***SUBMITTED TO OUCQA FOR INFORMATION – June 11, 2019***

***APPROVED BY TRENT UNIVERSITY’S SENATE COMMITTEE – January 15, 2019***

****

# Cyclical Program Review Committee (CPRC)

# Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan

**BA English Literature & MA English (Public Texts)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Degree Programs Being Reviewed** | **BA English Literature**  **MA English (Public Texts)** |
| **External Reviewers** | **Dr. Ted Bishop, University of Alberta**  **Dr. Paul Keen, Carleton University** |
| **Internal Representative** | **Dr. Fiona Harris-Stoertz, Department of History** |
| **Year of Review** | **2017-2018** |
| **Date of Site Visit** | **March 1 & 2, 2018** |
| **Due Date for Implementation Report by English Literature** | **October 1, 2019** |
| **Date of Next Cyclical Review** | **2025-2026** |
| **Date Prepared by CPRC** | **December 12, 2018** |
| **Date Approved By Provost & VP Academic** | **December 17, 2018** |
| **Signature Of Provost & VP Academic** | VP, Academic Signature |

Students enrolled in Trent University’s English programs will be engaged in curriculum that demands creativity, critical inquiry and strong communication skills. Throughout their degree, students will explore literature, culture and the history of ideas in courses ranging from medieval romance to contemporary graphic fiction.

The English BA program introduces students to literature in English, from its beginnings over a thousand years ago in Anglo-Saxon England, to its current status as the global medium of culture and communication. Students have the opportunity to study the language of our daily existence (whether that language happens to be Shakespearean, Canadian, Chaucerian or Jamaican) in works of the imagination, which confront the pressing and enduring issues in our lives and our world.

In the Public Texts MA program, students can use the knowledge that they have already obtained and explore what it means to “go public” or to “publish” and how that act resonates for writers, cultures and publics. Students will develop new ways of looking at the production and circulation of texts, and at the history and future of texts and publics, exploring issues and emerging as central to research today.

**Summary of Process**

During the 2017-2018 academic year, the BA English Literature and MA English (Public Texts) programs underwent a review. Two arm’s-length external reviewers (Dr. Ted Bishop, University of Alberta and Dr. Paul Keen, Carleton University) and one internal member (Dr. Fiona Harris-Stoertz, Department of History, Trent University) were invited to review the self-studies and related documentation. A site visit was conducted at both the Peterborough and Durham campuses’ on March 1st and 2nd, 2018.

This Final Assessment Report (FAR), in accordance with Trent University’s Institutional Quality Assurance Policy (IQAP), provides a synthesis of the cyclical review of the degree programs. The report considers five evaluation documents: the Undergraduate Program Self-Study, the Graduate Program Self-Study, the External Reviewers’ Report, the Programs’ Responses, and the Decanal Responses.

A summary of the review process is as follows: the undergraduate and graduate programs each prepared a separate self-study document addressing the evaluation criteria as outlined in Trent’s IQAP. Appendices included: Curriculum Vitae; Course Syllabi; Learning Outcomes; Enrolment, Retention and Student Data; Calendar Copy and Student Surveys. Qualified external reviewers were invited to conduct a review of the programs that involved a review of all relevant documentation (self-studies, appendices, IQAP) in advance of the site visit. A two-day site visit took place where reviewers met with senior administration, faculty, and students.

Once the external reviewers’ report was received the Programs, Undergraduate Dean and Graduate Dean provided responses to the report. The Cyclical Program Review Committee (CPRC) reviewed and assessed the quality of the degree programs based on the five review documents and reported on significant program strengths, opportunities for improvement and enhancement, and the implementation of recommendations.

The Implementation Plan identifies those recommendations selected for implementation and specifies: proposed follow-up, who is responsible for leading the follow-up, and the specific timeline for addressing the recommendation, if applicable. Academic units, in consultation with the respective Dean(s), will submit an Implementation Report in response to the recommendations identified for follow-up. The Report is due October 1, 2019.

**Significant Program Strengths**

* Reviewers commented that ‘both the BA and MA programs exemplify Trent University’s emphasis on creating vibrant, engaged and sustainable communities of learning, teaching, and research that are responsive to broader publics, locally, nationally, and globally.
* The Public Texts MA , was noted by the reviewers, as a program that ‘challenges students to explore both the fundamental influence of much broader social and materialist contexts on various literary forms, and the ways that literary culture can help to shape the world around it’. The MA program has unique and highly innovative features offering students a variety in educational experiences including cutting edge introductions to book history, editing and internships.
* The BA program has recently made fundamental structural changes, discarding traditional models of historical coverage to offer students an unlimited choice from a wider range of course and a capstone experience in fourth year.

