

FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW (PPR)

Bachelor of Fine Arts

In Image Arts: Photography Media Arts

The Creative School

In accordance with the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response and assessments of the undergraduate Image Arts: Photography Media Arts program (formally “Photography Studies”). This report identifies the strengths of the program, together with opportunities for program improvements and enhancements, and it sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

This report also includes an Implementation Plan that identifies who will be responsible for approving the recommendations set out in the final assessment report; who will be responsible for providing any resources entailed by those recommendations; any changes in organization, policy, or governance that will be necessary to meet the recommendations, who will be responsible for leading those recommendations; and timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations.

SUMMARY OF THE PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW OF Image Arts: Photography Media Arts

The School of Image Arts offers full-time, four-year Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degrees in its two undergraduate programs, Film Studies and Photography Studies (name change to Photography Media Arts as of Fall 2023). Students in either program may elect the Integrated Digital Option during their third and fourth years. This option provides a hybrid curriculum with greater emphasis on emerging digital media.

The internationally renowned Image Arts: Photography Media Arts program embraces a full range of lens-based media with a focus on creating images that compel, provoke and inspire viewers.

Students can create their own path or mix and match between contemporary art, documentary, editorial, commercial, photojournalism and creative image-making. They can learn all aspects of photography and media art, including camera and lighting, installation experience, 3D environments, graphic design, and curation, among others.

Work placements, visiting artists programs, workshops, interdisciplinary collaborations and practical assignments, including publishing and professional gallery exhibitions, are also available to students. They can also access the Image Centre, Canada’s leading centre for the research and exhibition of photography, which contains the world-renowned Black Star Collection.

This document comprises the The Creative School (TCS) Dean’s response to the Peer Review Team (PRT) Report and the School’s response, in accordance with the directions of the 2020 Periodic Program Review (PPR) Manual and with Section 8.2 of Senate Policy 126, Periodic Program Review of Graduate

and Undergraduate Programs. The site visit by the external PRT for the Periodic Program Review was carried out between March 13 and 14, 2023. The Photography Media Arts program submitted a list of potential Peer Review Team (PRT) candidates to the Office of the Dean who then selected

Yam Lau, Associate Professor, Graduate Program in Visual Arts, Department of Visual Art & Art History, York University

Peter Sramek, Professor Emeritus, Faculty of Art, OCAD University

The PRT report acknowledges the Photography Media Arts program's commitment to review and improvement, highlighting the revision of core courses, program rebranding and the hiring of new faculty as positive steps. The review team recognizes that the photography industry is in constant flux, and supports the program's focus on having students think more broadly about photography as a medium. While they approved of the program's current direction, there were several areas in which the PRT felt the program could improve, including reviewing courses for relevance and redundancies, hiring an academic coordinator to aide students with course sequencing during their first two years of the program and a more robust structure of support for internships.

The PRT Report offered the following ten critical recommendations (divided into short and long term recommendations), and the School has responded thoughtfully to each to generate their Implementation Plan. The Dean's Office is in full support of the School's responses to the PRT recommendations.

The program submitted its response to the PRT report to the Dean of the Creative School to which the Dean responded on June 28, 2023.

The Academic Standards Committee completed its assessment of the Image Arts - Photography Media Arts PPR on Jan 18, 2024. The Committee indicated that a thorough, analytical and self-critical program review was conducted. The program provided a detailed plan for future growth and support for development.

The Academic Standards Committee recommends that the program continue, as well as provide a one-year follow-up report, as follows:

1. The mandated One-Year Follow-up Report be submitted by June 30, 2025 to include:
 - a. An update on all curricular changes as indicated in the Implementation Plan
 - b. A plan outlining how the program will comply with Faculty level changes to curriculum and planning
 - c. A description of the measures and steps the school has taken to engage with EDI throughout its curriculum and program activities

Presented to Senate for Approval: **March 5, 2024**

Start date of next Periodic Program Review: **2026-27**

SUMMARY OF THE REVIEWERS' RECOMMENDATIONS WITH THE PROGRAM'S AND DEAN'S RESPONSES

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATION 1: Rebranding/visioning

