committee:** At its November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013 meeting, Senate Academic Planning approved the following motion: “that the Senate Academic Planning Committee, on the recommendation of the Program Review Sub-Committee, approve the inclusion of a university-wide recommendation on each Annual Implementation Report that, prior to the next cyclical review, the program develop a means for assessing program learning outcomes.” A full explanation of the rationale behind the motion can be found here:

[http://legacy.wlu.ca/documents/56385/PRS\\_Recommendation\\_for\\_Annual\\_Implementation\\_Reports\\_SAPC\\_Nov\\_11\\_2013.pdf](http://legacy.wlu.ca/documents/56385/PRS_Recommendation_for_Annual_Implementation_Reports_SAPC_Nov_11_2013.pdf)

The committee recommends that the Department begin having conversations about program learning outcomes assessment and put together a strategy for collecting and presenting evidence of this assessment in its next cyclical review.

**Additional Comments (Unit):** At the close of the Winter 2014 term, the Cultural Studies Program developed an MOU with Communication Studies and has since merged with the Department. The full extent of that merger, including programming implications, will be taken up at a Departmental retreat in summer 2014.

The certain but as yet unknown implications of the IPRM and SMA processes have had a stagnating effect on the Department. We anxiously await the conclusion of these processes and direction from the University before making any substantive changes or proposals as related to our programming.

**Additional Comments (Dean(s)):**

Arts: Generally, I’m somewhat disappointed by the Department’s response to the recommendations made by the reviewers, and suggest that the department needs to engage those recommendations more wholeheartedly in 2014-15.

FGPS: I am interested in the department’s ambivalence about developing a doctoral program, and would appreciate some discussion of their plan. They mention that they undertook a feasibility study last fall, but I have not received any results. I also have not received the written “report to the dean” mentioned in this report even though it does apparently address graduate matters.

**Additional Comments (PRS):** The committee shares the Deans’ concerns with the overall Department response to, and the lack of progress made on, implementing the recommendations. The PRS expects to see further progress and follow-up on the recommendations in next year’s report.