

English and Film Studies 2018 Implementation Report

Submitted By: Robin Waugh, Chair, Department of English and Film Studies

Date: May 23, 2018

Recommendation to be Implemented ¹	Responsibility for Implementation	Anticipated Completion Date	Additional Notes
<p>Recommendation #8: Create an online presence for English and Film Studies and improve website.</p> <p>Recommendation #9: Advertise the MA Practicum widely and stress its uniqueness.</p>	<p>Department Chair and appropriate Department Faculty; Department Administrative Assistant</p>	<p>April 31, 2017</p>	<p>Elements of these two recommendations can be implemented in stages.</p>
<p>2017 Comments</p> <p>2017 Unit Comments for #8: Completed. The new website has become operational. The content of the website was written in September of 2016, and I have recently written updates, which CPAM has received. I have taken training in how to revise personal profiles. Appropriate updating will be ongoing.</p> <p>2017 Unit Comments for #9: Completed. The website and graduate guidebook now advertise the Practicum.</p> <p>2017 FOA Decanal Comments: This recommendation has been successfully fulfilled, although the additional suggestions by the Acting Dean of FGPS are well taken.</p> <p>2017 FGPS (Acting) Decanal Comments: I would encourage the English Dept. to highlight the Professional Skills Option at the MA level in recruitment efforts, and to gather data from students who have completed the course in order to offer testimonials to potential students. I would also encourage the department to continue to seek and cultivate community partners who might augment possible work placements and offer additional settings in which students might apply their skills. Additionally, I would encourage them to make contact with Development and Alumni Relations to determine if funds can be fund to pay students undertaking this course a minimal honorarium.</p> <p>2017 PRS Comments: The committee considered Recommendation #8 to be completed, but in the context of the FGPS dean's comments, would appreciate an update on evidence of the implementation of #9 in next year's report.</p>			
<p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other </p>			
<p><u>2018 Unit Comments for #8: Completed.</u> The new website has become operational. The content of the website was written in September of 2016, and updates have been ongoing. The presence and profile of the Department on social media in general has increased, with presentation of our Literature Matters event and other events on Facebook and the department's blog. Individual Department members also continue to maintain and develop their own social media</p>			

¹ Note: related recommendations have been grouped together as they appear in the Final Assessment Report.

presence, while the Department's blog continues to be ably managed by Dr. Eleanor Ty and Dr. Sandra Annett. These two faculty members together with Dr. Andrea Austin now form the Department's Liaison and Promotion Committee, tasked with reaching out to high schools, maintaining a strong social media presence, and promoting the Department's programs outside the university. The Hollywood Conference in May received extensive media coverage. I have recently talked to Dr. Alex Latta about the Department joining the C3 Innovation Labs Initiative. Film Production courses would be particularly suitable to providing students work in labs that are designed to link with the community at large.

2018 Unit Comments for #9: Completed. The website and graduate guidebook now advertise the Practicum. Testimonials were sought, and students continue to sign up for the practicum program. We continue to work with community partners in order to develop further internships and placements, and we have attracted high-quality placements that the students respond to positively. This last year, we also experimented with on-line ads on YouTube (Google) concerning the Graduate Program, with its practicum. I am afraid any efforts to drum up honoraria that could be used to pay students for their work were unavailing; the Department will keep on trying to seek out additional funding sources.

2018 FOA Decanal Comments: I concur that both of these recommendations are now completed. I would recommend that the department engage with the new Combine initiative, as developed through the office of the Associate VP: Teaching and Learning, especially in relation to the Film Studies program.

2018 FGPS Decanal Comments: I applaud your successes at growing your media presence through the Liaison and Promotion Committee. The outreach efforts and events like the Hollywood Conference benefit the program in multiple ways. I encourage the department to consider whether the online ads were effective. I have no specific recommendation about the google ads since 1 year is a single data point, but the results were disappointing. I commend the department on their ongoing efforts to find internships and placements for their students.

2018 PRS Comments: The committee considered this recommendation to be completed, and no further reporting is necessary.

Recommendation to be Implemented	Responsibility for Implementation	Anticipated Completion Date	Additional Notes
<p>Recommendation #10: Reassess the recent plethora of new courses to the curriculum in light of decreased numbers of tenure stream and Contract Academic Staff.</p> <p>Recommendation #12: Rethink MA and PhD streams to better articulate what differentiates WLU (e.g. MA practicum), PhD with Film Studies focus.</p> <p>Recommendation #13: Revise the Research Methods course further to introduce SSHRC/OGS workshop, add other professionalization seminars with a focus on alt-academic careers.</p>	Department Chair and appropriate Department Faculty	January 31, 2017	The Department should continue its progress in relation to these recommendations.

2017 Comments

2017 Unit Comments for #10. Completed and Ongoing. Any curriculum recommendations have been superseded by recent changes in enrollments patterns. In a retreat in August and at a subsequent special meeting of the English Program, the Department's offerings were completely reassessed with demand in mind, though it has become increasingly difficult to predict enrollment patterns for English courses in senior years. In first year, the Department was gratified to see the first need to increase tutorials due to all first-year courses being full to occur in several years. Due to the apparent popularity of our first-year offerings in particular, it was decided not to change these. Several Special topics courses have been introduced, with a view to regularization if these prove popular. For the first time, the Department also polled majors and non-majors in order to assess student desires, needs, and goals, and how well the Department's offerings were satisfying these. The results of this polling will figure in future decisions with regard to curriculum. The Department has started to cycle many courses that were typically offered each year. These measures should allow for further rationalization of curriculum.