The team recommends that the Program Director, Chair and Faculty move forward with their proposal to re-imagine Photography Studies as Photography Media Arts. This rebranding presents an ambitious and cohesive vision that will position the program at the forefront of post-secondary photographic art education. It encompasses an exciting conceptualization of Photography in today's environment where the notion of photographic image-making has expanded significantly. Building on this perspective, the redesign of the curriculum will fall into place, a redesign that is in fact already underway with current course updates. The rebranding initiatives outline three study streams that correspond to the current state of the photography medium. The three streams also satisfy the different career paths most envisioned by students today. The team suggests the program stakeholders outline a timetable to execute the vision, starting with the name change as a way to galvanize support and excitement. As the three study streams are an ambitious restructuring of the current program, it will be important to map out clear paths for current and incoming students, in tandem with the faculty complement, course offerings, space and equipment availability.

As part of this new structure, the current Integrated Digital option will be clarified as an option directly within Photography, creating the suggested concentrations: Art, Studio, and Integrated Digital. Giving students the opportunity to select specialization pathways such as fine art, commercial or expanded digital practices will present clearer program options to students and be more attractive to prospective applicants looking for such study and future career preparation.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The school agrees with the recommendation to rebrand. It was our stated goal to rebrand/rename the program to "Photography Media Arts." It also takes up the priority already articulated regarding folding elements of the Integrated Digital program directly into the foundations of the photography program. As indicated in Section 9.2, we would propose that curriculum from the Integrated Digital Option would form part of the Photography Program to exist as one of three concentrations, e.g., "Creative Technologies," "Contemporary Art," and "Commercial & Design." Additionally, the two foundation years of the Photography Program will be adjusted to include an expanded photography/digital skill development so that digital media becomes embedded in the DNA of the Program.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The Dean's office is currently examining curriculum, infrastructure, and budgets holistically through a 360 Review of all programs within The Creative School. Several initiatives have surfaced and are under discussion with proposed developments expected in the next academic year. The curricular renewal in the School of Image Arts as outlined in the PRT recommendations and the program's response are timely, and when combined with the initiatives derived from the 360 Review, will better position the School of Image Arts toward excellence in the 21st century.

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATION 2: Curriculum Review and Course Clarity

The team expects that re-imagining the Photography Studies as Photography Media Arts entails major curriculum overhaul. This is an opportunity to strengthen and clarify the current course offerings. Foundation courses such as Visual Studies I, II and III need to be finely calibrated to prepare students for

the focused streams in the third and fourth years. We advise that the course titles be expanded to indicate differentiation between these courses. For example, Visual Studies I currently explores composition and design. The course could be renamed Visual Studies I: Composition and Design. Such changes provide clarity to students and guidance for course design.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The school agrees with the recommendation to strengthen and clarify the current course offerings and calibrate visual studies courses with production courses to eliminate redundancies and to prepare students for the focussed streams in the third and fourth year. The first two years would provide the foundational skills and knowledge required to function as a creative professional and image-maker in any of the possible concentrations. This would entail a few notable adjustments in the first two years of the current Photography Program—a number of which are already in progress. History courses are being redesigned to take on a more global and ECI perspective, and theory and visual culture courses are being adjusted to respond to the need for more diverse and inclusive content while also addressing issues of decolonization. Technology courses would still cover foundational photography skills such as studio lighting and post-production, but there will be a greater emphasis on moving image, audio, and graphic design, along with digital skills including coding, 3D modeling/capture/animation, and basic extended reality (XR). Some basic analogue photography training would remain in the foundation years and advanced training in analogue processes would be made available through specialized elective courses.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

See response to “SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATION 1: Rebranding/visioning.”

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATION 3: Year 1 and 2 Coordinator

During our conversations with current students and alumni, many expressed frustrations with the way courses are organized and sequenced. The most common issues are redundancy with course material and the lack of continuity and context for course material delivery. Students, especially the cohort in the first two years, expressed confusion and to some degree apathy. A couple of them said the program has an “identity crisis”. Some of their concerns were echoed during our conversations with faculty.

