1 YEAR FOLLOW-UP REPORT

Submitted to YSGPS: March 31, 2025
Last Updated: April 3, 2025

Graduate Program:	**Molecular Science (MSc, PhD)**
Peer Review Team:	Dr. Reinhart Reithmeier, University of Toronto Dr. Jennifer van Wijngaarden, York University Dr. Claire Oswald, Toronto Metropolitan University.
Site Visit:	January 10th and 11th, 2024 on-site
PRT Report:	Feb 16, 2024
Program Response:	April 7, 2024
YSGPS Response:	April 19, 2024
Approved by Senate:	May 28, 2024
1 Year Follow Up Due:	May 28, 2025

As mandated by Toronto Metropolitan University Senate Policy 126: Periodic Program Review of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs[1], within one year of Senate approval of the PPR, a 1 Year Follow-Up Report is to be submitted to the Faculty Dean or Dean of Record and the Vice-Provost and Dean, YSGPS, on the progress of the implementation plan and any further recommendations. This follow-up report will be also be reviewed by Programs and Planning Committee, YSGPS Council, and finally Senate. The PPR Report to Senate may also include a date(s) for subsequent Follow-up Reports.

What follows are the PRT recommendations, the program responses, YSGPS responses, and the implementation plan, including the 1 year follow-up status reports by the program.

[1] "Policy 126: Periodic Program Review of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs," Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU), accessed November 20, 2024, https://www.torontomu.ca/senate/policies/periodic-program-review-of-graduate-and-undergraduate-programs-policy-126/.

PRT RECOMMENDATIONS, PROGRAM/FACULTY DEAN/YSGPS RESPONSES + PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND 1 YEAR FOLLOW UP

PRT Recommendations	PRT Rationale	Molecular Science Program Response	Dean of Faculty of Science Response	Proposed Program Action	Program Timeline and Responsibility/Lead	YSGPS Response	1 Year Follow Up
Recommendation 1: Molecular Science employ a more holistic approach in the admission process, including more emphasis on the statement of interest and life experience and developing clear admission guidelines to evaluate diverse applications.	To remove barriers and increase diversity of student population.	Currently, admissions are managed by the Program Director (GPD) and Program Administrator (GPA) with review of documents by the Admissions and Awards Committee. However, significant differences have emerged in scoring applications in recent years and this is an issue that was identified in our initial self-study report. In 2023, GPD Sarah Sabatinos attended a holistic admissions seminar through YSGS for initial training and to consider program actions. We also note that applicants may not have the experience or understanding of	The Faculty of Science agrees with the program response.	The Admissions & Awards Committee will solicit opinion from faculty and students to determine how best to consider applications. More emphasis will be placed on faculty consultation with prospective applicants during the process to ensure that diverse applicants feel welcome and that their applications are taken seriously. We propose that applicants continue to provide a statement of interest, CV, transcripts, and reference letters. The GPD will develop a template for an admissions Statement of Interest (SOI) document that helps applicants to capture their life experiences in addition to academic qualifications. INTENT- to reassure applicants that life experiences are valuable	Admissions were discussed April 17, 2024, and will be developed in Program Council meetings over Spring/Summer 2024. The background description in the self-study, and the PRT suggestion, were provided to Council members for comment. This consultation will be ongoing in 2024. Council will vote on the use of a new admissions SOI template document with an aim to implement this for the 2025-2026 admission cycle.	The YSGPS supports the Program's efforts to introduce a more holistic admission process that will encourage a diverse pool of applicants in line with one of TMU's core principles of integrating EDIA throughout our activities and policies.	Admissions process was altered to give potential supervisors more agency in recognizing and mentoring students. Beginning in spring 2024, we have been testing a new method of admissions which allows faculty to review all completed applications, and then to send to the Program and Admissions/Awards Committee for review. This process was begun to allow faculty to consider candidate applications with a wider lens, and to contact qualified candidates early in the process without first

