

FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW (PPR) Bachelor of Arts (Honours) English Faculty of Arts

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 English Program. 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 English

This document comprises The Faculty of Art's Dean's response to the Peer Review Team (PRT) Report and the School's response, in accordance with the directions of the 2022 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 Feb 25-26, 2025. The English program submitted a list of potential Peer Review Team (PRT) candidates to the Office of the Dean, who then selected

Prof. Joshua Schuster, Director of the Centre for the Study of Theory and Criticism, Western University Prof. Eleanor Ty, Undergraduate Advisor, English; Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, Wilfrid Laurier University

The reviewers felt the English Department at TMU is thriving and well-administered. They were very impressed with the quality and successful endeavours of the faculty and the students in general. The chair and Undergraduate Director have created a collegial and friendly work atmosphere for everyone. The program, focusing on modern and contemporary literatures and cultures, meets the needs of the students in an urban campus. Its objective of providing students with reading, writing and critical skills while also giving them hands-on practical experience is unique in the province. The strong student numbers has enabled the Department to continue to hire new faculty over the last seven years. These new hires complement existing faculty area specializations and have expanded research and teaching areas in the Department.



The PRT Report offered the following eight critical 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 English program submitted its response to the PRT report to the Dean of The Faculty of Arts, to which the Dean responded on April 8, 2025.

The Academic Standards Committee completed its assessment of the English Program on May 8, 2025. 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:

The mandated One-Year Follow-up Report be submitted by June 30, 2026 to include:

1. An update on the Implementation Plan

Presented to Senate for Approval: June 3, 2025

Start date of next Periodic Program Review: 2031/33

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

RECOMMENDATION ONE:

That the University continue to support the Department's goals of integrating experiential learning and literary studies by providing faculty members with funding for their experiential learning projects. It is clear that the program is doing a lot with limited funding. An increase in funding for experiential learning, such as for class visits, site visits, White Wall Review, expanded practicum offerings, and co-op programs, will have an immediate and positive impact on the program. In other words, a little more financial support will go a long way, knowing how important these programs already are for the Department. The program may consider a "certificate of experiential learning" that students can add to their CV that indicates some degree of advanced achievement in experiential learning. The Department should also provide the Centre for Digital Humanities with support in its transition to the future Director who will hold a CRC appointment. While some additional funding will come with the CRC, the current Director should be supported with teaching release and/or a staff position of a few hours who can help facilitate and publicize the ongoing work done at the CDH. The program/faculty is aiming for a minor in Arts DH and, if so, further funding and support will be needed for the CDH to operate.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The English BA Program strongly supports elements of this recommendation while acknowledging the



current financial restraints imposed by the university on the Faculty of Arts. Since experiential learning is a significant component of the University's mission, additional financial support would enable further development in this area of student learning. Funding for class visits from professionals in diverse fields such as publishing along with support for site visits to GTA museums and cultural and professional institutions would enhance student experience by putting them in touch with a variety of experiences.

The Program acknowledges the generous support of the Faculty of Arts for the White Wall Review, a literary journal published by the Department of English that enhances student experiential learning through hands-on experiences in print and digital publishing, editing, event planning, and marketing. We look forward to finding ways to ensure long-term funding for this important and dynamic publication experience for both undergraduate and graduate students in English. This is also a recommendation that can be found in the self-study, where the program proposes ways to explore opportunities to integrate the White Wall Review into program course structures. It is crucial to have classrooms and other spaces in our department (like the WWR office) and on campus that support experiential learning with updated technology, movable desks and flexible classrooms. While our faculty work within the challenging classrooms available, it would greatly benefit from spaces for our practicum courses.

We agree also that additional support for the operations of the Centre for Digital Humanities (CDH) is necessary to ensure its future success as a leading centre of research and learning in the Faculty of Arts. The contributions of the CDH's leadership, direction, and administration should be supported by the Faculty of Arts through such means as teaching releases and funding for support staff. The CDH offers weekly programming along with a featured monthly event (DH@TMU). The director's administrative commitments, meetings with stakeholders and members, and planning take roughly 20 hours a month. The week-long summer university which was piloted last year currently requires another 80-100 hours to arrange and execute. The director's labor for these contributions to the Faculty of Arts comes to 160 hours during Fall and Winter terms, and 100 during the summer, for a total of 260 hours (this is a conservative estimate). The program agrees that a course release and additional staffing would enhance student experience by increasing opportunities for student learning and training in Digital Humanities. CDH projects like the *Yellow Nineties 2.0*, a award-winning digital archive, *Lesbian and Gay Liberation in Canada, Decameron 2.0, The Theatre of the Arts: Thomas Hope's Visionary Gallery Remediated, Wilde '82: A Conference of Some Importance, and Stories in Play* support student and faculty learning and research.