The team believes it is an opportune time to designate a coordinator for the first two years of the program. This is especially important since contract faculty are responsible for most of the teaching in the first two years. They may not have the institutional overview of the program and are inadvertently siloed in their courses. We believe course contents and their sequencing in the first two years need to be actively managed by a coordinator, who would oversee and ensure that course contents align with program objectives and that courses are delivered in a meaningful progression. We advise the role of the coordinator to be a full-time faculty and serve on a rotational basis. This role will be especially pertinent to ensure the success of the three professional streams in the third and fourth year. The coordinator can steward the first two years of studies to align with the three professional streams and thus ensure that students are sufficiently prepared and informed about their choices.

We also suggest paying attention to developing better communication and coordination overall between full-time and CUPE faculty and technical staff. This applies to creating and maintaining shared understandings of curricular objectives, course and program learning expectations and what is required in courses in the way of student production. Ensuring that there is good communication will support individual courses and instructors, as well as the implementation of structural and philosophical changes.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The school agrees with the recommendation to create a service position acting as the Year 1 and Year 2 Coordinator who will guide faculty teaching in the first two years of studies to both eliminate redundancies and help coordinate and align curriculum with skills that will prepare students for the three professional streams (art, commercial and creative technologies) and thus ensure that students can make informed choices about the pathways toward specialization.

The school also agrees with the recommendation to improve communication between TFA and CUPE faculty as regards curricular objectives, course and program learning expectations. We have already mapped the current curriculum in May 2023 in intensive meetings reviewing all aspects of the courses. The new 1st and 2nd Year Coordinator is working with faculty over the summer to clarify and adjust production and technology courses in year one and year two to ensure the least amount of repetition and to see that we are covering essential skills.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

As mentioned previously, the Dean's office is undertaking a 360 Review of all programs within The Creative School. Several initiatives have surfaced and are under discussion with proposed developments expected in the next academic year. The possible implementation of university-wide availability of courses from the School of Image Arts is timely. This, combined with an examination of core and elective courses within Image Arts as well as other programs within The Creative School will stimulate synergies and enhance the School of Image Arts to continue as a leading post-secondary educational institution.

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATION 4: University-wide Engagement

The central position of the photographic image as an evolving and contested medium within current social and cultural dynamics has the potential to attract a wide range of students within the university. The opening of courses to a wider student body, especially the larger lecture and elective studies courses, would connect the program more directly as a key player within Image Arts, The Creative School and the broader university. The increased enrollment base could support the offering of additional Photography courses and allow for the realistic definition of specialization pathways within a reconfigured program which is now limited in the number of optional courses it can mount each year.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The school agrees with the recommendation to open our courses to non-Image Arts and university wide. In the context of the Creative School's 360 revisioning, the program is looking at ways of opening up both electives and core courses to students in other programs in order to expand offerings, eliminate redundancies and allow for increased student enrolment in our electives. This will help to expand our course offerings and allow our students to have more choice.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

See response to "SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATION 3: Year 1 and 2 Coordinator."

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATION 5: Student Engagement

During our meeting with students, many voiced their frustration with the lack of platforms where their concerns could be heard. We recommend the program create some type of open channel where students can communicate with faculty directly about their experience in the program. A town hall type of meeting at the end of the first or second year between students and faculty will provide an excellent

opportunity for inclusion and participation. It is also an opportunity to include student perspectives in ongoing program planning.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The school agrees with the recommendation to make communication a key issue, both in listening to our students and in outlining and making clearer the paths of students' curricular choices. We are hearing from students about the need for forums and we are looking at running more frequent orientations, town halls and pizza lunches for the school. We also intend to allow for more two-way communication with our students by planning periodic Wellness days with snacks and chat. The development of coordinators for each year of the program would also open lines of communication with faculty and students—something we are looking at.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

See response to "SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATION 3: Year 1 and 2 Coordinator."