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		graduate studies applications to highlight relative skills and accomplishments that are valuable (yet which may not fall under academic or research excellence).		to graduate studies, and that all paths are not the same.			filtering through the Admissions and Awards Committee. As of March 2025, this procedure was used to welcome a full cohort of MSc students, and has had no reported issues. We will poll Membership in Summer 2025 and ratify any admissions procedures in Fall 2025.
Recommendation 2: YSGS change its Guidelines to allow PhD candidates to complete a Masters degree if they do not proceed in the PhD Program.	To increase number of direct entry PhD students and flexibility of program.	The Program has investigated the possibility of MSc completion for students who previously transferred to the PhD program. We understand that this can become an option for students who find they cannot complete the	We will work with the program to define the specific conditions when this would be appropriate, and to develop a policy and procedure	The Program commits to clarifying this option for students and ensuring that it is reflected in all relevant documents and policies for the Program.	The Program will work with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies for FOS to clarify procedures through YSGPS to allow MSc completion out of a PhD program, once the revisions to policy 170(b) are in place.	While noting that this option is meant to be for unusual circumstances, the YSGPS will work with the Program GPD and FOS Graduate Associate Dean to clarify processes and policies related to	The Program's stance has not changed. We have clarified this option to students and supervisors in multiple email communications, and at student seminars. We will reframe this on Transfer exam

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		PhD program in the upcoming revisions to policy 170(b). However, the current guidelines and process are unclear. Further, the availability of this as an option is largely unknown.	consistent with the revised Policy 170(b).			this recommendation.	paperwork to include this fact in Fall 2025.
Recommendation 3: Molecular Science eliminate the written examination and reduce the length of the research proposal to say, a maximum of ~11 pages plus appendices for the PhD Candidacy Exam.	To decrease time to complete candidacy exam and align with course requirements in other Ontario universities	We agree that it is prudent to take steps to align the candidacy process with similar programs at other Ontario Universities, especially if this may decrease the burden on PhD students. The Program will review this recommendation in consultation with graduate students, the MolSci Curriculum Committee, and the MolSci GPC.	The Faculty of Science agrees with the program's approach.	The Program will discuss the current forms and guidelines for PhD candidacy to identify ways by which we might implement this recommendation if we move forward after consultation with key stakeholders.	This recommendation will be discussed with the MolSci Curriculum Committee in Spring 2024, as well as with the MSGSU (MolSci Graduate Students Union). The GPC will also consider the matter during our April 2024 Council meeting, with further discussion to take place during a summer 2024 retreat or at the fall 2024 Council meeting. If the MolSci GPC agrees, we could move forward with a change starting in Fall 2026.	The YSGPS supports Program efforts to align the PhD candidacy process with comparator programs and is available to consult on this.	This recommendation has not been developed within 2024 due to other changes. The Program recognizes the value of the PRT's suggestion, and will reinitiate discussions with key stakeholders in summer 2025 for consideration at fall 2025 Council meeting.