While a "certificate in experiential learning" is potentially a good idea, the program is unsure of how to implement this opportunity since TMU does not offer certification of this type as part of their degree designations. Upcoming developments toward a Concentration in Digital Humanities might provide opportunities to explore micro-credentials or summer school certification.

Priority/Timeline: High / Ongoing

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

Integrating experiential learning opportunities into student learning is a key component of Arts'



approach to degree programming. I am prepared to allot \$5000 annually to support the *White Wall Review* and have secured the Provost's commitment to match that amount annually over the next three years. The Society of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities (SASSH) often provides financial support for student publications; it would be worthwhile for student editors on the *White Wall Review* to explore whether matching funding might also be available for this important work. I have also highlighted funding for the *White Wall Review* as a priority for advancement.

The CDH has played a central role in grounding the English Department's international reputation as an academic leader in the field of digital humanities. While we are not in the financial position to provide a course release to the director at this time, I would be able to commit to funding for a Research Assistant position to help alleviate the workload of the director.

To discuss microcredentials with the Chang School, the program should communicate with the Program Director for Arts at the Chang School and other CE partners. The program should also be aware that a new policy covering non-credit programs is currently being developed (Policy 176). Once the draft policy is released, the program may want to review it to see if there are opportunities to develop an experiential learning designation. The Arts Ambassador program is currently exploring developing electronic badges to recognize student participation in extracurricular learning activities. It may be worthwhile to discuss with the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Studies, whether there is an opportunity to recognize the experiential learning that English students engage in as part of that program.

I agree with the program's designation of a "high" priority timeline to address this recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION TWO:

That the university make it a priority to hire someone to oversee the Departmental website, fix broken links, and make it more attractive to prospective students. The Department is really a vibrant place with dynamic faculty and students. However, one does not get this impression at all by perusing the Department website. Many links do not work. The introductory video needs to be updated. The achievements of faculty and students can be better highlighted on the website. It is well known that current and prospective students overwhelmingly use department websites for information on their academic pursuits. The website or a Departmental blog/newsletter should also be regularly updated with news and announcements. Current and recent graduates reported that they were attracted to the program for its sense of contemporary pedagogy and curriculum. However, it is very difficult to get a sense of these qualities from the existing website. The university really needs to improve the website to highlight the many strengths of the Department.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

Since recruitment is an essential part of the university's ongoing efforts to increase student admission, it is evidently crucial that our website remain active, dynamic, and up-to-date. We have no staff to support the website. In the past, our undergraduate program advisor volunteered his expertise to make updates and ensure a dynamic user experience. Currently, there is no one tasked with attending this necessary and important role. We await plans from the Faculty of Arts around centralizing marketing and websites



but considering the community-oriented nature of the English department, funds to support a social media assistant would help support the existing students and recruit others.

Priority/Timeline: High / Ongoing

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

I recognize that dynamic, accurate, and up-to-date information on our website and social media is an integral component of both student recruitment and of representing our programs to the world. As such, I have asked Central Communications (Central) to audit the social media platforms across Arts and our websites and to develop a plan for updating and managing our digital presence. The audits were completed at the end of February. Recommendations from that audit include Central managing Arts' social media under the Arts Instagram account; and Central providing a template for updated program websites that would need minimal updates. I am prepared to provide funding to support website updates for programs across Arts once we receive the implementation plan from Central.

I agree that updating our program websites and our social media is a "high" priority.

RECOMMENDATION THREE:

That the Faculty of Arts hire someone to be in charge of social media (ex. Instagram) for the Department in order to announce upcoming events, showcase departmental successes, feature faculty and student achievements, highlight publications such as White Wall Review, etc. This kind of social media would also be part of student recruitment.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The program has hired student social media coordinators in the past. Under current budgetary constraints, we have not had the funding to support this role. We recognize current efforts in the Faculty of Arts to centralize social media accounts and to provide support for showcasing the department via social media.