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATION 1: New Hires

It is important to continue to hire more full-time, tenure-track faculty that fit the forward-thinking objectives of the program and the university. We believe the current faculty complement reflects a deficit that leads to some of the structural challenges indicated in the recommendations. While we fully support the re-imagining proposed in the Photography Media Art initiative, implementation of such an ambitious goal requires new full-time hires, especially related to decolonization, diversity of voices and a broad view of contemporary photographic practices. Assigning key faculty to teach the new curriculum that targets desired developments in content and delivery methods will be important. Increasing the percentage of core courses taught by permanent faculty, especially in the lower levels, will help bring the program in line with intended developments. At the same time, it is important not to overextend the demands on new faculty to carry the burden of change.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The school agrees with the recommendation to seek new faculty hires; Those hires made in the last two years have already fundamentally shifted our ability to address decolonization in the curriculum and have increased our diversity of voices in front of the classroom while broadening our view of contemporary photographic practices. We aim to assign key faculty to develop and teach new curriculum that targets desired developments in content and delivery methods but our ratio of full-time to part-time faculty is low. Creating new curriculum while also carrying a high service load, related to many key curricular goals (Max Ex, Function, Rougher, Artspace, etc.) as well as filling the committee roles left vacant by a large contingent of senior faculty retiring all at once, has made our tasks more difficult. We would like to increase the percentage of core courses taught by permanent faculty, especially in the lower levels, but more hires will be needed to bring the program in line with intended developments, unless a teaching stream is established, which would allow us to share some of the service load.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The Dean's office will work with the School and Human Resources to regularly review the School's staffing needs as the program evolves. Several factors are currently in play that influence next steps regarding staffing, including curricular renewal, and implementation of initiatives from the 360 Review.

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATION 2: Technological Support

We suggest continuing to provide solid technological support for the hands-on practice that is needed in

this discipline. At the same time, the expressed philosophy of teaching to workflow approaches rather than specific current tools, such as software, supports creative problem-solving and produces more flexible graduates. Faculty must be oriented to understand this philosophy and apply it to their course content planning. This can also help avoid the difficulty of requiring all students to use a particular specialized piece of equipment that may be in limited supply or unavailable in the Technology Centre.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

See response to “SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATION 2: Curriculum Review and Course Clarity”

DEAN’S RESPONSE:

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATION 3: Course Delivery Formats

As class sizes have increased, we heard students complain about not getting proper feedback for work on which they have committed time and production costs. We encourage the program to experiment with class duration. Production courses could be 4 hours and study courses reduced. To provide some comparisons, current TMU Photography Program courses are three hours per week, while at York University, undergraduate studio courses are four hours per week, while Guelph University delivers their studio courses in two three-hour sessions (6 hours total) per week.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The school agrees with the recommendation and are willing to look at alternative structures to ensure that we can deliver the curriculum and retain studio education; the strength of the BFA program is that we go beyond “skills” and “training” by working with the whole individual as they develop creative problem-solving skills, while always maintaining a balance of practice and theory. The timetable and course structures suited to business classes and engineering students are not necessarily ideal for studio-based practices, so we will continue to work to find the right balance.

DEAN’S RESPONSE:

See response to “SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATION 1: Rebranding/visioning.”

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATION 4: Internships and Professional Skills

It is strongly suggested to develop a more robust structure and support for experiential internship opportunities. This is extremely valuable in a discipline such as Photography but requires significant oversight and active support in finding placements along with adequate student preparation and guidance. From what the team can tell, this appears to be lacking currently and relatively few students manage to undertake internships. This is true despite the availability of organizational and curatorial opportunities within the program and the various galleries and Image Centre next door. These are focused on exhibition and publishing and limited to a few students each year. They also suit the professional needs of only a particular set of students. More external opportunities could allow for increased experiences in commercial and expanded digital imaging contexts, but active promotion and support is needed to get students to engage.

Regarding essential professional skills, students suggested that they be required to professionally prepare and frame at least some of their works each year to gain proficiency in the area of gallery presentation. This indicates that they are not necessarily exposed to these skills within the curriculum today, although this particular comment may well be due to restrictions during the pandemic that limited many hands-on teaching. A requirement for a third-year professional practices course would benefit all students,

especially if it could be designed to address a range of career directions that students may be contemplating.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The school agrees with the recommendation to develop an internship program. This is already a discussion; we plan to look at all the Creative School internships to see what is best suited to Image Arts. For example, in the School of Fashion, students must accrue a specified number of internship hours starting in their second year of the program. These hours can be acquired through short-term experiences (e.g., one-day jobs), or longer-term contracts, and are monitored by an internship coordinator. Once the specified number of hours has been achieved, students would receive credit for a fourth-year internship course.