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Recommendation 4: The Program reduce the course requirement for MSc students to one and PhD students to two.	To better align with the goal of creating research-based degree programs and more timely completion.	The Program supports this recommendation as we recognize that student research, creative, and scholarly activities (SRC) are critical to their thesis and program learning outcomes and yet require substantial time. Molecular Science Faculty members have previously conveyed strong support to reduce the student course burden. Consultation and consideration must balance any reduction in elective course number with core skills in Molecular Science (i.e. communication, research skills, analysis, etc)	The Faculty of Science agrees with the program's approach, and confirms that the change will not impact the program's future funding or department hiring.	We will consult with the Molecular Science Curriculum Committee and MolSci GPC about implementing this recommendation. Specifically, we expect to vote on a motion at the April 18, 2024 GPC meeting to reduce the number of elective courses to 1 for a MSc student, and to 2 for PhD students.	A motion in support of this recommendation was passed at a MolSci GPC meeting on April 18. The Curriculum Committee will prepare the major curriculum change proposal over Spring/Summer 2024 to reflect this change, including a strategy for assuring the curriculum maintains a rigorous breadth and depth of education that develops core scientific skills essential for research and scientific employment. This proposal will be approved by MolSci GPC over the Summer and brought forth to YSGPS PPC in Fall, with an aim for full implementation by the 25-26 academic year.	YSGPS supports Program efforts to adjust course requirements so that students can better balance these with their SRC activities and is able for consultations with the GPD to implement this recommendation should it move forward. YSGPS notes that such low course requirements are unusual at TMU and emphasizes that our Graduate Degree Level Expectations (as defined in Policy 110) require learning outcomes that cover both breadth and depth of knowledge. The coverage of the	**This change passed at TMU Senate, Mar 25/25.** Molecular Science Council voted to reduce elective course number from three (3) to one (1) for MSc, and two (2) for PhD. The motion passed in April 2024. The Program and FOS subsequently worked together to complete the Major Curriculum Change paperwork required. This was submitted in Feb/25 to YSGPS, and then passed PPC on Feb 24/25. On March 5/24 the YSGPS Council approved the changes as proposed.

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						revised curriculum in delivering and assessing competency in all its learning outcomes will need to be considered.	On March 25/25 the TMU Senate passed the changes as proposed. We anticipate the implementation of these changes for the Fall 2025 term.
Recommendation 5: MSc and direct entry PhD students take the enhanced MS8201 Seminar Course in their first year and MS8202 in their second. PhD students take a re-imagined MS9201 in the year after their qualifying exam.	To avoid repetition in the Fall term, MS8201 focuses on developing the skills for success in graduate school, MS8202 on student presentations, while MS9201 focus on the tools required for success after graduate school in line with TMU's mission to *"prepare students for careers in professional and quasi-professional fields."*	We appreciate the suggestions to avoid repetition and enhance the student experience. However, the current structure of the seminar course reflects logistical constraints based on the need to provide structured content while providing an opportunity to practice communication skills. The PRT noted that the seminar is essential in exposing students to a breadth of current topics in interdisciplinary Molecular Sciences. To	The program's response highlights the complexity of issues surrounding the seminar course, and that a blanket acceptance of the PRT's recommendation would likely cause more problems than it solves. We note that many minor changes related to how the course is	We will meet with the MolSci Curriculum Committee to initiate discussion about changes to the graduate seminar course(s), as well as consulting with previous instructors of the seminar courses (R Botelho, L Campbell, A McWilliams, S Sabatinos). Possible changes will then be further explored at a GPC meeting through a SWOT/SOAR-style session to document ideas and challenges. If there is sufficient interest, a GPC *ad hoc* committee will be established to assist and direct course development. The Department of Chemistry and Biology and Faculty of Science will be actively involved in these developments	Discussion about seminar course changes and their implementation will continue throughout Spring/Summer 2024, with an aim to incorporate minor practical improvements for Fall 2024, and if any curriculum changes are deemed necessary, they will be advanced through the necessary approvals in Fall 2024, with an aim of implementation for Fall 2025.	The YSGPS supports the Program's plans to explore these changes to the seminar course(s) in order to meet student needs and is available for consultation regarding curriculum changes.	On March 20/25, Sarah Sabatinos presented a new Seminar Course structure to the Molecular Science Curriculum Committee. These plans were not discussed at that meeting. The Program will bring forward the proposed changes to Council over the summer of 2025.

