

■ Yeates School of
Graduate Studies

**Response from YSGS on the
PRT Reports for the MBA-MTI and MSc-MTI Degree Programs
Dr. Jennifer Mactavish, Dean YSGS
Dr. Anthony Bonato, Associate Dean YSGS**

The Peer Response Team for both the Periodic Reviews of the MBA-MTI and MSc-MTI programs consisted of Dr. Danny Cho (Professor, Department of Finance, Operations & Information Systems Goodman School of Business, Brock University), Dr. Claude Laurin (Professor, Department of Accounting Studies, HEC Montreal), and Dr. Linda Schweitzer (Associate Dean, Research and External Sprott School of Business, Carleton University). The PRT site visit was conducted over December 12 and 13, 2013. The PRT report was communicated to the Associate Dean, YSGS on January 13, 2014, and the response to the report from TRSM was communicated on February 19, 2014.

As mandated by Ryerson Senate Policy 116, what follows is the YSGS-level response to both the PRT report, and the response to the report of TRSM. For each of the two programs under review, we summarize the recommendations and responses. We divide recommendations into two broad categories: academic, and administrative and financial. The role of YSGS is to provide direct commentary on academic matters, while making suggestions for administrative and fiscal matters (for example on fees, which are not set by YSGS). For simplicity, we supply our responses (as well as a recap of the PRT recommendations and TRSM responses) in the form of tables.

We begin each section with an overview of the major recommendations. In addition, while we do not directly respond to elements of the development plan in the original report not included in the PRT recommendation (6 such elements for the MIT program, and three for the MSc), we encourage further discussion and prioritization within TRSM regarding these matters.

MBA-MTI

For this program, the PRT includes 9 recommendations, and we endorse all of them with the exception of Recommendation 8, which requires some additional discussion. Recommendations 1 and 2, which would combine the MBA Global and MBA-MTI, constitute the most substantive of the advised program changes.

ACADEMIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Note: the recommendations are numbered as they were presented in the PRT report, and do not reflect a priority rank in ordering. The key recommendations here are 1 and 2.

Recommendation	TRSM response	YSGS response
<i>Recommendation 1:</i> Combine the two MBA degree programs (i.e., MBA-G and MBA-	We believe that Recommendations 1 and 2 deserve extensive consultation and analysis of the available options. The feedback received from alums, faculty	Recommendations 1 and 2 are arguably the most important recommendation of the PRT, and we endorse both of them. While

<p>MTI) under one administrative program. This will maximize the synergies between the two degrees.</p> <p><i>Recommendation 2:</i> Consider merging the two MBA programs, while keeping the unique specializations in the MBA-MTI.</p>	<p>members, and students suggest the need for a more formal evaluation of these options. Hence, we propose to strike a committee comprising students, faculty members, alums, and employers active with the recruitment of our graduates to review these options carefully and advise the Dean of TRSM on the preferred option. We propose to undertake this review over summer 2014.</p>	<p>recommendation 1 is perhaps more administrative, we include it in this table. While the proposed changes would require QC approval, we think these would further strengthen the Ryerson's MBA brand and bolster recruitment to the MBA-MTI stream. Rather than waiting for summer of 2014, we suggest immediate action on these recommendations. As a first step in this direction, a discussion with TRSM faculty involved in the programs, facilitated by the Deans of TRSM and YSGS, took place in late March 2014.</p>
<p><i>Recommendation 4:</i> Eliminate the thesis option from the MBA degree requirements.</p>	<p>TRSM agrees with Recommendation 4.</p>	<p>YSGS agrees with this recommendation</p>
<p><i>Recommendation 9:</i> Maintain the GMAT as part of the MBA admission requirements but allow informal exceptions for those with significant work experience or superior academic records.</p>	<p>TRSM agrees with Recommendation 9. TRSM undertook a pilot study by giving GMAT waivers to a small number of experienced applicants. We are carefully reviewing the progress of those students as they progress through the program. We believe that we will develop a revised policy based on our experience with the current group of students exempted from the GMAT exam.</p>	<p>YSGS endorses this recommendation. Also see comments about the GMAT and GRE included in the MMSc tables.</p>

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	TRSM response	YSGS response
<p><i>Recommendation 3:</i> Seek formal course sharing agreements with the School of Media (and others) to incorporate unique strengths of the university into the MBA programs.</p>	<p>We agree with Recommendation 3. We would also like to report that TRSM shares courses with relevant schools and departments across faculties.</p>	<p>YSGS agrees with this recommendation.</p>
<p><i>Recommendation 5:</i> Consider unlinking the MRP from the Internship or solidify the link and reduce the required lead-time by converting the MRP requirements into that of a project or case study. This is more in keeping with the actual MRPs being produced and should significantly reduce the</p>	<p>TRSM agrees with Recommendation 5. We would also like to highlight that earlier changes made to the structure of the MBA – MTI degree facilitates Recommendation 5. In particular, we have moved a required research methods course from semester 2 to semester 1, which helps</p>	<p>YSGS agrees with this recommendation.</p>

