

Internal Academic Review 2005-2006
Department of Film and Media and the Stage and Screen Studies Program
Internal Academic Review Committee Report to Senate

The Internal Academic Review (IAR) of the Department of Film and Media (formerly Film Studies) and the Stage and Screen Studies Program is now complete. The Internal Academic Review Committee (IARC) has taken into consideration all of the submissions related to the IAR of the Department of Film and Media and respectfully submits the following report. The IARC Report to Senate is intended to supplement the findings of the attached Review Team Report and to provide a mechanism for the Head of the Department and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science to jointly report on the progress to date in addressing the Review Team recommendations (please see the “Outcomes” section of this report). Normally the External Consultants Report (see attached) would not form part of the public documentation but the IARC has requested and obtained permission from the External Consultants to include their report with the IARC Report to Senate. Furthermore, the IARC met with the Head of the Department of Film and Media and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science at Film House to gain additional insight.

Summary of the Internal Academic Review of the Department of Film and Media and the Stage and Screen Studies Program

The Department of Film and Media offers well-respected and distinctive concentrator programs, including the Stage and Screen Studies program. Faculty are well known for their research and film production and the Unit is to be congratulated for its continuing efforts to form interdisciplinary collaborations of various kinds with cognate Units. The Internal Academic Review Committee (IARC) can attest to the ambience of Film House, likely a direct result of the combined energy, dedication and mutual respect of its occupants.

The IARC focused its discussions on an assessment of “the quality and suitability of the academic endeavours”¹ of the Unit in the following key areas:

Academic Programs: As noted by the external consultants, the Department of Film and Media is to be commended for its leadership in interdisciplinary activities at Queen’s since its inception in the late 1960s. The IARC encourages the Department of Film and Media to continue its interdisciplinary focus through participation in the proposed

¹ Senate Internal Academic Review Policy

Cultural Studies graduate program, development of courses with broad appeal for non-concentrators and contribution to the planning of the development of the proposed Arts Campus at the Tett Centre. The IARC concurs with the Department's belief that students should have the opportunity to learn to approach media with an informed and critical eye. The IARC suggests that these efforts will position the Department well to maintain enrolment or to encourage growth at the undergraduate or graduate level if so desired by the Department and Faculty in the future.

The Department of Film and Media sees its distinctive strength as offering an education that integrates critical studies with production. Nonetheless, the IARC agrees with reviewers' suggestion that the Department may well benefit with a clearer articulation of this distinctiveness, both to attract the best students and to garner the attention the program deserves within the Queen's and broader community. It is recognized that a fundamental challenge for the Unit is keeping the production component current in a constantly changing and evolving digital age. The IARC suggests that the Unit will need to carefully monitor the production component and respond quickly to maintain currency of the program.

Scholarship and Research: The IARC agrees with reviewers that the evaluation of teaching and research productivity for members in creative arts programs requires both flexibility in the systems in place and a clear understanding of the unique parameters used for teaching evaluations and research productivity.

The IARC appreciates the unique place the Department of Film and Media holds within the University and concludes the Department is well placed to thrive during what is anticipated to be period of change in the coming years.

**Outcomes of the Internal Academic Review of the
Department of Film and Media and the Stage and Screen Studies Program**

*Joint response submitted by the
Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science and the
Head of the Department of Film and Media and the Stage and Screen Studies Program*

The Faculty Office recognizes the important role that graduate education can play in attracting excellent faculty and students and supports in principle FILM's interest in a graduate program and in the cultural studies graduate program that is under discussion. At the same time, a graduate program would require new space, new production facilities, and supervisory time from faculty members—things that the IAR recognizes are in short supply.

FILM's proposed move to the new Arts Campus next to the Tett Centre will help ensure a renewal of the department's teaching and production spaces as well as afford the department the opportunity to act on some of its goals regarding curriculum development and the possibilities of the changing media world. Over the past few years the Faculty Office has undertaken to support FILM's equipment needs and will continue to do so in the future. A custom designed, more up-to-date location will go a long way towards dealing with the main issues raised in the IAR regarding space and facilities.

Follow-up on these recommendations and issues will take place during annual budget and staffing strategy meetings between the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science and the Vice-Principal (Academic)

Attachments:

Review Team Report

External Consultants Report

**REPORT OF THE INTERNAL ACADEMIC REVIEW TEAM
FOR FILM STUDIES**

Team members: Caroline Baillie
 Kevin Cooke
 Rosemary Jolly
 David McConomy, Chair
 Vince Sacco
 Haley Shanoff
 Richard Webb

March 1, 2006.