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		reduce the attendance requirement, or split the course into smaller more focused courses would diminish this exposure. Nevertheless, we note that there is room for improvement in the way the seminar courses are run, and we will undertake a review and make necessary changes. Regardless of the eventual outcome, any potential changes to the seminar course must ensure that students do not face additional burdens or hurdles.	administered can be made without official curriculum modification, while some other beneficial changes may require the generation of new course codes and calendar descriptions. In any case, we support the program's consultative and thoughtful approach to overhaul of the seminar course.	since they administer all resource-related matters related to teaching.			
Recommendation 6: That the benchmark expectation for MSc students to	To ensure high standards of research quality as although not	The Program agrees that this is an expectation. During the COVID-19 pandemic,	The Faculty of Science agrees with the recommendatio	We will look to include this statement of expectation in documents and guidelines.	We will discuss this at a Spring 2024 Council meeting.	The YSGPS supports the Program's response to this recommendation.	The Program strongly agrees with the PRT's original point. We appreciate the

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contribute 1 SRC finding, and PhD students 3 findings indicate that the research should be of sufficient quality to be externally peer-reviewed.	explicitly required, external review of research (e.g., peer review of publications) remain the gold standard for the dissemination of knowledge.	and with recognition of holistic milestones that accommodate different research paths, the definition of "finding" was expanded to include all works that are judged by a committee to be sufficient. We could add the description of "research should be of sufficient quality to be externally peer reviewed" to ensure that this is clear.	n in principle, but notes that due to the subjective nature of what constitutes a "finding", and the various possibilities for exceptional circumstances make it difficult to put into policy. We will work with the program to come up with the best ways to convey research productivity expectations to students.	We also look to train supervisory committee members to support student success by helping to create bridges that build quality SRC findings. The Program notes that publications are not a degree requirement. While publications may be important currency for scientific careers, students should not be withheld from progress or graduation because their work is not published.			support of FOS and YSGPS in highlighting the value of student contributions to literature, while maintaining the flexibly to recognize broader forms/types of SRC communications. Beginning in Spring 2024, documentation to Mol Sci members has used the phrase "research should be of sufficient quality to be externally peer reviewed". In the remainder of 2025 we will continue to edit materials to include this statement, and to help faculty committee members to judge contributions.

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Recommendation 7: Consider dropping the Materials, Surfaces and Interfaces and Molecular Biosciences fields and unify under Molecular Sciences.	To better align with the program objectives and eliminate confusion and redundancy in the course requirements.	The Program recognizes that the "Fields" of study documentation is not used extensively within Molecular Science degree programs.	The Faculty of Science agrees with the program's approach.	We propose dropping "Fields" designation and implementing this in line with rebranding of the Program.	We will discuss this at a Spring 2024 GPC meeting and vote on a motion to remove Fields from the curriculum. This curriculum change would then be sent to the YSGPS Council for approval.	The YSGPS supports Program efforts to remove the Fields from the curriculum if desired and is available for consultations with the GPD to implement this recommendation should it move forward. It notes that removing fields from a program is an example of a major curriculum modification in Policy 127.	**This change passed at TMU Senate, Mar 25/25.** The recommendation to remove "Field" and "Stream" designations was included in the Major Curriculum Modifications paperwork for course reduction (Item 4 above). The dates and timelines for this item #7 are identical to #4.
Recommendation 8: Graduate students should be involved in organizing activities like Orientation, the Visiting Speaker Program, the Summer Conference	To enhance meaningful engagement of graduate students in program activities and help develop their	The Program recognizes the importance of student participation in these activities. This is important for learning and professional development.	The Faculty of Science agrees with the program's approach.	The Program will consult with the MSGSU regarding strategies to increase student participation. Each year, Molecular Science Graduate Students are always welcome to participate in the summer conference (SATI -	We have already moved ahead on this recommendation. In Winter 2024, graduate students played a role in organizing and coordinating with invited speaker seminars. A plan	The YSGPS supports the Program's response this recommendation and commends its commitment to increasing student	**This recommendation is implemented.** GS involvement is reinforced in the summer symposium and has been requested for weekly

