



University of Alberta Quality Assurance Suite of Activities

Faculty of Arts: Academic Program Reviews

Excerpted Reports 2017-2018

Department of Drama

Programs Reviewed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bachelor of Arts in Drama ● Bachelor of Arts in Drama (Honors) ● Combined Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Education in Drama ● Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting ● Bachelor of Fine Arts in Design ● Bachelor of Fine Arts in Technical Theatre ● Bachelor of Fine Arts in Stage Management ● Master of Arts in Drama ● Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Voice Pedagogy ● Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Practice ● Master of Fine Arts in Directing ● Doctor of Philosophy in Performance Studies
Review Dates	April 3-5, 2018
Reviewers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dr. Warwick Dobson, Committee Co-Chair (Undergraduate), University of Victoria ● Professor Robert Gardiner, Committee Co-Chair (Graduate), University of British Columbia ● Dr. Clive Hickson, Internal Member (Undergraduate), University of Alberta ● Dr. Denise Hemmings, Internal Member (Graduate), University of Alberta ● Dr. Jill Carter, External Member (Graduate and Undergraduate) University of Toronto ● Dr. Margaret Kemp, External Member (Graduate and Undergraduate), UC Davis



Outcome

The External Review Committee was clear to point out a sizable evolution which is occurring within the Canadian theatre landscape which includes growth in diversity of Canadian dramatic literatures and forms; numerous festivals of performing arts with hybrid business models; the export of successful original Canadian plays, dance, musicals, and performance work across international borders; Canadian theatre institutions and granting agencies now programmed for diverse audiences and support the work of artists from non – Eurocentric communities and forms; and that many community colleges are now offering similar programs previously only available at universities.

Despite this shifting landscape, the External Review Committee acknowledged that the Department of Drama is proactively aware of these changes and that they, with the help of alumni, community partners, and industry, have been active in addressing them both within curriculum as well as pedagogy, with an expectation that the Department of Drama would be undertaking a strategic review planning process under leadership of the new chair and to plan for a sustainable future.

The External Review Committee concluded that the Department of Drama, as one of Canada's premier drama programs, provides students with incomparable facilities, faculty who are knowledgeable and generous with the time they devote to students, and a strong network of local practicing theatre artists who are frequently invited to contribute their expertise to the various undergraduate and graduate programs that are offered by the Department of Drama.

Program Strengths

- Drama's facilities remain the envy of Canadian drama/theatre departments
- Student satisfaction across all programs is impressive
- The introduction of the Combined Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Education in Drama has been a positive innovation. Current enrolment is healthy and trends indicate a continuing interest in this program.
- All of the BFA programs are characterized by a sharp focus on professional standards; a high number of BFA graduates continue to secure employment in prestigious producing houses across Canada.
- The curriculum, outcomes, and alumni careers are consistent with those at comparable North American institutions and are of high quality.

Opportunities for Program Improvement and Enhancement

The committee made several key recommendations:

- Undertake a thorough curriculum and resource planning review to ensure that the



Department of Drama's programs are consistent with recent and ongoing developments in professional theatre in Canada and to ensure long term program identity and sustainability. This process should include undergraduate and graduate students. The Faculty of Arts should be engaged in this planning activity in regards to faculty renewal and resource planning.

- Notwithstanding faculty confidence that the programs offered by the University of Alberta and McEwan University are distinctive, close monitoring of new initiatives by McEwan University is recommended. Retention of the academic integrity of the Department of Drama's programs is essential.
- To meet the need for greater diversity in the program, Drama might wish to explore increasing Indigenous presence and could creating opportunities for meaningful collaborations with Indigenous groups.
- There should be an effort towards greater involvement of student representatives in certain aspects of departmental business.
- The Department of Drama should build on the success of previous and ongoing faculty projects working with diverse communities and schools, engaging more graduate students in projects that strengthen ongoing relationships both within and outside the University.