**Opportunities for Program Improvement and Enhancement**

* The program should explore opportunities to create new programming in writing skills, creative writing, journalism as well as the potential for online learning.
* In order to address faculty retirements, the program should review curriculum offerings and begin planning for imminent retirements that may require streamlining curriculum offerings.
* The introduction of ‘new’ Options at the undergraduate level will provide opportunities of increased enrolment.

**Complete List of Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1**

That the program hire additional faculty for both campuses, to replace retiring faculty and to address the need for a Renaissance specialist.

**Undergraduate Program Response**

The program supported this recommendation and indicated the most pressing need would be for a Renaissance specialist.

**Undergraduate Decanal Response**

The department has identified some hiring needs in specific areas. Multi-year hiring scenarios have been developed to facilitate planning and investment needs to maintain program offerings and quality of education.

**Graduate Program Response**

Renaissance/digital humanities is a common joint field and would address missing areas of expertise in the graduate program. Digital humanities would support the important research and internship opportunities provided by the EditionsTrent digital lab at Traill College, at which many of our students intern, and which constitutes a key focus of the MA program.

**Graduate Decanal Response**

Digital humanities are an exciting area for the program to explore and is worth continuing to prioritize as a potential hire. To support the case for Digital Humanities, it might be useful to think about synergies and joint initiatives to make a stronger case for delving into the digital humanities.

**RECOMMENDATION 2**

That a student assistant be hired to assist the graduate administrator during peak times of the academic year.

**Graduate Program Response**

The program supported the recommendation.

**Graduate Decanal Response**

The program could use some of its Operating Budget to hire additional student support if required. Alternatively, the graduate studies department is developing online processes and procedures that will streamline the workflow for our academic administrative assistants, and provide efficiencies.

**RECOMMENDATION 3**

That an advisor be hired to oversee the internship program.

**Undergraduate Program Response**

This recommendation is directed at the part-time program’s internship option. As internships are becoming a standard part of the university experience, the humanities will need a coordinator to oversee internships and practicums. The program hopes the new Director of Co-op, Careers and Experiential Learning at Trent will be able to provide options.

**Undergraduate Decanal Response**

Experiential learning is growing in the humanities and will need to be supported administratively. There are a variety of options for support to explore.

**Graduate Program Response**

This is essential, given the demands on the graduate director and staff member to support internship stream students, and the likelihood that applications to this stream will increase.

**Graduate Decanal Response**

Trent recently completed a review of Experiential Learning resulting in a new Co-op, Careers, and Experiential Learning office. Supporting internships is a priority for the University.

**RECOMMENDATION 4**

That in first year, GTAs be in charge of running seminars only, and that separate marking assistants be hired to grade first-year coursework.

**Undergraduate Program Response**

TAs are predominantly competent, engaged, and effective, and it is important to ensure that TAs are equipped with the tools to be effective. Because English, like the other undergraduate program in humanities, relies on TAs from several different graduate programs, some of this work needs to be done holistically.

**Undergraduate Decanal Response**

Better TA training seems like the most reasonable approach to the problem. The reviewers’ suggestion that we separate TAships and marking assistance is problematic insofar as, marking is a skill that graduate students need to learn and there is no reason to assume that marking assistants will necessarily be better at marking than TAs.

**RECOMMENDATION 5**

That first year writing courses be restructured to full-year courses.

**Undergraduate Program Response**

If the university changes its policy on 1.0 credit courses, the program will certainly revisit the delivery of Write in Time and several courses in ENGL, particularly at the upper year levels.

**Undergraduate Decanal Response**

One key reason to offer writing courses is to help students across the university develop better writing skills. One advantage of 0.5 credit writing courses is that students in a wide variety of disciplines are better able to fit in a writing course or two as they progress through their degree. In a half course system, full-year courses eliminate a significant number of students from the enrolment pool. There are also students who might be willing to invest in a half course, but not a full course. Fortunately, students who want to develop their writing further have the option of taking more than one writing and/or English course.

The English Department is in a great position to support student success across campus through the delivery of half credit writing courses. This contribution is an intellectual and social good and one of which we should be very proud.

**RECOMMENDATION 6**

That more events be organized for graduate students so that they have a chance to meet and learn about each other’s work.

**Graduate Program Response**

In 2017-18, the program organized the first Public Texts Public Talks event with some financial assistance from the undergraduate program. Graduate students in 2017-18 organized and conveyed student activities via social media accounts. The graduate administrator regularly emails graduate students with announcements regarding the many graduate student events at Traill College, in addition to specific program events in English, Cultural Studies, History, and Theory Culture Politics. A student driven initiative might be more successful.