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Day, and other professional networking activities.	organizational and leadership skills.			Science at the Interface), and emails are sent multiple times to encourage participation. However, student organizing participation for the SATI research day dropped during the pandemic and has not been common since.	to improve opportunities will be generated for Fall 2024 and then ongoing. The plan will include opportunities listed here, as well as those identified by the Molecular Science Graduate Student Union	participation in Program activities.	seminars. Student chairs are designated each week, and are encouraged to participate by choice.
Recommendation 9: YSGS significantly increase the minimum MSc ($22,700) and PhD ($28,000) funding package to cover tuition and other fees plus a living allowance.	To provide competitive stipends to attract top students and support their cost of living.	The Program agrees with this recommendation but will need to consult with the Faculty of Science and faculty supervising students in this program in order to explore feasible ways of doing so. A student funding emergency meeting was held in Summer 2023; additional discussion is required to find options	The Faculty of Science agrees that the state of graduate student funding at TMU is inadequate. At the faculty level, we are taking steps to ensure fairness and consistency in the administration of current funds (TAship, supervisor support, and program funds),	This is a complex topic that will require extensive and ongoing consultation with the Faculty of Science and with Faculty members in the Program.	This recommendation will be raised at a Spring/Summer GPC meeting. Funding will also be discussed in a summer retreat.	Such resource-related matters are outside the purview of the YSGPS, but it will continue to support efforts and initiatives to increase graduate student stipends. It should be noted that such funding has increased over the past several years through the addition of funding for 4th year doctoral students, the introduction of	The Program agrees with this recommendation; graduate student funding at TMU is inadequate. The issue of increased funding has been raised at the April 2024, December 2024, and March 2025 Council meetings. We remain committed to applying to funding that will increase student stipends, such as NSERC CREATE and others.

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			and always advocating for more support.			TMGS scholarships, and the new international tuition revenue sharing model.	
Recommendation 10: Interviews of graduate student parents should be carried out before and after parental leave. Supervisors continue to provide a stipend ($8,000 for MSc/$10,000 for PhD) during parental leave in addition to the $15,000 provided by the Program.	To ensure a smooth transition back to graduate studies and completion of the degree and that additional living costs do not burden new parents.	The Program recognizes that parental leave is an important and vulnerable time in graduate studies. Contributing to parental leave is a workplace obligation that has not been fully implemented in studies. We commit to finding ways that this can be improved.	The Faculty of Science has been piloting a parental leave program for about two years. We will take this recommendation under advisement to improve practices and visibility of the program.	This topic will be discussed with the Molecular Science GPC. Low funding levels have previously meant that faculty are not always able to support parental leave. Tri-Council funding allows for parental leave reimbursement, which might be supported by helping faculty to apply.	This will be discussed at a summer 2024 GPC meeting. We will draft a statement and/or action item after consultation and discussion. We will work to implement action for Fall 2024.	Such resource-related matters are outside the purview of the YSGPS, but it will continue to support efforts and initiatives to ensure that graduate students do not face undue hardship by taking parental leave.	The Program plans to move forward on this recommendation. There have been no parental leaves in the past 12 months. However, the Program has taken an active approach to have informal check in meetings with students to discuss issues that impact their health and happiness.
Recommendation 11: Funding continue to be provided beyond normal completion	To provide support and ensure timely completion of the degree.	Institutional funding for students (both the YSGPS Scholarship budget, and FOS funds) are tied to head counts of students within their	The Faculty of Science agrees in principle that graduate students need adequate	We are consulting with Molecular Science GPC members and will have a discussion of this issue during a Spring/Summer GPC meeting.	This will be discussed during a Spring/Summer 2024 GPC meeting. Problem solving and a SWOT/SOAR analysis will be employed to encourage	Such resource-related matters are outside the purview of the YSGPS, but it will continue to support efforts and	At present there is no additional funding in the Program to provide full funding outside the degree completion window.