Purpose

The Queen's University protocol is to perform an internal academic review of every program in the University once every seven years. The review is not based on any perceived need for review in any program, but as a necessary step to maintain the highest academic standards in all programs.

The internal academic review team is not presumed to have any specific expertise in the area under review but is intended to bring a Queen's University perspective to the process. A group of External Consultants is commissioned to perform a review of the program as part of this process. The external consultants are selected for their program-specific expertise and submit a report as part of the evaluation process. (Appendix A)

The department invests a considerable amount of time and energy in preparing its own internal review document. In this case, a three volume report was produced which presented departmental views of the current status of the department and possible future directions. In our view, this document was both extensive in its coverage and enlightening in terms of the issues it brought to our attention.

Approach

In its first meeting the members of the internal academic review team decided that we were not interested in simply performing a bureaucratic function by reviewing and approving work done by others, i.e., the external consultants and the department; rather, we intended to have real input to change, if change were needed. To accomplish this end, we decided to engage in a full round of meetings and discussions with every constituency of the Film Studies Department.

As a result, we met with the external consultants, the faculty, staff and students in separate sessions and conducted a full tour of the facilities. The meeting with students was attended by four students from various years at which they presented the results of a Student Forum, that had been attended by about thirty students, and the Minutes of a Meeting of the Stage and Screen students, which was attended by about fifteen students. These discussions were very informative: we suggest that the Faculty respond to the specific concerns raised by the students in their reports. (Appendix B)

We met with the Film Studies staff to get their perspective on the Department. They were unanimous in their praise of the Faculty and their dedication to the best interests of the students. Their overriding view was that the Department is a tight knit group, which shares a mutual respect but is underappreciated by the University as a whole.

In our meeting with Faculty, virtually every Faculty member attended and expressed their views openly and with great candor. In general, they are content with the operation of the Department but expressed some concern in specific areas – concerns that we have captured elsewhere in this report.

Our team also met with the current head of the Department, Clarke Mackey and with Blaine Allen, his predecessor. Their views are well documented in the Department's Internal Academic Review Report, but we were able to get a better understanding of the dynamics of the Department from them.

After discussions among the team we have prepared this report in an effort to further the objectives of the University in maintaining and improving the quality of the Film Studies Program.

Initial Impressions

While the members of the internal academic review team were not selected for their expertise in the area, many of the members had first or second hand knowledge of the program and their initial impressions of the program were borne out by our own observations and those of the external consultants.

The Queen's University Film Studies Program is a well respected program based on critical thinking with some exposure to film production. The faculty in the program have achieved significant recognition for their research and film making activities and many are viewed as experts in their chosen field of endeavour. The program has accomplished many firsts in its history, and has an impressive list of accomplished alumni.

Within the department there is a mutual respect among members, both faculty and staff, and, seemingly, a genuine affection for each other. The students were very complimentary regarding the faculty and the interest that they have shown in the work and accomplishments of the students. The staff were viewed as being most helpful and willing to assist wherever a need arose.

The facilities, however, belie the accomplishments that the program has achieved over the years. Film House does not lend itself to the pursuit of excellence or the quiet contemplation required for scholarly research. There is a certain ambiance about Film House that most faculty, staff and students wanted to preserve. This has to do with the individuality of the space and the way in which it forms a physical manifestation of the uniqueness of the film studies community at Queen's. This aspect we wholeheartedly endorse. However, to the extent that the physical space is vastly insufficient in size and quality to support the current activities of the Department, major improvements are essential for the program is to sustain its current record of achievement.

Conclusions and Recommendations

We have reviewed the report of the external consultants and believe that the report has captured many of the essential elements of the Film Studies Program. The recommendations made in that report are consistent with our findings and go far beyond our areas of expertise in many of the specific areas relating to curriculum and pedagogy.

In addition to the external consultants report, there are a number of issues on which we want to comment and about which we wish to make recommendations. These issues are essential to enhancing the experience of everyone involved in Film Studies at Queen's.

Graduate Studies

At the moment, there is no graduate program in Film Studies. Several years ago, approval was granted for such a program, but undergraduate enrollment increased significantly and the necessary human resources to introduce graduate courses was not available. We concur with the external consultants that a graduate program is an essential component of this program, both in terms of attracting the best faculty and the best students, and maintaining a reputation for excellence. We would recommend that the necessary steps be taken to provide the resources to enable the graduate program to be implemented at the earliest opportunity.