**Graduate Decanal Response**

Graduate Studies has a Strategic Research Fund (SRF), which programs can apply to. The SRF is used to fund events to enhance graduate student research experience. Typically, this fund is used to hold mini-conferences or bring in noted speakers. Programs can obtain between $500-$1000 per term to support events. The English Public Texts MA has applied to the SRF in the past, and the program should continue to do this to help support these sorts of activities.

With the changes to the college system in 2018-2019, Traill College has both more autonomy and funding to support graduate student initiatives. In the coming year, more events will be hosted by Traill College that will help expand opportunities. The program should work with the Principle of Traill College to make sure that the program’s priorities are reflected in Traill College offerings.

**RECOMMENDATION 7**

That the Materiality and the Text in the Digital Age course be a required course for graduate students.

**Graduate Program Response**

‘Materiality and the Text in the Digital Age’ replaced Public Texts 1 this year as ‘recommended but not required.’ The external reviewers commented positively on this course. The program will monitor participation in 2018-19 and revisit in spring 2019.

**Graduate Decanal Response**

The Dean agrees with the Program’s response.

**RECOMMENDATION 8**

That the thesis option be reserved for students with an 80% average and that students wishing to shift into the thesis option be asked to apply by the end of first semester in their first year.

**Graduate Program Response**

The department agreed to make this change however would substitute ‘normally reserved’ to allow for worthy exceptions. The program agreed that a firm deadline for changing streams be required.

**Graduate Decanal Response**

The Dean agreed with the Program’s response.

**RECOMMENDATION 9**

That the department create a list of courses offered by other departments that would count toward the English degree instead of cross-listing courses.

**Undergraduate Program Response**

The program intends to introduce this list for 2019-20.

**Undergraduate Decanal Response**

This might be difficult for the Registrar’s Office to manage and track over time. Perhaps another way to address the issues at hand can be found.

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

The Implementation Plan provides a summary of the recommendations that require action. The Academic Unit in consultation with the Dean will be responsible for moving forward with the recommendations to ensure that each is completed within the recommended timeframe.

The Academic Unit will be responsible for submitting an Implementation Report reporting on the completion and/or status of each recommendation. The Implementation Report should be submitted to the applicable Dean(s) who will then forward the Report to the Office of the Provost.

**DUE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTATION REPORT: October 1, 2019**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Recommendation** | **Proposed Follow-Up**  *Indicate if ‘No follow up report is required’ and provide rationale.*  *Indicate specific timeline for completion or addressing recommendation.* | **Position Responsible for Leading Follow-up** |
| **Recommendation 1 – Graduate and Undergraduate**  That the program hire additional faculty for both campuses, to replace retiring faculty and to address the need for a Renaissance specialist. | No follow up required.  This is a faculty resource issue and is part of annual staffing plan discussions; under the purview of the Dean. |  |
| **Recommendation 2 – Graduate**  That a student assistant be hired to assist the graduate administrator during peak times of the academic year. | No follow up required.  This is a resource issue and is part of annual staffing plan discussions; under the purview of the Dean. |  |
| **Recommendation 3 – Graduate and Undergraduate**  That an advisor be hired to oversee the internship program. | No follow up required.  This is a resource issue and is part of annual staffing plan discussions; under the purview of the Dean. |  |
| **Recommendation 4 – Undergraduate**  That in first year, GTAs be in charge of running seminars only, and that separate marking assistants be hired to grade first-year coursework. | No follow up required.  The program and Dean agree that this recommendation will not improve the program’s quality. The Centre for Teaching and Learning offers courses in TA training that lead to a certificate. |  |
| **Recommendation 5 – Undergraduate**  That first year writing courses be restructured to full-year courses. | No follow up required.  The University academic plan is to eliminate 1.0 credits courses when possible. |  |
| **Recommendation 6 – Graduate**  That more events be organized for graduate students so that they have a chance to meet and learn about each other’s work. | Provide follow-up on events hosted. | Graduate Director |
| **Recommendation 7 – Graduate**  That the Materiality and the Text in the Digital Age course be a required course for graduate students. | Provide update. | Graduate Director |
| **Recommendation 8 – Graduate**  That the thesis option be reserved for students with an 80% average and that students wishing to shift into the thesis option be asked to apply by the end of first semester in their first year. | No follow up required.  Program has already implemented this recommendation. |  |
| **Recommendation 9 – Undergraduate**  That the department create a list of courses offered by other departments that would count toward the English degree instead of cross-listing courses. | Provide update. | Undergraduate Chair in consultation with the Dean & Registrar’s Office |