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times subject to good progress.		funding window as currently defined for MSc (2 years) and PhD (4 years). Under this model, any support to students outside this window would dilute the support to students within the window. Ideally, when good progress is being made, students should complete on time. But the program can do more to communicate with students, supervisors, and supervisory committees to ensure that this is the case. Also, in some cases, students and supervisors may agree that longer time in the program may be mutually beneficial in order to achieve certain research milestones, and in these cases,	financial support for the duration of their studies. However, given the funding models in place, it will be more effective to promote timely completion through communication with both students and faculty.		active thinking and creativity. We will develop options and ideas for discussion during the summer, aiming to implement possible changes to funding requirements in this context in Fall 2024.	initiatives to ensure that graduate students do not face undue financial hardship if they do not complete their degree within the current timelines with guaranteed funding. We note that supervisors do not have the authority to keep students in a program longer than what it takes for the student to complete all degree requirements. If such a practice exists, this should be addressed right away.	However, when funds were available to the Program, we provided an equal amount of funding to students outside the funded window. To make these difficult decisions, we have implemented a Budget Committee. A result of this is a “Core Values” document and “Funding Priorities” document. These documents were discussed in April 2025 Council. Members will be asked to vote and adopt these documents in May 2025.

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		supervisors must be willing to financially support these students.					
Recommendation 12: Create an EDIA committee that conducts a climate survey and organizes activities to address identified needs.	To align with goals of Dimensions Program and core values of EDI to create a healthy lab environment.	The Program agrees with Recommendation #12, and a survey is currently underway. Furthermore, it will be beneficial to strike a committee including program students to address graduate student-centered EDIA issues.	The Faculty of Science agrees with the program's approach.	EDIA was raised in an April 2024 GPC meeting. An EDIA climate survey has been released by the Dimensions Project (NSERC; Costin Antonescu) within FOS. We will consult with students and Dimensions to build a committee that best serves students and the program, by defining the roles, structure, and election of an EDIA committee.	We will organize a Molecular Science student Town Hall for May 2024 for their feedback and input. We will develop options and ideas for an EDIA committee during the summer to facilitate discussion and planning for earliest implementation in Fall 2024 or Winter 2025.	The YSGPS supports the Program response to this recommendation and commends its efforts to specifically consider EDIA as it pertains to graduate student concerns and needs through the formation of such a committee.	The Chemistry and Biology Council has an EDIA committee, which has graduate student members. We are assessing how an additional EDIA committee within the Dept may interact so that all voices are heard but without demanding more activities from graduate students.
Recommendation 13: Develop resources and guidelines for best practices in graduate student supervision and to deal with student issues.	To create a healthy lab environment aligned with the EDI principles of the Dimensions initiative.	The Program is actively collaborating with the Faculty of Science Dimensions Leader (Costin Antonescu) to institute mandatory Code of Conduct agreements with lab heads, supervisors, and all members of research	The Faculty of Science agrees with this recommendation and is working with the Dimensions leader and programs to develop these	Sarah Sabatinos will reach out to the MSGSU to identify key concerns and points that should be included in guidelines. These will be developed in consultation with faculty and graduate student members, and presented to the GPC in Fall 2024. Ahead of that, GPC members will also have an option to discuss and clarify	We will make the GPC aware of initiatives related to this recommendation during a Spring 2024 meeting and explore how best to capture opinions and opportunities for supervision guidelines. Over summer 2024, we will work with graduate	The YSGPS supports the Program response to this recommendation and commends its efforts to ensure that graduate students have a healthy lab environment based	We continue to work with graduate students and Dimensions Chair (now Dr Stefania Impellezzeri) for guidelines and best practices.

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		laboratories. In addition, we recognize that supervisors may require training and support for best practices. We will work with a GPC sub-committee and an independent group of graduate students to identify key issues and required resources/guidelines.	guidelines, as well as a strategy for their implementation and gaining buy-in from faculty members.	required guidelines and resources.	students to identify key concerns.	on shared expectations of conduct for all Program participants, as well as a means by which students can raise concerns in a safe and confidential manner. YSGPS updated its Graduate Supervision Guidelines to meet several of the recommendations in the "Academic Accommodations for Graduate Students Outside of Courses" report to clarify roles, responsibilities and resources related to accommodations for graduate students outside of course	We have discussed Code of Conduct creation and implementation within the Department and encouraged participation at YSGPS seminars for supervisors. We will continue to develop these guidelines and principles during 2025, towards formal documentation in November 2025 Council meeting.