The faculty expressed support for a "cultural studies" MA, which would tie into the cooperative efforts of other departments. We believe that this bears investigation. A Masters of Arts Administration, in conjunction with the School of Business, was suggested, as there is significant interest in this field. Since the School of Business is well regarded within the business community, their efforts, coupled with the excellent reputation of the Film Studies Department, would produce graduates with a well respected, specialized degree.

Facilities

Film House, in its current configuration, has definitely outlived its viability as a place to house the program. Apart from the inadequacy of space for various aspect of the program, the physical facilities seem to pose a danger to faculty, staff and students. We observed water leaks, physical deterioration and dangerous overcrowding conditions. From a safety perspective, we were concerned that the University might be liable for substantial loss in the event of a mishap.

On the other hand, we wish to go on record as saying that the creative ambiance that is present at Film House is something that the University should strive to maintain or duplicate when new facilities are contemplated. We know that a new Arts Campus is being proposed and that the Film Studies Department has endorsed it. However, we would encourage the University ensure that the new facilities have an ambiance that is suitable to the creative efforts of the Film Studies Department as well as possessing the required physical attributes.

In selecting a new facility, emphasis should be placed on ensuring that each department to be housed within the facility has appropriate and adequate space, as additional changes will likely not happen for some considerable time.

Students expressed concern about locating the Film Studies Department in a location that is remote from the rest of the Queen's Campus. In a practical sense, transportation would be an issue and could result in a reduction in the cross pollination of ideas as students from other Faculties or Departments would be discouraged from taking Film Studies Courses.

Equipment

The equipment available to students and faculty is inadequate. Budgetary restrictions and university wide regulations have proven to be a major impediment to upgrading and improving equipment quality. Faculty expressed the opinion that the "latest and greatest" technology was not necessarily required to hone one's movie making skills, but some improvements were required. We agree with the external consultants' recommendations that a specific line item be incorporated into the budgeting process to ensure that funds are available on an annual basis to improve and maintain the equipment available in the program.

We observed some very specific examples where students were required to operate with makeshift arrangements for lighting and animation because the facilities and equipment were not available to them.

Interdisciplinary Studies

We believe that one of the elements that can make the Film Studies Program one of the best available is co-operative activities with other disciplines throughout the University. Some efforts have been made in this area, but these efforts seem to be sporadic and based on individual professors' interests and efforts. We would suggest that a concerted effort be made to increase the number of interactions that take place between Film Studies and other departments and faculties to enhance the experience of the students across campus. We would also encourage the department to better publicize its efforts in offering interdisciplinary courses so that students are fully aware of what is available.

The students indicated that they did not feel fully welcomed by the Drama Department and, because of their unique status in Film Studies, did not feel that they truly belonged in either department. More effort should be made to include Film Studies students in acting projects and more Drama students in film projects.

Student Feedback/Evaluations

The Faculty indicated that they believed that the current Student Evaluation system at Queen's (USAT) did not properly reflect their performance, as the approach is best suited to "lecture" type courses rather than fully interactive courses as are more the norm in

Film Studies. Likewise, the Faculty expressed concern over their own merit evaluations within the University structure as their research and academic work does not fit into the normal guidelines. They believed that the University should more closely track the guidelines of the Film Studies Association of Canada for evaluating their performance.

Balance of Theory and Production

The external consultants drew our attention to the fact that there was ongoing discussion internally about the balance between Theory and Production in Film Studies. They are of the opinion that many schools are moving to increased emphasis on production, while Queen's is renowned for its emphasis on Theory. In their view, Queen's should maintain its current emphasis on the Theory aspect of Film Studies, with an element of Production, rather than moving more to the Production aspects of the area, which would put us in full competition with many other universities who have better facilities and equipment than we do.

This emphasis on Theory also relates to the evaluation methods for faculty mentioned above and further emphasizes the need to incorporate the guidelines of the Film Studies Association of Canada for evaluation purposes.