2017 Unit Comments for #12: Completed. The Department's Graduate Studies Committee and Department in Council held meetings on this subject and in the end the Department decided to keep the titles of its graduate programs and the streams the same. Several proposed changes were discussed, but none of these represented the academic disciplines covered by Department members as well as the current titles and streams. The Department is promoting the Practicum fully, now that it is a regularized and not a pilot program.

2017 FOA Decanal Comments: The Department should consider implementing an overall strategy of deleting some courses when new courses are added. Cycling courses is a good approach, but can only be taken so far if the number of new courses added begins to significantly outpace those removed from the Calendar. Although a "one in, one out" method is too mechanical, a more general and flexible policy could be undertaken without significant negative impact on student choice.

2017 FGPS (Acting) Decanal Comments: Fields for graduate programs are increasingly seen as outdated. I would encourage the department to think more broadly about how it might differentiate itself, with a further view toward professionalization, e.g. via exploring partnerships with local colleges in offering an MA plus a graduate diploma or postgraduate certificate, or by exploring options for a Co-op with Laurier's Co-op office. I would also encourage the department to think in terms of broad competencies which professors might offer students rather than narrow areas of specialty. Last but not least I would encourage the program to look toward the ASPIRE program as ways of building professionalization opportunities into discrete course offerings.

2017 PRS Comments: All of the recommendations in this category are related to a curricular review of course offerings and areas of specialization within both the undergraduate and graduate programs. The committee would appreciate an update in next year's report on any curricular initiatives undertaken by the department in relation to data from the student poll that is mentioned above, as well as efforts to promote the practicum component of the graduate program.

☐ Completed ☐ In Progress ☐ Other

2018 Unit Comments for #10. Completed and Ongoing. Extensive review of our English curriculum this last year at DiC meetings has resulted in many major changes. We used the polling of English and other Arts students to help in these actions. The most important change is the new Minor/Concentration in Creative Writing. This document meant the development of several new courses together with the strategic situating of others within the structure of the

Minor/Concentration. Several revisions of the proposal document took place based on extensive feedback from all important stakeholders, including students. This new program, which Laurier is lucky to be able to launch due to the strong commitment of three uniquely qualified faculty members in the Department, has passed all approval processes and will be ready to go in September. We continue to revise curriculum based on enrollments patterns. In several DiC meetings, the Department's English offerings were completely reassessed with demand in mind, though it has become increasingly difficult to predict enrollment patterns for English courses in senior years. In first year, the Department decided to offer EN119 Reading Fiction each term, because this course seems to provide English with the most majors. A course that seems to be less popular was removed from the first-year cycle, as was another, which seems to attract mainly senior students. Several senior courses were slated for a wider (3-year) cycle, and one senior course was deleted. A complete review of Film courses is also underway, and several Film courses were replaced with new ones that fit the Film Program's aims more precisely. The special topics courses introduced this last year have proved popular, and regularization of these, together with further innovation, is planned. EN190, An Introduction to Academic Writing, continues to be very popular both inside and outside of the faculty. All sections so far scheduled by the department will be taught by full-timers this coming year—a very positive development. Further rationalization of curriculum will continue in coming years.

2018 FOA Decanal Comments: Although the efforts made by the department to reassess its offerings are useful, and partially address the issue raised in Recommendation #10, it is important that such evaluation remains ongoing. If a significant number of Special Topics course are moving towards regularization, there should be an equally significant effort launched to delete classes that either no longer attract students or that are unnecessary for degree patterns. As noted in my comment of 2017, while a “one in, one out” approach is not necessary, serious consideration should be given to a parallel process of addition and subtraction. A more specific report on exactly which courses are intended to be regularized, and which courses might concomitantly be removed, would be helpful, and could be presented to PRS in a subsequent report.

2018 FGPS Decanal Comments: I support the efforts to assess and revise course offerings both with internal input (DiC) and input from other departments. The changes outlined seemed primarily to try and optimize enrolment and contain cost by adjusting course offerings and rotations. That being said, it is unclear if any courses have been deleted. In fact, there seems to be additional offering of special topic courses with an eye toward regularization. I recognize that it is difficult to remove courses, but there are 40 courses listed in the calendar. 23 of them have not been offered in the past 3 years. In addition, 10 special topics courses were offered in the same three-year span. A substantial pruning of courses seems warranted.

In 2017, the department considered recommendation #12 and decided to keep the current structure. I encourage the department to consider application numbers and conversion rates to make sure that the current structure is attractive to large numbers of potential applicants.

2018 PRS Comments: Comments provided by both the department and the dean suggest that there is further work to be done in the area of course review. The committee would appreciate an additional update on this recommendation in next year's report, identifying specifically which courses have been regularized and deleted.

Recommendation to be Implemented	Responsibility for Implementation	Anticipated Completion Date	Additional Notes
Recommendation #16: Design and initiate linkages between Communications and English and consider how the English program Writing Minor might operate as a required course within multiple faculties.	Department Chair	April 31, 2017	Consultation with the Chair of Communication Studies, and between the relevant faculty in both departments, will be necessary.
Recommendation completed (2017).			

PRS Comments: The committee appreciates the diligence and efficiency with which English & Film Studies has implemented the recommendations prioritized out of its 2015-2016 cyclical review. All but one of the recommendations is now considered to be completed, but the committee would appreciate an update on progress on this outstanding recommendation next year.

Subsequent Report Required? Yes ☒ No ☐