<p>required lead-time for students as well as the time commitment of faculty supervisors who could instead be supervising MMSc theses (see MMSc below).</p>	<p>students develop necessary research skills required to undertake systematic research as part of the MRP. Furthermore, the proposed change under Recommendation 5 would also be facilitated by the series of research oriented hands-on workshops offered in the second semester to students. These workshops equip graduate students with the necessary skills required to complete MRPs.</p>	
<p><i>Recommendation 6:</i> Include MBA courses as part of the normal teaching load (i.e., on-load) for all faculty teaching in the MBA programs.</p>	<p>TRSM agrees with Recommendation 6. However, we recognize that teaching assignments have to be balanced between the undergraduate and graduate programs to ensure that the learning needs of graduate and undergraduate students are looked after. TRSM recognizes that facilitating on-load teaching for MBA courses will allow graduate students to benefit from the diverse skills and scholarship of the RFA faculty.</p>	<p>While faculty teaching assignments are not within the purview of YSGS, we agree with this recommendation. Graduate course delivery should be viewed, like undergraduate courses, as central to the educational mandate of the University.</p>
<p><i>Recommendation 7:</i> Increase international tuition fees to a minimum of that gained for each domestic BIU.</p>	<p>TRSM agrees with Recommendation 7. However, TRSM would prefer that international tuition fees be increased as ancillary fees to account for additional funds needed to support international graduate students. Past experience with foreign students at TRSM suggests that significant effort is often required in improving language proficiency, both written and oral. Furthermore, because TRSM's rankings rely on the employability and labor market performance of its alums, foreign students who choose to stay in Canada and seek employment need extensive support in finding employment opportunities.</p>	<p>YSGS agrees with the spirit of this recommendation. YSGS, however, does not set fees for programs and changes of this nature would have to be carefully considered within MTCU's tuition and ancillary fee framework.</p>

	TRSM believes that ancillary fees targeted at foreign students will allow it to serve the unique needs of foreign students better. In addition, it would allow TRSM to recruit graduate students from emerging markets in a more aggressive manner.	
<i>Recommendation 8:</i> Allow the TRSM to have early contact with applicants by doing the initial review of applicants before forwarding recommendations to the YSGS. The YSGS would retain control of the final admissions decisions.	TRSM agrees with Recommendation 8. However, we would like to point out that the Yeates School of Graduate Studies has recently improved the use of technology by incorporating a knowledge management system, which has improved our access to prospective students who are in queue in the system.	While we agree with efforts to optimize the admissions process for the MBA-MTI and all other Ryerson graduate programs, this recommendation is not feasible given that Ryerson’s admissions process—at graduate and undergraduate levels—flows through OUAC, and from there is redirected to our institutional enterprise content management system (Nolij). In addition, the recommendation would open a host of FIPPA concerns that are not tenable. Nolij is in its first year of implementation and we are confident that the present collaborative approach between TRSM and the Admissions team in YSGS will resolve any concerns moving forward. It is also important to note, that admissions decisions for the MBA-MTI (and all Ryerson graduate programs), after initial screening by YSGS Admissions Officers, are made at the program level.

MMSc-MTI

For this program, the PRT also makes 9 recommendations. There are three of an academic nature, with the remainder being administrative or financial. For this program, the financial recommendations (Recommendation 9) are key to bringing the fees for this program in-line with other thesis-based programs at Ryerson and all similar programs in the sector-wide in Ontario.

ACADEMIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	TRSM response	YSGS response
<i>Recommendation 1:</i> Expand the	TRSM agrees with	YSGS endorses, in full, this