It is proposed that an internship coordinator will help connect students with opportunities, but students can also find internship activities on their own. The School of Image Arts also has several available internship and experiential learning opportunities readily available through staff positions at Artspace gallery, career-boost positions (e.g., Photography Program Director's assistant, Gallery assistant for Image Factory and Gallery 310), and through various positions as part of student-led initiatives: Maximum Exposure, Function Magazine, the Converge lecture series, ROUGHER, etc.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The Dean's office is committed to working with the School to support initiatives that improve student experience.

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATION 5: Recruitment and Promotion

Although the statistics in the self-study reflect some recent softness in student numbers, there are various reasons for this. The review team believes that this does not reflect a reduction in the importance of the photographic medium and the need for professional practitioners. To the contrary, photographic images permeate contemporary society and there is a need for those who work with them intelligently in new and diverse contexts. The proposed redesign of the program will help make it clear how the TMU program can prepare graduates to fill these needs and keep the program flexible enough to respond to changes.

Enrollment issues are being experienced in university art programs elsewhere and TMU must be able to promote the Photography program with clarity in order to attract appropriate applicants. Some current students suggested in conversation that they were unsure what the program was when they applied to it. This could be changed. During the site visit, we saw publications of very high-quality students' work, reflecting the success of the program. It would be beneficial to archive students' work on the program website and positively showcase it as a recruitment tool. Other similar university programs have been actively engaging potential applicants by reaching out to high schools to give talks and demos. This may be something to consider. Along with the redefinition of the program branding, structure and professional study pathways such promotional presentation can maintain the premier reputation and presence of TMU Photography in the Canadian educational environment.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The school agrees with the recommendation to develop fresh recruitment materials using high quality student work. Based on the proposed rebranding we have developed new language, a visual slideshow and pitch—all reflecting the new name, chosen based on multiple surveys, much deep discussion and in collaboration with Creative School and TMU marketing teams. We used to visit high schools and do

portfolio reviews with potential students in the past. Now that the disruptions of the pandemic have stabilized, we intend to do this again, starting in fall 2023. We also recognise the promotional power of our students' works and intend to update the website with work of recent grads as well as highlighting our alumni success stories.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The Dean's office is committed to working with the School to support initiatives that improve student experience.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: PHOTOGRAPHY MEDIA ARTS

<p>Priority Recommendation #1: Curricular Renewal Phase One - Rebrand program "Photography Media Arts"</p>
<p>Rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PRT recommended that we move forward with rebranding, which has been in process for 2022-23. Photography has undergone a profound transformation due to advances in digital technologies. Photographers must develop expanded, transdisciplinary practices that include video, audio, and an assortment of other screen-based and digital media. High schools now offer "Media Arts" instead of photography classes. Phase One in our curricular redesign begins with changing the name of the program from "Photography Studies" to "Photography Media Arts" to align more effectively with the current professional realities.
<p>Implementation Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Submit Category 1 minor modifications to course curricula for fall 2023 ● Submit Major modification forms - Photography Name Change Proposal (submitted and approved) ● Update and align course content within year 1 and 2 in the existing curricular structure to emphasize the range of digital technologies. ● Phase Two in our curricular redesign is currently in development (see priorities below)
<p>Timeline: November - May 31, 2023; Approved Oct 3, 2023</p>
<p>Responsibility for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chair, Program Curriculum Committee in consultation with faculty, School Curriculum Committee, PD

<p>Priority Recommendation #2: Curriculum - Map photography course content in all four years to assess content sequencing and identify learning outcomes, skills, artists discussed, assignments, professional experiences, etc.</p>

Rationale:

- PRT recommended that we map the program in order to refine and modify courses to create a more cohesive foundation, eliminating redundancies and creating more offerings in digital and creative technologies. It is necessary to clarify what each course is covering, improve messaging so students understand the curriculum and prepare students for potentially streaming into specializations in later years.

Implementation Actions:

- A thorough review of the existing curriculum and learning outcomes
- Continue the process of rebranding the program through curricular developments
- Look at ways to enhance student learning through emerging technologies
- Strengthen and clarify the current course offerings.
- History and theory curriculum overhaul (see 4.1) to determine logical flow from 1st - 4th years.
- Fine-tune foundational courses (Visual Studies I, II and III) to reduce redundancies See below re: redesign of years 1 and 2.
- Upon reviewing the curriculum, examine current credit requirements for accessibility, continuity, and workload management issues.
- Engage and work collaboratively with colleagues from The Creative School as programs prepare to engage with the 360 recommendations.