Priority/Timeline: High / Ongoing

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

Please see the response to Recommendation #2 above.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR:

That the University consider different ways of allocating classrooms so that English classes are not always put in the oldest buildings on campus, ex. Victoria and Kerr Hall. Ideally, these classrooms would be renovated so that computers, projectors, sound systems and wifi work, but in the meantime, perhaps some English classes could be located in newer buildings "owned" by other departments. Faculty should be informed of their timetables and room assignments earlier in the process (we heard that they are informed in July or August - this is very late compared to peer institutions which generally inform faculty of their teaching schedule by May).



PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The program agrees with this recommendation. As noted above, it is crucial to have classrooms and other spaces in our department (like the WWR office) and on campus that support experiential learning with updated technology, movable desks and flexible classrooms. While our faculty work within the challenging classrooms available, it would greatly benefit from spaces for our practicum courses.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

With only 163 classrooms (160 PTEC classrooms and 3 non-PTEC classrooms) for over 40,000 undergraduate students, space at the university is an ongoing issue. All Arts Chairs have been provided with information on classroom capacities to help programs make informed decisions regarding their classroom caps in an effort to help manage some aspects of classroom allocations; however, clearly, such efforts cannot address the classrooms in need of refurbishment or the lack of an Arts building. The Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is re-vitalizing its Space Committee. Part of its mandate is to review and make recommendations regarding university classrooms. It is my understanding that the Faculty of Arts representative is a member of the English Department. Their presence on the Space Committee will provide an opportunity to continue to raise these concerns to upper administration.

Teaching timetables are provided for in the Collective Agreement in Article 10.12.B (Teaching Workload). The Article provides that faculty members shall receive a provisional teaching workload for the next academic year by May 15; however, the provisional workload may be changed at a later date, due to unforeseen operational requirements. Article 10.12B further stipulates that "Faculty members shall be provided their teaching schedule not less than ten (10) weeks prior to the commencement of the term. In the event of previously unforeseen circumstances this schedule may be changed before the commencement of the term. In such cases the change must be made as early as possible and with the agreement of the faculty member, which will not be unreasonably withheld."

The program's designation of this priority as a "medium" priority is reasonable in that it recognizes both the limitations facing the program in its ability to effect direct change on the space issues and its ongoing efforts to advocate for meaningful change over the next two years.

RECOMMENDATION FIVE:

That there be more consultation and collaboration between the Department of English and the Chang School of Continuing Education. As the Chang School offers courses housed in the English Department, these offerings should complement rather than compete with each other.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The program has already acted on this recommendation by designating a new Chang School coordinator from our faculty.

Priority/Timeline: Low / 1-2 years / ongoing



DEAN'S RESPONSE:

I am happy to learn that the program has a new Chang School coordinator. I have also provided the contact details for the Chang Program Director for Arts programs (Jessica Cammaert) in recommendation #1 above.

The program has already acted on this recommendation; thus I concur that further action on this recommendation is a "low" priority.

RECOMMENDATION SIX:

That the Department enhance its Canadian Literature and Indigenous Literature course offerings and consider a future hire in one or both fields. The program currently does offer some courses led by faculty and sessionals in Canadian Literature and there are teachers who offer courses on Indigenous Literature. Indigenous literature could also be a component taught in other courses, ex. Urban, Popular, Gender and Sex, Non-Fiction, Autobiography, or Speculative Fiction.

The program is able to support the curricular needs in these fields, but it should increase support to help highlight the importance of these fields for students at TMU and in Canada. The English Department already makes excellent use of its Toronto location to support teaching and research on local issues, and it can continue and expand this work with a future hire in Can Lit and/or Indigenous Literature to become one of the leading programs in Canada in these fields.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

Currently we only have one faculty member who teaches our Indigenous Studies courses in the Department; however, the financial and resource support that this instructor requires should be provided by the Faculty of Arts and/or the University, including consistent annually committed funds to purchase beads and other material, to support guest speakers, Elders and other community members, and Indigenous author visits. This would support the University's academic plan, particularly its reconciliation aims around the TMU name-change.

Priority/Timeline: Low / 3-4 years

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The Faculty of Arts provides Guest Speaker Grants and Experiential Learning Grants that can be used to support some of the initiatives described in this recommendation (see Teaching Grants - Faculty of Arts - Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU)). Similar funding is provided through the university: Curriculum Development Fund - Indigenous TMU - Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU)

It is difficult to make a commitment for additional financial support without a clear understanding of support required; however, I am prepared to raise support for such coursework as a priority for fundraising with advancement once a clearer understanding of the financial support required has been established.



I concur with the program's timeline; but, am also prepared to pursue funding in a more aggressive time frame.