Scheduling

One of the issues raised by the students that needs some attention is the problem of class scheduling. Many of the Film Studies courses are five hours per week in order to accommodate screenings. As a result, it is often very difficult for students to schedule course from other faculties into their schedule. Or, conversely, while there are efforts being made to attract a cross-section of students from various disciplines, scheduling makes it difficult, if not impossible, to take the range of courses being offered. We understand that this is a University wide problem, but special efforts should be made to co-ordinate the course offerings and the schedule to make it possible, if not easy, for students to take the desired courses.

Co-ordination of Efforts

In our meeting with students, some concern was expressed about the co-ordination of course content to ensure that all students received a common base of knowledge in their early years in the program to ensure that, in later years, they each had the maximum opportunity to participate in the learning experience in more advanced courses. We see this as a valid, but not unusual concern, of students who take similar courses from different professors over their academic careers. We would state, though, that faculty must pay attention to the thrust of the overall program and not simply to their own courses.

This issue is closely tied to establishing a pedagogical vision for the Department, which is a University wide issue being addressed through the establishment of a Teaching and Learning Strategy for the University.

Student Guidance

In our meeting with the students, we learned that there is not an “Honours” meeting at the end of their third year of studies to inform them of the admission process for the Honours Program. We believe that this is an essential part of the program and might explain why some 4th year courses are undersubscribed. We would encourage the Department to institute such an “Honours” meeting.

University Support

The impression that we received in speaking with many of the participants in the review, especially faculty and the external consultants, is that the cognitive areas of the University do not receive as much financial support as is generally assumed, or is necessary, to maintain the high standards that are expected of them. In many ways, these areas provide a window on the University from the outside world because of their interactions with the local and national arts’ communities. Knowing full well that the University is facing major financial constraints of its own, we would like to encourage the University to revisit the role that is played by these areas to ensure that adequate funding is provided to them. Because this has been an historical strength of Queen’s, it is possible to see how it may have been neglected over the past decade. Nevertheless, continued downloading of resource constraints to the cognitive disciplines will have a negative effect on the university as a whole in years to come.

Note of Appreciation

We would like to express our thanks to everyone involved in the review process as everyone made us feel most welcome. Our meetings with Faculty, Staff and Students were very enlightening and enjoyable, and made the task of performing our review infinitely easier.

Our overall impression, at the end of our review and the analysis of our findings, is that the Film Studies Department is performing its tasks remarkably well given the constraints that it is facing. The department is a credit to the University because it has been able to establish and maintain a reputation for excellence in the film world that transcends the Canadian context.

External Consultants Report
Film Studies Internal Academic Review

Appendix A

March 1, 2006.

I. INTRODUCTION

Background

During the summer of 2005, Vice-Principal Academic Patrick Deane commissioned an academic review of the Department of Film Studies and the Program in Stage and Screen Studies at Queen's University. While not restricting the scope of the review, the External Consultants were requested to consider the following: program objectives, admission requirements, curriculum, teaching, evaluation of student progress, level of achievement, equity, human resources, physical and information resources, financial resources, societal context, learning and program outcomes and faculty profile.

Given the short duration of the site visit, the team of consultants was not in a position to make specific recommendations in all of the above areas. However, we believe that recommendations contained herein will provide a framework for addressing all of the above issues as well as others noted by the team.

Members of the Team of Consultants

- Dr. Michelle Citron, Northwestern University
- Dr. Sheila Petty, University of Regina
- Prof. Owen Shapiro, Syracuse University

Consultation Process

The consultation process consisted of two phases:

1. Review of background materials provided by Queen's University which included: Unit Self Study (in 3 volumes), various course syllabi, Faculty of Arts and Science 2005-06 Calendar, written submissions from the Film Studies Department Student Forum and Stage and Screen Studies students.
2. A site visit during November 7-8, 2005 which included interviews with Academic Vice-Principal Patrick Dean, Dean Robert Silverman, Associate Dean Jamey Carson, members of the Internal Academic Review team, faculty, staff, students as well as a tour of the library and the programs' physical facilities.

The consultants especially want to thank Vice-Principal Patrick Dean, Dean Robert Silverman, Associate Dean Jamey Carson, Department Head Clarke Mackey, Nancy Cutway, the Internal Academic Review team, and all the students, faculty and staff with whom we met for their forthrightness, insights, and hospitality during the site visit.

Based on the information received, we have prepared this report with observations and recommendations. We are in unanimous agreement with the material contained herein.