Timeline:

November - May 31, 2024

Responsibility for

- Program Curriculum Committee in consultation with faculty, School Curriculum committee, PD, Chair, Curriculum advisor

Priority Recommendation #3:

Curriculum - Create service role: Curriculum Coordinator Year 1+2

Rationale:

PRT pointed out: "...most common issues are redundancy with course material and the lack of continuity and context for course material delivery...[I]t is an opportune time to designate a coordinator for the first two years of the program. This is especially important since contract faculty are responsible for most of the teaching in the first two years."

- We want to enhance the student experience and eliminate gaps and redundancies in the curriculum through the participation of a TFA faculty member acting as coordinator in the curriculum in years one and two.
- It is also aimed at enhancing student retention, as there is often a lack of follow-up if only CUPE faculty are teaching in the first two years of the program.

Implementation Actions:

- Appoint Curriculum Coordinator Year 1+2 (4.2 & 4.3) - Done
- Map curriculum to sequence course content and ensure that course content aligns with program objectives and that courses are delivered in a meaningful progression.

Timeline:

May 2023 - ongoing

Responsibility for

- Chair, PD, Curriculum Coordinator Year 1+2, program curriculum committee, Program Faculty

Priority Recommendation #4:

Curriculum - Phase 2 of Rebranding Program and curriculum redesign: Continue with curricular modifications and redesign Year 1 & 2 foundations courses and core courses to establish foundation skills, which allow students to stream into “areas of focus,” including “Design and Commercial,” “Contemporary Art,” and “Creative Technologies” in Third and Fourth Years.

Rationale:

Today’s students are looking for hands-on skills and professional opportunities. There is a large proportion of students who want to work in the fields of editorial, fashion and commercial photography, a percentage that is interested in new technologies and another group that is drawn to contemporary art, curation and theory. This means they have different goals by third year, depending on the area they want to concentrate on. We want to create multiple paths for students to follow and recommend different electives both in IMA and the Creative School, depending on which of these areas they choose.

Implementation Actions:

With assistance from the Curriculum Coordinator for Year 1+2 and in consultation with faculty, foundation courses will be closely examined to determine key skills and learning outcomes all students need before moving on to specializations.

- Reduce the number of core courses to allow specialization in years three and four
- Revamp the core photography theory course to integrate cross-cultural, post-colonial, feminist, and critical race theory
- Include more industry-based professional development
- Balance traditional photography skills with expanded technological content
- Develop outlines for a robust internship program
- Better integrate digital media, including video, animation, coding, etc.;;
 - Focus on foundational skills and knowledge (history, theory, design, visual culture, creativity, and creative technology) required to function as a creative professional and image-maker in any of the possible concentrations.
 - Emphasize creative technologies; teach students a wide range of skills
 - Further eliminate redundancies, address gaps
 - Consider place of analogue

- Sign post areas of focus possible in years 3 & 4

Timeline:

Jan – May 2024

Responsibility for

- PD, Curriculum Coordinator Year 1+2, program curriculum committee, Program Faculty, curriculum specialist (CELT), Chair, Academic coordinator

Priority Recommendation #5:

Curriculum - Based on the discussions of #1-4 above, revise course titles and/or descriptions, and if needed, reposition course delivery in the program.

Rationale:

Based on the PRT report as well as results from the 360 analyses currently underway in The Creative School, we anticipate that major modifications related to course structure and placement will be an integral part of the redesign to be submitted in May 2024. The evolution of photography (i.e., use of mobile devices, digital media, social media, and AI) has influenced and expanded the field of still, interactive and moving media. The PPR along with the recommendation of the PRT, have highlighted the need to better align our degree offering vis-a-vis the professional field today.

Implementation Actions:

- Calibrate course titles to better differentiate courses and provide clarity to students. I.e., Visual Studies I currently explores composition and design. Rename the course Visual Studies I: Design Fundamentals
- Look at the sequencing of courses for best logic
- Continue to redesign art history courses to include a global perspective and theory and visual culture courses to include diverse and inclusive content.
- Redesign technology courses to include coding, 3D modeling, capture animation and extended reality.
- Integrate career-relevant skills in commercial photography
- Integrate craft aspects of analogue photography

Timeline:

Nov 2023 - Sept 2025

Responsibility for

- PD, Curriculum Coordinator Year 1+2, program curriculum committee, Program Faculty, curriculum specialist (CELT), chair, Academic coordinator

Priority Recommendation #6:

360 Revisioning - Meet with RTA New Media to discuss synergies in electives pertaining to

technological areas including CGI, VFZ, animation, virtual production, 3D projection and game design. Look at other possible programs for synergies.