MMSc degree program to include a broad scope of specializations by leveraging the generic core and allowing the expertise of the faculty to determine the areas of specialization for each student.	Recommendation 1. In this regard, the development plan submitted as part of the self-study report identifies the program change required to enable Recommendation 1. Specifically, the only program change required at this stage is to convert a required course to an elective.	recommendation as it reflects the original OCGS approved program structure.
<i>Recommendation 2:</i> Change the name of the “Master of Management” or “Master of Science in Management”.	TRSM agrees with Recommendation 2. The preferred option for TRSM is a change to ‘Master of Science in Management’. The change in the degree’s name will enable faculty members with diverse research interests to supervise graduate students in their respective academic niches.	YSGS agrees with this recommendation and preference for the title, “Masters of Science in Management”.
<i>Recommendation 5:</i> Include the GRE as an alternative to (not as a replacement for) the GMAT for admissions.	TRSM agrees with Recommendation 5. We would also like to mention that not all research-based master’s degrees in faculties of business and management in Canada require GMAT or GRE exams. We have attached with this response an appendix that lists the admission requirements for similar research-based master’s in faculties of business and management in Canada. The appendix highlights the fact that admission requirements do vary significantly across Canada.	To enhance flexibility, to minimize a possible barrier for prospective applicants, and to align with the range of requirements at other institutions, YSGS would endorse dropping the GMAT (or GRE) entirely from the admission requirements.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The major recommendation here is Recommendation 9, which would lower the tuition for the MMSc program. We think this is a critical item that, if executed, would make the MMSc a competitive program with stronger admission numbers.

Recommendation	TRSM response	YSGS response
<i>Recommendation 3:</i> Separate the MMSc program from the MBA programs in all promotional and advertising activities. Appoint a new	TRSM agrees with Recommendation 3. In this regard, a recruitment and outreach plan is being developed to attract talented graduate	YSGS agrees with this recommendation.

Director of MMSc – currently the Associate Dean of Research & Graduate Programs assumes this position, provide a separate webpage and admissions process, and clarify staff support roles and titles. Use faculty profiles to promote the MMSc program.	students to the MMSc degree. The planned changes include new print and web based material dedicated to the MMSc degree. Work on this initiative was put on hold until the requested change in program structure and in the degree’s name is achieved.	
Recommendation 4: Provide a funding model for all MMSc students that is transparent and offered at admission.	TRSM agrees with Recommendation 4. We are aware of the funding models available in other faculties at Ryerson University and we intend to develop a similar funding model for graduate research students. We intend to develop a model that is transparent for the student and the supervisor.	YSGS supports this recommendation, as student funding is critical to recruiting and retaining quality students. As with other graduate programs at Ryerson, the level of scholarship support from YSGS is contingent on meeting target, and also includes a commitment to GA/TA funding provided by the home faculty (that is, TRSM in this case) and stipends from faculty members research programs.
<i>Recommendation 6:</i> Clarify the realistic expected length of the MMSc program and communicate in advance with MMSc students.	TRSM agrees with Recommendation 6. The revised promotional materials in print and online will explicitly list all programme related requirements.	YSGS agrees with this recommendation and would encourage an emphasis on optimal time-to-completion rather than maximum allowable limits.
<i>Recommendation 7:</i> Provide dedicated space for MMSc students.	TRSM agrees with Recommendation 7. However, given that TRSM’s building on 55 Dundas Street West is at capacity, dedicated space for research-based master students will be need to be located in an appropriate building within the Ryerson system. We would like to request the University to assist with identifying and refurbishing adequate space.	While we agree with this recommendation, we caution that space constraints present major obstacles for our graduate programs and students’ campus-wide.
<i>Recommendation 8:</i> Position the MMSc as a high quality research degree, supported by very high quality faculty and admit only students who well meet the admission criteria.	TRSM agrees with Recommendation 8.	YSGS agrees with this recommendation.
<i>Recommendation 9:</i> Consider reducing the MMSc tuition to	TRSM agrees with Recommendation 9. We believe	This recommendation, in tandem with recommendation 1,

<p>align with other research based graduate programs at Ryerson. If this is not possible, a substantial and very high profile student funding model should be developed to offset the premium paid by TRSM graduate students. It should be ensured that international fees are equivalent to a minimum of that gained for each domestic BIU.</p>	<p>that higher tuition fees have contributed to less than adequate enrolment in the past. We strongly urge the University to revise the tuition fee for the research-based master's in TRSM and bring it in line with the tuition fees for similar research-based masters in other faculties at Ryerson University.</p>	<p>is essential to attract quality students. At its current price point it is more than double the cost of other thesis-based master's programs at Ryerson and well beyond sector norms in the field.</p>
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In conclusion, we thank the external reviewers and colleagues in TRSM for a very thorough assessment of the strengths and challenges of the MBA-MTI and MMSc programs. The PRT recommendations and TRSM's responses raise many important issues that upon resolution will positively influence the future of both programs. In particular, combining the MBA Global with the MBA MTI, broadening the scope of the MMSc to include all areas within TRSM, and reducing the fees for the MMSc program are key recommendations that will strengthen the programs, increase enrollments, and support the SRC needs of faculty members.

Dr. Jennifer Mactavish
 Dean, Yeates School of Graduate Studies

Dr. Anthony Bonato
 Associate Dean, Yeates School of
 Graduate Studies