RECOMMENDATION SEVEN:

That the Department add an anonymous faculty survey to the next program review. The self-study PPR report was excellent and very detailed concerning the overall Department operations and its SRC work. The Department did conduct a very thorough anonymous student survey for enrolled students. An additional survey for faculty conducted anonymously would help provide further context and feedback for the reviewers. Faculty reported a good sense of collegiality and camaraderie. The program has been very successful in attracting new faculty who are leaders in their fields. An anonymous survey for faculty is typical in a program review and will provide a means for the faculty to participate more in the self-study process.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

In general, yes, the program agrees with this recommendation, though it would need to be followed-up by those who oversee the PPR process. There was room for anonymous faculty feedback in the March 19, 2024, ASCOR Self-Analysis Session for the PPR. Perhaps a more direct faculty survey such as those organized for students would allow more insight from TFA members.

Priority/Timeline: Low / 4-5 years

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

Questions, concerns, and suggestions regarding the PPR process should be directed to the Director Curriculum Quality Assurance.

Under Policy 126, undergraduate programs are required to undertake a PPR within an 8-year cycle; thus the low priority and 4 - 5 year timeline proposed by the program is reasonable.

RECOMMENDATION EIGHT:

That the Department continue to revise ENG 810 English Research Methods now that it is taught in second year. Some more consideration about what exactly this course is supposed to teach, what skills the Department would like students to acquire, and what new online or material archives could be used would be helpful. Since there are three sections of it being offered each year, its original parameters need to be expanded. A slight revision to the course description would enable more faculty members to teach it based on their areas of research and interest.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The program strongly agrees with this recommendation. Department assessment of ENG 810 is the first high-priority recommendation identified in the Self-Self Study: "By aligning ENG 810 and ENG 400 more thoroughly, and by reflecting on the overall design, goal, and learning outcomes of both courses, the program will be able to better organize required courses that both address student learning needs and experiences while bringing more faculty onboard as potential instructors in these courses."



Priority/Timeline: High / 1-2 years

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

Curriculum management is an ongoing iterative process. I am pleased to note the program's commitment to delivering a well-considered curriculum that is responsive to changing needs overtime while centering program learning outcomes and student needs.

The program's designation of the priority to address this recommendation as "high" is reasonable and in line with their commitment to excellence in their curriculum.

Policy Changes, Resources, Timelines:

None of the recommendations require any changes in organization, policy or governance.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: English

Priority Recommendation # 1: Revise ENG 810 English Research Methods to align with its second-year placement and expand scope to reflect faculty expertise.

Rationale: Identified as a high priority in the Self-Study and endorsed by peer reviewers, revising ENG 810 is critical for improving curricular coherence, research skill development, and instructional flexibility. The course should be aligned with ENG 400 and adjusted to the needs of second-year students.

Implementation Actions:

- · Review ENG 810's current learning outcomes, assessments, and scope.
- · Engage Curriculum Committee to revise the course outline and expand its parameters.
- · Consult faculty on potential contributions and areas of expertise.
- · Update the calendar course description to reflect broader research methods and approaches.
- · Align ENG 810 with ENG 400 to ensure progression of research skills.
- · Monitor student feedback and learning outcomes.

Timeline: 2025–26 academic year; implementation for Fall 2026. Course revision to be submitted to Department Council in Winter 2026; Deliver revised course to students in Fall 2027

Responsibility for

- a) leading initiative: Undergraduate Program Director, Chair, Curriculum Committee
- b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: e.g. Faculty Dean, UPO

Priority Recommendation # 2: Enhance support for experiential learning initiatives, including funding for class and site visits, the *White Wall Review*, co-op and practicum opportunities, and the Centre for Digital Humanities (CDH).

Rationale: (short description of information from the self-study that supports the recommendation)

Experiential learning was emphasized in the Self-Study as a high-impact practice that enhances student learning and engagement. Peer reviewers recognized the department's innovative integration of experiential learning despite limited funding. Expanded support aligns with institutional priorities and enables broader student access to career-connected learning.



Implementation Actions:

- Identify funding opportunities for experiential learning projects, including guest speakers and site visits.
- Discuss integration of the White Wall Review into existing courses.
- Continue to secure long-term funding and resources for the White Wall Review from internal and external sources
- Support CDH with course release and staffing to sustain programming and research projects.

Timeline: 2025–26 academic year (initial changes); ongoing development through 2026–27.