Rationale:

As the Creative School undertakes a reimagining of the faculty, removing silos and creating “Curricular Clusters” and “Creative School Experience” foundations courses across the faculty, we need to examine where our programs have cross-over or courses that are of interest to students in other faculties as well as eliminating/negotiating courses taught elsewhere.

Implementation Actions:

In collaboration with the Creative School Curriculum specialist and Associate Dean, we are participating in a series of meetings to look at shared aspects of our curricula and to see what courses might be cross-listed or collapsed.

- Identify those shared courses
- Work to find solutions to eliminate redundant courses through cross-listing or eliminating electives
- Identify what core courses can be turned into electives or be offered more broadly (or eliminated, if deemed redundant with other curricular changes)
- Reduce credits (core or electives) to conform with university standard credit count

Timeline:

Before 2024/25 loading - ongoing in Winter 2024

Responsibility for

PD in consultation with TFA faculty and program curriculum committee, chair, Academic coordinator, School Manager

Priority Recommendation #7:

360 Revisioning - Discuss implementation of CSE courses and other mode of delivery recommendations.

Rationale:

As discussed in priority #6 all programs are asked to cut one course in each year of the program to make room for a one-semester Creative School Experience (CSE) course. These courses aim to provide students across the faculty opportunities for exposure to a range of disciplines, theories and practices while meeting key learning objectives.

Implementation Actions:

- Look at enrollment for courses over last year
- Work with statistics and overview of enrollments provided in curriculum audit submitted by Faculty Curricular Specialist in Mid-November
- Meet with program curriculum committees to discuss and analyze the data
- Meet with School Curriculum Committee to discuss and analyze the data
- Present the data to TFA faculty for feedback
- Analyze the curriculum goals and modifications (as carried out by faculty and program curriculum committees in priorities 1-6 above)
- Make decisions regarding which courses to cut (once the outlines of the CSE courses are provided), to see what curricular goals are met
- Ensure that all our key learning outcomes are met in each semester of the program.

Timeline:

Nov 2023 - May 2024

Responsibility for:

- Chair, PD, Curriculum Coordinator Year 1+2, program curriculum committee, program faculty, curriculum specialist (CELT), academic coordinator

Priority Recommendation #8:

Program Identity and EDI - Evaluate program needs and schedule training for faculty in EDI

Rationale: In the PPR and the PRT report a high level of attention was given to questions of equity within the program. The need to decolonize the curriculum and highlight diverse practitioners and adopt global perspectives in history, theory and production courses was identified during the research, surveys, and preparation of the PPR. Some of these issues have already been addressed in revamping course content in history and theory courses to include global perspectives and decentre Western, male, and Eurocentric canons. This process will continue to evolve over the next few years in production courses. Additionally, the program students and alumni identified the dearth of racial and ethnic diversity in the tenured faculty cohort and cited the need to hire diverse faculty in order to address this significant gap.

Implementation Actions:

- Since the PPR was submitted to the dean in early 2020, three new faculty members have been hired broadening racial, ethnic, sexual orientation and gender inequities in the faculty.

Timeline:

May 2023 - ongoing

Responsibility for

- Chair, PD, All Faculty

Priority Recommendation #9:

Program Identity and EDI - Establish a new school Advisory Council.

Rationale:

The advisory council has not been active since COVID. Given all the changes in the photography media arts industries, new input is needed to advise on the future of the school.

Implementation Actions:

- Invite new council members once approved by the dean
- Put forward new list for approval at School Council
- Strike new advisory council

Timeline:

- Sept–Dec 2023 gather names from faculty
- Winter 2024 - approval from dean, Chair invites members
- June 2024 - first advisory gathering

Responsibility for

- Chair, PDs, Faculty

Priority Recommendation #10:

Student Experience - Create a communication plan re: rebranding and to improve student’s understanding of the steps required to complete the program and choose their courses.