II. CONTEXT OF FILM STUDIES AND STAGE AND SCREEN STUDIES AT QUEEN'S

Film studies at Queen's University began in 1967, during a period in which film and theatre professions in Canada emerged as part of a project of nation-building founded on national film and drama with defining aesthetic standards. This was an argument of the Massey Commission: that the mature nation is known by its representations, and that artistic excellence requires disciplinary mastery. The numerous film and drama programs that subsequently emerged in universities across Canada grew into an array of contesting models, with some offering BFAs, others BAs, and still others certificate or non-degrees in community colleges as was typical of film programs in North America. Queen's was ahead of its time for two reasons: 1) it was the first autonomous Department of Film Studies in Canada by 1969; and, 2) as early as the 1970s, it worked with other departments across the university to promote complementary interests and to broaden the range of programs available to students. In a sense, the department was a champion of interdisciplinarity long before this practice became a wide-spread and accepted phenomenon. While the department has evolved considerably since its inception, and has graduated some of Canada's top-flight film industry professionals, it is currently experiencing a period of little or no growth in numbers of majors and is at a sort of crossroads where it can no longer clearly define what makes it a unique program with national distinction.

III. ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

i. Governance and Leadership

Mission, Focus and Identity: It became obvious during the site visit that the department is undergoing an identity crisis and needs to re-examine its mission. Its vision as a critical studies program with a production component has become blurred by a growing pressure and interest among some faculty and students to expand the role of production. This direction would require significant investment in facilities and equipment. The wisdom of this direction, given the strength of other Canadian universities in production, would be questionable. That said, production is a critical element of a strong academic film program. Production creates better academics and many of the students go on to jobs in the field. Historically, Queen's overall reputation, along with the department's high profile faculty members and solid program, was enough to entice any prospective film student to Kingston to pursue a BA or BA (Hons) in film studies. The Department embraces the Faculty of Arts and Science's "vision of a broad undergraduate experience that fosters the capacity for judgement and critical thinking" and shares the philosophy that they are not simply training students to go into the industry. Hence, the current system of a BA with limited production courses (up to three credits during the course of the degree) is viewed as ideal, although one member admitted that it was difficult to recruit students in high school who are already artists. Furthermore, as more Canadian institutions offer both the BA and BFA degrees, and thus provide more options for prospective students, the Department must answer the following challenge: what is the future of film studies at Queen's University and what makes the program unique in Canada?

Recommendation: with solid support from the Vice-Principal Academic and the Dean of Arts and Science, the Department needs to clearly articulate and advocate its vision as well as

develop strategic long-term planning and goals in conjunction with the university's overall strategic plan. The department should continue to emphasize film studies with a strong, but supporting, production component.

ii. Curriculum and Pedagogy

a) Long-term Planning: some faculty members indicated that the dept. was about to undertake a re-assessment of the program's curriculum. Current offerings include core courses in media literacy, film history, theory, and aesthetics during the first and second years. More specialized topics courses, that are not core, follow during third and fourth years and tend to draw on faculty members' research expertise. There seems to be a great autonomy of courses versus a coherent set of courses throughout the four years that all majors must take. As is stands, many of the current offerings are dependent on the faculty of the day, rather than a coherent pedagogical vision.

Recommendation: undertake a comprehensive, first principles curriculum review that articulates the department's pedagogical goals in terms of its community, provincial and national contexts, and addresses the challenges of changing demographics. It would be useful for the Department to draft a "pedagogy document" that articulates clear goals for each course and stair-step logic between core courses and program levels.

b) Student Enrolments: during the 1990s, the Department experienced a surplus of numbers of students. This led to a funnelling effect whereby first and second year courses, which were once open to all students at Queen's, were now reserved for majors only. Furthermore, the program no longer allowed for transfer students. Currently, the Department is experiencing a decline in numbers and could easily open up the first and second year courses to non-majors, accept transfer students, and permit students in other programs to take a "one-off" film studies course without the prerequisite. Courses could be cross-listed with courses in other departments such as History, Women's Studies, Art History, Drama, and Languages so that not only would the Department have some form of control over the course content, but it would be able to consolidate scarce resources. The Spanish Department currently offers SPAN 308/408: The Films of Pedro Almodovar and SPAN 328: Gender, Development and Film in Latin America; the French Department offers FREN 227: Le cinema et la civilisation Française; and the Italian Department offers ITLN 308: From Fellini to Benigni. Given that there is a Fellini specialist in the Department, it would seem obvious that the two areas would want to work together. Cross-listing courses would also be a means of recruiting potential majors into the Department. It should be noted that at least two members of the Department have cross-appointments with other areas such as Art and Women's Studies.