Implementation Plan

In response, the Faculty made the following commitments:

- Under the direction of the new Department Chair, the Department of Drama will undertake a strategic planning exercise by 2020 which will address faculty renewal, resources, and curriculum. This process will include participation and feedback from Drama's students as well as the Faculty of Arts.
- The Department of Drama will continue to carefully monitor any new initiatives at nearby colleges and universities. Maintaining a faculty base of excellent scholars and practitioners is essential to attracting students to the University of Alberta over smaller institutions.
- The Department of Drama has recently created an Indigenous Theatre course and has hired an indigenous faculty member who is mentoring all current Indigenous students and will be pursuing SCHRCC funding to create an ongoing Indigenous Dramaturgy program working with Workshop West Theatre.
- The Department of Drama values student participation in governance and will continue to review ways to include students in departmental initiatives.
- The Department of Drama has created a relationship with the Citadel Theatre for MFA directing students and with Workshop West for MA students and MFA Theatre practice students. The Department of Drama will encourage faculty to look for opportunities for students to engage in projects outside the University and to collaborate with other departments.



Department of English and Film Studies

Programs Reviewed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bachelor of Arts in English ● Bachelor of Arts in Film Studies ● Bachelor of Arts in English (Honors) ● Bachelor of Arts in Film Studies (Honors) ● Master of Arts in English and Film Studies ● Doctor of Philosophy in English and Film Studies
Review Dates	April 9-11, 2018
Reviewers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dr. Siân Echard, Committee Co-Chair (Undergraduate), University of British Columbia ● Dr. Chris Andersen, Internal Member (Undergraduate), University of Alberta ● Dr. Carin Irr, External Member (Undergraduate and Graduate), Brandeis University ● Dr. Liz Bohls, Committee Co-Chair (Graduate), University of Oregon ● Dr. Normand Boule, Internal Member (Graduate), University of Alberta

Outcome

The External Review Committee recognized the Department of English and Film Studies' international reputation for its teaching and research by highlighting the Department's innovative and productive leadership in research and pedagogy, while pointing to "the strong and illustrious history" of the graduate program in English.

That established success notwithstanding, the undergraduate program has been challenged by the declining enrolments faced by all Departments of English in North America, diminished faculty renewal, and the balanced maintenance of several distinct programs (Literary Studies, Film Studies, and Creative Writing).

In the External Review Committee final report, two main issues emerged for consideration including the collaboration between program areas within the Department, and the continued Indigenization of the curriculum.



In response, the Department of English and Film Studies and the Faculty of Arts committed to planning a facilitated retreat designed to encourage inclusive and strategic decision making among its members.

Program Strengths

- The volume and range of faculty research and publications
- Sophistication of graduate course offerings on a wide range of topics
- Favorable comparison to three distinguished comparator institution (the University of British Columbia, Rutgers University, and the University of Toronto)
- The Department's efforts to Indigenize its curriculum, its student body, and its faculty cohort have been impressive

Opportunities for Program Improvement and Enhancement

The committee made key recommendations:

- That closer structural integration/alignment of the Department's three programs—English, Film Studies, and WRITE—is ill-advised and should not be prioritized as a departmental goal.
- Consider reducing the size of the PhD program.
- Bring alumni working in careers outside academia to campus regularly for workshops and networking with students.
- Provide PhD students with more pedagogical support.
- Establish a resource bank of teaching materials for PhD students.
- Move the Colloquium to the beginning of year three of the PhD curriculum.

Implementation Plan

In response, the Faculty made the following commitments:

- The Faculty of Arts has committed to providing support for a strategic retreat for the Department of English and Film Studies to further examine the roles and status of teaching staff in the Department; the graduate program in English and balancing M.A. intake with PhD intake; professional development; and ongoing curricular revision and program streaming.
- The Department has already initiated plans to reduce the PhD program in alignment with the committee's recommendation.
- The Department will consider engaging alumni as a regular component of graduate student training.
- The Department will review ways to enhance pedagogical support for PhD students, the establishment of a resource bank of teaching materials for PhD students, and will consult with students on moving Colloquium to the beginning of year three of the PhD curriculum.



