

Internal Academic Review 2009-2010

Department of Art Internal Academic Review Committee Report to Senate

The Internal Academic Review (IAR) of the Department of Art 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 Art 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 of Art and the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science to jointly report on the progress in addressing the Review Team recommendations (please see the “Outcomes” section of this report).

Summary of the Internal Academic Review of the Department of Art

It is clear from the submissions relating to the Internal Academic Review of the Department of Art that the Unit is complex and has struggled on many levels over the past several years. The messages from both external and internal academic reviewers are quite consistent. Despite difficult internal issues and the pressures associated with hard economic times, the Department of Art can be characterised by high quality academic programs, productive and respected scholars and artists, and strong students enrolled in all of its three units (Art Conservation, Art History and Fine Art).

All of the IAR reports point to low morale as one of the biggest challenges facing the Department of Art. The IARC was somewhat reassured by a recent face-to-face conversation with the current Acting Head where he expressed his view that morale in the Department is improving. The IARC is also encouraged by the Faculty of Arts and Science’s plans to name a Director to the Fine Arts program as a solution to concerns about the internal governance and the perception of opaque management of the larger Department of Art.

The IARC agreed wholeheartedly with the External Consultants’ concern about the impact of the pending retirements on the current Master of Art Conservation program. In order to keep this sole-Canadian program viable in its present form, these faculty members must be replaced with well-established academics who have the necessary expertise in specialized disciplines. Since the review, the Head of the Department, the Vice-Provost and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, and the Associate Dean of

Arts and Science have reported to the IARC that strategies are being explored to generate revenues for the Master of Art Conservation program including the possibility of introducing a graduate diploma that will be offered in the Spring/Summer terms.

It was noted that there were comments about the curriculum in the Art History program which focuses almost exclusively on Western art. In light of these issues, the IARC encourages the Department to evaluate their coverage of art in a more global context.

The IARC shares the External Consultants' recommendation that the physical space of the Department needs to be improved. This is particularly urgent in matters of health and safety, including outdated fumehoods used in the Art Centre extension which houses the Art Conservation program, and poor ventilation in both Ontario Hall and the Art Centre extension. The IARC has made the Director of Environmental Health and Safety aware of the situation and has raised the issue with the Associate Vice-Principal (Facilities). A report has been received from the Department of Environmental Health and Safety confirming that it will continue to work on potential health and safety issues in Ontario Hall and the Art Conservation Building.

The IARC recognizes the uniquely challenging and complex situation that the Department of Art is currently experiencing and suggests the need for active monitoring beyond what is usually afforded by the academic review cycle. The IARC fully supports the Department's ongoing efforts, in collaboration with the Faculty of Arts and Science and the School of Graduate Studies, to shepherd the Department of Art to a position of national and international prominence.

Outcomes of the Internal Academic Review of the Department of Art

*Joint response submitted by the
Dean of Arts & Science and the Head of the Department of Art*

The Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science and the Head of the Department of Art are pleased with the positive assessments of the Department of Art by the IARC. The following are our responses to the specific points raised by the IARC.

1. Concerns pertaining to morale and internal governance.

The issues of low morale and governance challenges in the Department of Art have long been associated with issues pertaining to the Bachelor of Fine Arts Programme. These difficulties with the BFA Programme have tended to monopolize the Department Head's time, restricting the amount of time spent on the Art History and Art Conservation Programmes. To address these issues, the Faculty of Arts and Science has been working very closely with the Department of Art since September 2010.

As of 1 April 2011, the Bachelor of Fine Arts Programme has been operating under its own governance structure, which entails that for at least the next three years the BFA Programme will report directly to the Office of the Dean rather than through the Head of the Department of Art. This arrangement will be in effect until 30 June 2014. It will be reviewed annually but, if no alternative structure is put in place before then or other resolution affecting the future of the Programme is made, a decision will be made during the 2013-14 academic year as to the future governance of the Programme.