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						work. The updated guidelines may be a helpful resource.	
Recommendation 14: Priority be given to a providing adequate financial resources, including a fund-raising campaign to support graduate programs at TMU, student awards, new equipment (e.g. NMR) and maintaining essential research facilities.	To recognize that government grants and tuition fee increases will not meet the growing needs of the Molecular Science graduate students.	The Program is delighted to support all campaigns that enhance student well-being, success and productivity. Some of the items identified are essential. The Program commits to working with the Faculty of Science and University to fundraise and participate at all levels.	The Faculty of Science appreciates the importance of funding for awards and research equipment and facilities, and commits to doing what it can, given budget constraints.	The Program will meet with Faculty representatives to discuss how fund-raising and support opportunities might occur. The Program has already attempted to develop a CFI proposal (Sarah Sabatinos, OVPRI discussion in March 2024), but was informed that it would not be supported in the current funding allotment/cap. A separate CFI proposal led by Roberto Botelho proposes supporting a new NMR instrument.	Sarah Sabatinos will meet with University, Faculty of Science, student, and Departmental representatives in Spring 2024 to discuss fund-raising for research. We are discussing other avenues toward this end in collaboration with the Council.	Such resource-related matters are outside the purview of the YSGPS, but it will continue to encourage and advocate for efforts and initiatives that ensure appropriate financial and infrastructure support for graduate students and their SRC activities.	Frustratingly, we have been unable to source funding for graduate student funding, equipment, and research facilities. Molecular Science remains committed to advocating for funds and is interested in working with Faculty and University levels to fund raise.
Recommendation 15: TMU commit to providing high quality research space to all graduate students, including possible renovation of Kerr laboratories	To address health and safety issues flagged in Kerr and to address inequitable resources for students located at different sites.	The Program appreciates and thanks the PRT for this suggestion. CFI discussions in March 2024 were unsuccessful. However, we are committed to working with TMU at all levels to support laboratory-	See response to #14 above.	The Program is committed to exploring how we can best act on this suggestion through conversations with the Faculty of Science, the Office of the Vice President of Research, and University Advancement, among other key TMU offices and stakeholders. To ensure graduate student opinion, we will also	This item has been flagged for discussion at the April 2024 Departmental meeting. The discussion is ongoing and will be followed and developed over the next several years.	Such resource-related matters are outside the purview of the YSGPS, but it will continue to encourage and advocate for efforts and initiatives that ensure appropriate financial and	The Program remains supportive of this recommendation and of committing to ensure equity in research space for all Molecular Science students.

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and expansion of MaRS footprint.		based SRC activities as these are expensive endeavors that require infrastructure and funding above that of non-lab based graduate programs. However, we also believe that the grant success we have enjoyed (and will develop further with adequate research infrastructure) brings reputational awareness and excellence for the MolSci Program.		discuss this item during the summer 2024 Molecular Science Retreat (date TBD). The Program will explore opportunities for access to key infrastructure through the new TMU Medical School.		infrastructure support for graduate students and their SRC activities.	
Recommendation 16: The Program carry out a strategic planning exercise that includes developing a brand, possible name change, and mission and vision	To elevate the Program to higher levels of excellence requires a clear vision, commitment to deliverables, and strong leadership in anticipation of the next PPR.	The Program is eager to carry out this exercise.	The Faculty of Science agrees with the program's approach and can support a retreat/facilitator to do so.	We will discuss this with the GPC during our April 2024 meeting to obtain approval for this as an item during the summer/fall retreat/council meeting. We suggest a 2-part plan to ensure the best representation of all Molecular Science members and adjunct participants. First, we will have a SWOT/SOAR discussion and brainstorming session during	We initiate discussions at the April/2024 GPC meeting to develop a structure for future talks in summer and fall. The Program will determine whether we might hire a facilitator to assist in a rebranding exercise. The Program will also	The YSGPS supports the Program's response to this recommendation and is available for consultation as it undertakes this rebranding exercise to consider the current environment and student needs.	The Program began to plan a "retreat" and planning exercise for summer 2024, but could not find time that worked for members. We will plan for a summer 2025 session at the Departmental Retreat.