Responsibility for

- a) leading initiative: Undergraduate Program Director, CDH Director, Chair, Creative Writing Committee
- b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: Faculty Dean

Priority Recommendation # 3: Improve the Department website and social media presence to better showcase faculty, students, events, and the academic experience.

Rationale: Highlighted by both self-study and peer reviewers as essential for recruitment and student engagement. Current limitations on staff support hinder timely updates. Students and prospective applicants rely heavily on online presence when making program decisions.

Implementation Actions:

- Assess current website gaps and usability issues.
- Coordinate with the Faculty of Arts marketing team on a centralization plan.
- Secure funding for a part-time web assistant or assign responsibility to an existing role.
- Implement a regular update schedule for events, news, and achievements.

Timeline: Planning in 2025; implementation beginning in 2026.

Responsibility for

- a) leading initiative: Program Chair/Director
- b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: Faculty Dean, Arts Marketing

Team

Priority Recommendation # 4: Improve collaboration and alignment between the Department and the Chang School of Continuing Education.

Rationale: Peer reviewers noted the potential for greater synergy between departmental offerings and Chang School courses. New coordination roles have been established to address overlap and competition.

Implementation Actions:

- Meet regularly with Chang School to coordinate course offerings.
- Review and revise course overlap or duplication.
- Develop cross-listed or co-branded offerings where appropriate.

Timeline: Ongoing; to be evaluated over 2025–27.

Responsibility for



- a) leading initiative: Program Chair/Director; Chang School Coordinator (Department)
- **b)** approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: Faculty Dean, Chang School Academic Lead

Priority Recommendation # 5: Expand offerings and support in Canadian and Indigenous Literature, including consideration of a future hire.

Rationale: The self-study emphasized the limited current capacity in these fields, and peer reviewers endorsed their expansion as a way to enhance diversity, decolonization efforts, and alignment with TMU's values.

Implementation Actions:

- Review current curriculum to identify gaps and opportunities.
- Provide stable financial and labour support for current Indigenous Literature course offerings (materials, Teaching Assistants, guest speakers, Elders).
- Propose future hire in Canadian/Indigenous Literature.
- Highlight existing offerings in student-facing materials.

Timeline: Long-term goal: 2026–28.

Responsibility for

a) leading initiative: Program Chair/Director in consultation with Department

b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: Faculty Dean, Vice-Provost Faculty Affairs

Priority Recommendation # 6: Develop and offer concentrations within the undergraduate program.

Rationale: Identified in SOAR and the student survey; supported by peer reviewers; Supports societal need by providing students with the opportunity to develop in-depth knowledge within a core area of study.

Implementation Actions:

- Develop concentrations in Law and Literature and Transnational and Migrant Literatures with Curriculum Committee
- Review with faculty
- Implement assessment/approvals process for integration of concentrations into curriculum
- Clearly communicate availability of concentrations and registration process to students.
- Develop any core elective courses required for the concentration, if needed
- Monitor course availability
- Monitor student enrolments in concentrations

Timeline: 2025-26 academic year with submission of proposal to VPA by June 30, 2026; commences Fall 2028

Responsibility for

a) leading initiative: Program Chair/Director, Curriculum Committee

b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: Faculty, Faculty Dean, UPO

Priority Recommendation # 7: Refresh and integrate the Program Advisory Council (PAC)

Rationale: The Department will foster connections with the PAC and more directly integrate them into the life of the Department through open houses, special events, and postgraduate career talks in their area of specialization.



Implementation Actions:

- Identify new PAC members
- Invite members to serve on PAC
- Share Self-Study and other curricular information with PAC for discussion and review
- Integrate PAC into student life through department events and recruitment efforts

Timeline: 2025-26 academic year with submission of proposed names to Dean in F2025; introduce PAC to faculty and students at event W2026

Responsibility for

a) leading initiative: Program Chair/Director, Curriculum Committee

b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: Faculty Dean

Priority Recommendation # 8: Improved first-year course scheduling and classrooms

Rationale: Identified in SOAR and student survey; supported by peer reviewers.

Implementation Actions:

- Develop and formalize pedagogic rationale for course scheduling and classrooms with Curriculum Committee
- Review rationale with faculty
- Consultation with Faculty of Arts
- Implement rationale and recommendations into CIDs
- Monitor course availability and course capacities to align with classrooms

Timeline: 2025-26 academic year; ongoing

Responsibility for

a) leading initiative: Program Chair/Director, Department Administrator

b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: Faculty Dean, UPO