Recommendation: undertake an enrolment management plan with targeted enrolment quotas which would include strategies for opening courses to non-majors, taking on more transfer students, and working with other Departments in the Faculty to ensure there is no duplication of course offerings. Given the talent and academic excellence of the Film faculty all efforts should be made to open film courses, especially those in theory and history, to a larger segment of the university's student population.

c) Graduate Program/ Cultural Studies: almost every faculty member interviewed identified the lack of a graduate program as a serious issue. The Department boasts a solid group of scholars and media artists, most of whom are already supervising or co-supervising graduate students in other areas. A graduate program in film studies, in conjunction with, and as a feeder to, an interdisciplinary graduate program in Cultural Studies seems to be an obvious next step, especially since the Department already teaches film and media as art and social practices. Furthermore, a graduate program would attract more undergrads (hence more numbers) and would provide the Department with more qualified teaching assistants.

Recommendation: move quickly to institute a graduate program in film studies in conjunction with a graduate program in Cultural Studies.

Note: Many members and students interviewed expressed a desire for a closer relationship with other programs in Fine Arts areas such as has begun with Drama through the establishment of the stage and screen program that would include Music and Art History/Film Art. There are obvious links between these areas, most notably through an interdisciplinary cultural studies program.

iii. Equipment and Facilities:

a) Facilities and Space: much is said in the department's self-study about the condition of Film House. It is woefully inadequate for a department so dependent on technology whether for production or studies courses. While the lecture hall in Ontario Hall is a good screening facility, there are no appropriate classrooms for teaching production. An "arts house" is in the planning stages and will become the new home for a number of arts departments at Queens, including Film. This kind of interdisciplinary arts facility is important to give greater visibility to the arts at Queens, to encourage easier cross-fertilization of the arts, and to replace the wretched film facilities. Currently, animation is little more than a windowless closet where twenty students share one Bolex camera that is jerry rigged on 2-by-4s. The MAC workstations in the semi-public site on the first floor are ergonomically disastrous: a user must twist his or her body into an unnatural position in order to access the keyboard and mouse while looking at the screen. A number of faculty stressed the need for a studio, which the department had in the past but no longer. Given the department's focus on experimental and documentary practices, such a facility would be nice but not essential. There is, however, a need for a space in which to properly teach lighting, and camera movement, etc. This could be in the form of a "black box" shared with Drama in the proposed arts building.

Recommendation: Construction of a new Arts building to house Theatre, Music, and Film.

b) library: libraries are an important resource to film departments. The library at Queen's supports the department in the form of book and periodical acquisitions, DVD checkout, a film collection, and a new budget for DVD collections and multimedia acquisitions. They also have a multi-use twenty-five person computer lab used mainly for engineering students.

Recommendation: Improved support from the library can be attained through the following: 1) a faculty member from Film should sit on the Library's DVD/Multimedia

committee; 2) the library should build a DVD collection; redundancy with the department's own collection is, in fact, useful and recommended; 3) the library's computer lab should include MAC workstations, and visualization software appropriate to film students should be added.

c) equipment maintenance, repair and replacement: Film is capital intensive. The only fiscally responsible way to run a film program is with a built-in line item for equipment maintenance, repair, and replacement. Standard in the field is 5% of capital worth. Most schools finance this through a fee system charged to each student enrolled in a production course. This is a "lab" fee, similar to that used in science departments like chemistry. In addition, schools often charge a lab fee in studies courses to subsidize film and video rental and purchase costs. These fees are equitable since they are charged only to students enrolled in courses that benefit directly from these fees. As for computers, the university needs to understand that MACs are necessary for film departments. For example, the editing software used by all film departments – Final Cut Pro – is only available for the MAC. Thus, it is thus critical that the university supports multiple platforms.

Recommendation: a) the university provide MAC computers and the necessary technical support for them; b) a lab fee be instituted for students enrolled in production and studies courses in the department; these fees would be used directly for equipment maintenance and repair as well as departmental film purchases and rentals.

iv: Stage and Screen

a) curriculum: Stage and Screen, a collection of Drama and Film courses, constitutes a unique "track" offering a creative solution to students wishing to study in both areas. The program deserves attention and support as it could play a central role in distinguishing Queen's from other Canadian institutions. However, to accomplish this goal there needs to be a truly integrated curriculum developed by the faculty in these two departments. At present there is only one course, STSC 300, that both integrates the disciplines and is team-taught. There are studies courses, script and play writing courses, and production courses in both departments but they are seen as separate entities. More faculty in both departments must become involved if there is to be a truly integrated and exciting program in Stage and Screen, and more team-teaching and cross-disciplinary courses are needed.