Professor Katheen Sellars was appointed Programme Director on 1 April 2011 – this appointment has been approved by the Committee of Departments and Faculty Board. BFA faculty members will report to the Director and the Director will be responsible to the Dean for the operation of the Programme. The duties of the Director will include, but not necessarily be limited to, coordinating, facilitating, recommending upon and expediting matters pertaining to the operation of the Programme, ensuring that Programme policy is carried out, and demonstrating initiative and leadership in the conduct of Programme business.

A retreat and weekly meetings have been taking place with BFA faculty members, BFA DSC Representatives, Associate Dean Catherine Krull (FAS) and Jacoba DeVos (Human Relations) for the past several months; the objective of which is to assist with the transition to a new governance structure, formulate ways to bolster morale and collegiality, develop a handbook outlining procedures and regulations, and discuss strategies for strengthening the BFA Programme such as a new timetable and course delivery structure.

Having established a new governance structure for the BFA Programme means that the Head of Art will now be able to devote her/his time exclusively to the Art History and Art Conservation Programmes. A new Head of the Department of Art, Professor Janice Helland, will take effect 1 July 2011.

2. Keeping the Art Conservation Programme viable in its present form.

Several meetings have taken place with the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, the Associate Deans of SGS and FAS and faculty members of the Faculty of Art Conservation program to discuss possible ways of generating revenues. The possibility of offering a diploma/certificate program during the spring/summer months is currently being discussed.

The Art Conservation program has also recently established an Advisory Committee, which consists of national and international conservation experts from professional and academic sectors, representatives from the Faculty of Arts and Science, the School of Graduate Studies and the Department of Art, Program faculty, and student members. The first Advisory Committee Meeting took place at Queen's on 2 May 2011. Topics covered at this first meeting included fundraising, succession planning, program publicity, and the proposed diploma/certificate program.

Another fund raising initiative that has recently taken place has been including the following message in all Art Conservation correspondence (email, newsletters and letters): "You can create a powerful legacy with a donation that will ensure a secure future for the Art Conservation Program at Queen's University. Your contribution will help in our quest to preserve and enhance the learning experience of our students. Please consider a gift and visit <https://www.givetoqueens.ca/artconservation> where you will find a link to on-line giving to the Art Conservation Trust Fund". This request has also been sent to a variety of list serves across North America

3. More global context needed in the curriculum of the Art History Programme

A new Bader Chair in Southern Baroque with a specialty in Latin American studies will begin his appointment on 1 July 2011 of this year. This will bring a new global focus to the Art History curriculum. In terms of post-1900 studies, Art History is committed to maintaining its first rate teaching and research in postcolonial studies, which includes Aboriginal art from North America and elsewhere. The programme will continue to be dedicated to offering undergraduate and graduate courses in critical approaches to art and globalization.

4. Improved Physical Space

We are encouraged by the IARC's concerns of Health and Safety matters as they affect both Ontario Hall and the Art Conservation building on Bader Lane. The Faculty of Arts and Science is currently working with the Department and the Department's Safety Technician in implementing an audit of space in Ontario Hall. A leaking roof in Ontario Hall and ventilation repairs in the Art Conservation facility are top priorities.

To this end, and as part of the University's deferred maintenance program, the south roof of Ontario Hall will be repaired this summer.

5. The uniquely challenging and complex situation that the Department of Art is currently experiencing.

We were encouraged that the external IAR consultants and the Internal IAR Review Team recognize the Department's strengths, unique challenges and achievements. The three programmes have achieved national recognition and respect buttressed by student interest in studying these disciplines at Queen's and the successful job placements of graduating students. As the IARC points out, Queen's stands out in having the only Art Conservation Programme in the country. International recognition of the research and publication output of Art History faculty is ongoing.

The Faculty of Arts and Science and the Department are dedicated to continue our collective work towards improving the diversity and continuity of these successes, strengthening each of the specific Programmes, and, ensuring that the Department's national and international reputation remains of a high order.