Rationale:

We have noted that students don’t have a clear sense of the logic and rationale for the courses they are taking. There may be a gap in understanding how our courses lead to critical thinking and writing skills and professional opportunities

Implementation Actions:

- Create open channels so that students can communicate with faculty directly about their experiences in the program (i.e., regular town halls).
- Assign one faculty member as coordinator for each year, who will be in charge of going to lecture courses to explain curricular path that year and highlight experiential learning opportunities such as exchanges, career boost and co-ops.
- Draft a schematic of the program that can be shared with students each semester as the course intentions period is advertised
- Work with the social media/events coordinator and Academic coordinator to create tools to communicate

Timeline:

Fall 2024 - fall 2025

Responsibility for

PD, Curriculum Coordinator Year 1+2, chair, Program Curriculum Committee, faculty

Priority Recommendation #11:

Student Experience - Map assignments per semester to evaluate student workload, equipment availability and access to technical staff.

Rationale:

PRT suggested we integrate workflow approaches rather than specific current tools, such as software, to support creative problem-solving and produce more flexible graduates. They suggested we orient faculty to understand this philosophy and apply it to their course content planning. This approach helps avoid the difficulty of requiring all students to use a particular specialized piece of equipment that may be in limited supply or unavailable in the Technology Centre. Additionally, there are limited Staff and facilities resources.

Implementation Actions:

- Work with the School Manager, faculty and staff to understand resources and needs.
- Consider adjusting class schedules to avoid bottleneck at TRC
- Look at weekend and off-time use of facilities
- Work to avoid having all assignments due the same weeks in Semester

Timeline:

Fall 2024 - fall 2025

Responsibility for

- PD, Curriculum Coordinator Year 1+2, chair, Program Curriculum Committee, faculty

Priority Recommendation #12:

Student Experience - Expand opportunities to further Alumni relations and networking for current students

Rationale:

Seek Networking opportunities and internship possibilities for students through Alumni contacts.

Implementation Actions:

Create a service role for lead faculty member to take on. Will need to work in collaboration with development office and faculty, events manager and academic coordinator and faculty

- Update alumni lists through LinkedIn.
- List events and project critiques to invite alumni participation.
- Look at the calendar for the year and identify/schedule networking events for students.

Timeline:

February 2024 - ongoing

Responsibility for

- Faculty member (Service role) working with PD, chair, faculty

Priority Recommendation #13:

Student Experience - Establish industry outreach and internship goals and responsibilities.

Rationale:

- In our PPR surveys and feedback sessions with students in 2019 and 2020 - 2021, students identified a gap in the linkage between the program and industry-based experiences. Given the shift in photography media practices, we recognize the need to signpost the career opportunities our graduates will be prepared for, which goes well beyond traditional photographic skills and practices. This includes moving image and sound, e.g., video, as well as website design, photography for the screen, curation, exhibition, publication, and installation, as well as lighting for portrait and product, 3D animation, projection mapping, coding, and intro to gaming.

Implementation Actions:

- Create a service role for one faculty member to take lead and work with Faculty Internship coordinator, faculty, PD, Chair
- A new communication plan and marketing materials will need to be developed; however, these are part of ongoing operational activities, there will be no need for additional resources.

Timeline:

January 2024 - Sept 2025

Responsibility for

Faculty member (Service role) working with Creative School, PD, chair, curriculum committee and faculty members

Priority Recommendation #14:

Human Resources - Recommend hiring goals based on retirements and the needs of the school.

Rationale:

In 2021, three faculty members in photography retired. In Fall 2022 two new RFA faculty with Caribbean roots were hired. Both bring strategies for teaching diverse students and deal with experiences of immigration and difference as a central modality, practice and subject area. In Fall 2023 a new Art History Visual Culture professor was hired, whose work deals with Global Photographies. There are pending retirements in the next few years, which will call for a new hiring strategy depending on the new curriculum. EDI will remain a central priority.

Implementation Actions:

- Create a succession plan based on the changing curriculum and EDI priorities in the program
- Determine key areas of knowledge that are of value to the program and the larger Creative School Clusters associated with Photography Media Arts

Timeline:

1-2 years

Responsibility for

PDs, Chair, Faculty