Recommendation: the teaching of at least one course at each academic level that together would constitute a "core" experience investigating the many faceted relationships between film and drama, including the use of time-based imagery in stage productions. One specific suggestion recommended by Stage and Screen students was the creation of a theory course addressing cultural theory as it relates to the intersection of film and drama. There is also need for a required team-taught acting/directing course in which students learn to act and direct for the camera.

b) space and facilities: there needs to be a serious investment into the infra-structure of the Drama Department. Its present location, in poorly renovated Theological Hall, is grossly inadequate. Spaces are cramped, even dangerously so, with low ceilings and lack of a controlled

environment (especially related to set construction). Proper and adequate storage space for sets, costumes, and props is needed. The three theater spaces -- a black box, small experimental stage, and main stage -- are potentially good but the spaces themselves are partially jerry-rigged and inadequate in all the ways cited above. Faculty and students are performing miracles by staging quality performances under such circumstances. Stage and Screen could become a strong, nationally significant program on the cutting edge of performance arts studies. We recognize that the symbiotic relationship between theory and practice, in both film and drama, is essential to the development of important new scholarship in these areas. Though the Film Program is focused more on studies than practice the Stage and Screen program can be, with a small investment in digital equipment, a more balanced studies/practice program. In combination with a cultural studies graduate program Stage and Screen can, and should, flourish.

Recommendation: building a new art house that includes proper theater and film spaces, as developed with consultation of the Drama and Film Departments, would resolve the space and facilities issues outlined above. This should be done as soon as feasible and would be a priority recommendation of this committee.

c) Program Cohesion: Students and faculty agree that there is a need to develop a stronger identity for the Stage and Screen program. This can be furthered by creating an effective student advising structure with periodic student/faculty meetings or seminars that bring together all who are in the program, such as a weekly “lab theater” where students or faculty present creative or scholarly work to the entire group for critical and aesthetic feedback. Faculty advising is essential for student success, particularly in the arts, where the educational experience is highly individualized. And students need to learn that “criticism” does not equate with “negative,” which is a concern we heard from faculty regarding critiques of creative work.

Recommendation: a coherent policy of student advising be constructed for the entire university, the result of which would be that every student consults with a faculty advisor before enrolling in the next semester’s courses. Faculty will help guide the student toward the selection of courses required by the student’s chosen program as well as electives that may be beneficial and appropriate to the student’s educational objectives. Advising may also include planned critiques and assessment of student work each semester by a group of faculty.

v. Film Program-University relationship: The Film Program seems to be in demand but its lack of adequate faculty lines, space, and facilities preclude it from serving the larger institution that would benefit from access to its courses. The Dean of Arts and Science sees film as a “nice little unit” but one that was uncooperative with the Arts & Science plan to grow two years ago (double cohort). Our many interviews and discussions revealed a view of the film faculty as less than important researchers as compared to faculty in other Arts & Science disciplines. The contentious relationship between the Dean and the Film faculty has had a serious effect on faculty morale and willingness to work with the upper administration. Without assigning blame it is clear that both the Dean and faculty need to come to a place of mutual respect. The existing friction has generated a “closing of ranks” among the faculty that has contributed to an already existent strong sense of collegiality. Every member of the Film Program-- faculty, staff, and students -- seemed to respect and truly like one another. We rarely see such cohesion and unity of purpose.

Recommendation: It is clear that the pedagogical mission of the arts is so manifestly different from that of the other areas in Arts & Sciences that it makes sense to create a School of Visual and Performing Arts, combining Art, Drama, Music, and Film. We would like to note that, although not in our domain of review, we sensed some differences within the Art Department between the Art Historians and Art practitioners; this might generate a conflict for the Art Historians being separated from Arts & Sciences. It is very common among institutions with both Art History and Art practice to be in different academic colleges.

NOTE: The Vice-Principal (Academic) has determined that Appendix B: Students' Input to Film Studies Internal Academic Review includes evaluative comments which make it possible to identify individuals and therefore, while it provides useful feedback to the Unit under review, it will not be included in this report.