Department of Music

Programs Reviewed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bachelor of Arts in Music ● Bachelor of Arts in Music (Honors) ● Bachelor of Music in Composition and Theory ● Bachelor of Music General Route ● Bachelor of Music in Performance ● Combined Bachelor of Music/Bachelor of Education (Elementary) ● Combined Bachelor of Music/Bachelor of Education (Secondary) ● Master of Arts in Music ● Master of Music in Performance ● Master of Music in Composition ● Master of Music in Choral Conducting ● Doctor of Music in Performance ● Doctor of Music in Composition ● Doctor of Music in Choral Conducting ● Doctor of Philosophy in Music
Review Dates	November 21-23, 2017
Reviewers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dr. Jeffrey Stokes, Committee Co-Chair (Graduate), University of Western Ontario ● Dr. Fred Cohen, Committee Co-Chair (Undergraduate), San Jose State University ● Dr. James Deaville External Member (Undergraduate and Graduate), Carleton University ● Dr. Patricia Green, External Member (Undergraduate and Graduate), University of Western Ontario ● Dr. John Burge, External Member (Undergraduate and Graduate), Queen's University ● Dr. Janice Causgrove Dunn, Internal Member (Undergraduate), University of Alberta ● Dr. Patricia Manns, Internal Member, (Graduate), University of Alberta



Outcome

The External Review Committee commended the Department of Music for its robust engagement as an active, productive, vital, and excellent program at the University of Alberta. The Department of Music's programs successfully and tangibly demonstrate the dissemination and expansion of the art form of music in Edmonton and beyond through its distinguished history of music-making and scholarship.

Confronted by changes in faculty density and complement, a challenging physical site, and other common trials facing arts and other non-STEM post-secondary programs, the External Review Committee encouraged the Department of Music to seek a revised direction for itself, which could include a comprehensive visioning exercise with identified outcomes that would position the Department of Music for future accomplishments of even greater excellence and achievement.

Program Strengths

- Consistent, positive feedback from students in relation to faculty member engagement.
- Strong library resources and holdings.
- The programs offered by the Department of Music attract high-calibre students from around the world.
- The Graduate Handbook provided to students and faculty is very well written and provides clear guidelines for the program.
- The graduate faculty members are dedicated to research, publications, recordings, public concerts, recitals, as well as composer commissions and performances.
- Tri-Council funding of current faculty members is impressive.
- Strong community outreach and cooperation with local arts organizations.

Opportunities for Program Improvement and enhancement

The committee made several recommendations:

- The Department of Music is strongly encouraged to amplify its student recruitment efforts including the development of a recruitment strategy.
- Undergraduate and Graduate course offerings should be more predictable.
- Ensure appropriate work and study space for graduate students and address security issues in the Fine Arts Building and the Old Arts Building.
- If Convocation Hall remains the Department of Music's main performance and recital venue, it must undergo extensive renovations to address such issues such as capacity and acoustics.
- Consider a formal graduate student mentorship program to augment FGSR professional development requirements.
- The Department is encouraged to explore the possibility of a hire in Indigenous music



studies.

In response, the Faculty made the following commitments:

- The Department of Music and the Faculty of Arts committed to a comprehensive strategic visioning exercise to envision the future of the Department of Music's curriculum, course offerings, student recruitment, academic advising and mentorship, faculty complement and renewal, and teaching and learning spaces.
- The Department of Music committed to undertaking a review of timetabling for undergraduate and graduate courses, with a pilot on track for 2018-2019.
- In partnership with the Graduate Music Students' Association, the Department of Music will plan several annual meetings between graduate students and faculty to foster a greater sense of community across the diverse student body.
- The Department of Music committed to ongoing review of its curriculum.
- The Department of Music acknowledged considerable challenges posed by aging concert space, a lack of work and study space, and deferred maintenance, but committed to working with the University and the Faculty of Arts on ensuring student safety and security.