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statements that align with TMU's mission.				the Molecular Science Summer 2024 Retreat (date TBD). However, since some faculty and students are away during the summer or otherwise engaged, there will be a second opportunity for discussion in fall 2024. We will also discuss options and outcomes with TMU administration and the YSGPS to determine how a name change and rebranding might impact our interaction with other programs and funding sources at the University.	request support from TMU branding offices and experts for knowledge and resources.	YSGPS notes that a change in a program's name is considered a major curriculum modification under Policy 127.	
Recommendation 17: Track and engage alumni in the MS Program through activities such as annual career panels, workshops and mentoring organized in partnership with the MS Program	To strengthen relationships with alumni and community leaders to the benefit of future students through their mentorship, advice and potential donations.	The Program recognizes the importance of alumni engagement, and also that current tracking and engagement is low. The seminar course this year has actively developed Alumni relationships with presentations and visits by former students (i.e. Amra	The Faculty of Science agrees with the program's approach.	To reach alumni, we require better tracking within the Program. Sarah Sabatinos and Sarah Kovacs have committed to recording Alumni information and checking previous records. We will reach out to alumni at least twice per year, perhaps with a newsletter to update alumni about the Program and milestones/highlights. We will also actively write Alumni to	We will initiate a first newsletter and tracking effort in May 2024. We will discuss with the PPC how to reach Alumni (and seek faculty support as former supervisors) during the April 2024 Council meeting. We will contact Advancement support staff	The YSGPS supports the Program's proposed actions to better engage with alumni and track their activities post-graduation to highlight their successes and promote networking with current	The Program supports this recommendation and is working to improve our tracking of Alumni. We have discussed a newsletter, beginning in Summer 2025, which can be sent to Alumni who "opt in" to keep them updated on Program activities

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Graduate Student Union and a Program Advisory Council that includes people external to the program.		Saric, now at SickKids Research Institute; Alexandra Petrova, now at Sixsense). To reach alumni we require better tracking. We found during the self-study that records from the UPO were not helpful or were missing important information that could help engagement opportunities.		return and participate in seminars and other opportunities.	in Faculty of Science and at TMU centrally to seek support and knowledge/instruction in how best to proceed.	students in the Program.	and opportunities to participate in the Program.

Summary Statement/Conclusion:
Over the past year, the Molecular Science Program has worked to implement important recommendations made by the PRT. These recommendations promote student completion and success. We have passed a reduction in MSc and PhD elective course numbers and removed the “Field” and “Stream” designations. These changes will be implemented in September 2025. Further, with the creation of an ad hoc Budget Committee, we have moved ahead to define “Core Values” and “Funding “Priorities”. These are the start of our strategic planning exercise and define how we fund students and use any residual amounts that are available.

Given the large number of recommendations by the PRT to the Program, specific activities have not happened for several items. For example, there has not been enough time to develop alternative branding, to change procedures for parents, or to create an EDI committee. Activities involving extensive fundraising have not occurred; we remain hopeful of our ability to serve a role in developing better research spaces and student support. Ultimately, graduate student funding levels from the Government and University will not change; changes to student stipends will need to occur from supervising faculty. While our research productivity increases each year, supervisors cannot commit to an additional $10, 000 or more per student. Despite the difficult financial situation, the Molecular Science Program is happy to have resolved immediate issues. Our Program changes will directly improve student experience. We look forward to using the PRT recommendations in the next few years to continue improvements for the Program.