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***SUBMITTED TO OUCQA FOR INFORMATION – December 7, 2018***

***APPROVED BY TRENT UNIVERSITY’S SENATE COMMITTEE – November 27, 2018***

# Cyclical Program Review Committee (CPRC)

# Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan

# BA Media Studies

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| **Degree Programs Being Reviewed** | **BA Media Studies** |
| **External Reviewers** | **Dr. Nick Dyer-Witheford, Western University**  **Dr. Kevin Dowler, York University** |
| **Internal Representative** | **Dr. Hugh Elton, Ancient Greek & Roman Studies, Trent University** |
| **Year of Review** | **2017-2018** |
| **Date of Site Visit** | **March 5,2018** |
| **Due Date for Implementation Report by Media Studies** | **October 1, 2019** |
| **Date of Next Cyclical Review** | **2025-2026** |
| **Date Prepared by CPRC** | **October 17, 2018** |
| **Date Approved by Provost & VP Academic** | **November 9, 2018** |
| **Signature of Provost & VP Academic** | Jackie Muldoon Signature |

The Media Studies program at Trent takes an interdisciplinary approach to the understanding of media practices and effects. Students take courses in a range of disciplines including Cultural Studies, Anthropology, Philosophy, and Canadian Studies. Students have the opportunity to engage in ethical, theoretical, and technical issues related to the implications of the human-technology interface for knowledge, individuality, and community. Media Studies’ students have the opportunity to learn through experiential and experimental approaches using practice-based courses focusing on the application of knowledge in areas of film, radio, music, multimedia design and more. The program provides students with an academic background for work in the media, communications, and any other field where media literacy is vital.

**Summary of Process**

During the 2017-2018 academic year, the BA Media Studies program underwent a review. Two arm’s-length external reviewers (Dr. Nick Dyer-Witheford, Windsor University and Dr. Kevin Dowler, York University) and one internal member (Dr. Hugh Elton, Ancient Greek and Roman Studies, Trent University) were invited to review the self-study documentation. The site visit took place at the Peterborough campus on March 5, 2017.

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 undergraduate degree program. The report considers four evaluation documents: the Program’s Self-Study, the External Reviewers’ Report, the Program Response, and the Decanal Response.

A summary of the review process is as follows: the academic unit completed a self-study that addressed all components of the evaluation criteria as outlined in Trent’s IQAP. Appendices included: Curriculum Vitae; Course Syllabi; Enrolment, Retention and Student Data; Library Statement of Support and Student Surveys. Qualified external reviewers were invited to conduct a review of the program that involved a review of all relevant documentation (self-study, appendices, IQAP) in advance of the site visit. A one-day site visit took place where reviewers met with senior administration, faculty, and students.

Once the external reviewers’ report was received, both the Program and Dean provided responses to the report. The Cyclical Program Review Committee (CPRC) reviewed and assessed the quality of the degree program based on the four 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 the proposed follow-up and the person(s) responsible for leading the follow-up. 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**

* The Media Studies program has a strong interdisciplinary approach, providing students with a substantive view of how media is shaped and used in many different fields. As noted by the reviewers, the program’s strengths lie in the interdisciplinary curriculum and the combined focus on theory-building and practice-based approaches to knowledge acquisition.
* Overall students have a high opinion of faculty and their expertise. Faculty actively mentor and support students to provide positive student experiences.
* The program reflects current developments in media studies. Workshop courses introduce students to methods of research creation, and students learn critical algorithm studies through game studies.

**Opportunities for Program Improvement and Enhancement**

* There is opportunity to increase enrolment by focussing on the younger demographics and their interest in social media.
* An award be established for students in third and fourth years to recognize outstanding performances and achievement.
* The accelerated BA/MA program with the Cultural Studies MA will provide students with the opportunity to easily transition into post-graduate study. (The program commenced September 2018)

**Complete List of Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1**

**That additional full-time or cross-appointed faculty in Media Studies be hired to stabilise course offerings.**

**Program Response**

The program agrees with the recommendation. Additional faculty members could contribute to their own departments (e.g. GWST, BUS, or COIS) and the Media Studies’ program simultaneously by teaching courses listed in both programs.

**Decanal Response**

The suggestions made above for cross-appointments have a good academic and pragmatic rationale. There is potential for growth in media studies, and the blend of media studies with relevant disciplines stands to update and revitalize the university curriculum.

**Recommendation 2**

**That links be developed and strengthened with Indigenous Studies and International Development Studies.**

**Program Response**

The program agrees with the recommendation. As a first step, the program added INDG 3102Y: Images in Contemporary Media to the program list. There are no courses in International Development Studies that are obvious candidates for inclusion, however, since IDST is mentioned only once in the report, the program is unsure about this half of the reviewers’ suggestion.

**Decanal Response**

The program is building its INDG connections and new opportunities will arise as the university moves further towards truth and reconciliation in education. The launch of the Indigenous Course Requirement (ICR) in September 2018 will increase the number of students on campus who are knowledgeable about local and global Indigenous matters, and this will in turn create new opportunities for MDST instruction.

**Recommendation 3**

**That a faculty member teaching in Media Studies have a clear and unequivocal voice in hiring decisions made by the Department of Cultural Studies.**

**Program Response**

The program agrees with the recommendation, and further suggests that any future hiring process in which the successful candidate will teach in the Media Studies program or substantially contribute to the Media Studies program in any department must involve an additional voting member selected by Media Studies Program Committee.

**Decanal Response**

This is a reasonable recommendation for hiring decisions involving teaching for the MDST program.

**Recommendation 4**

**That a course rubric be introduced as a means of identifying program students and enabling comprehensive tracking measures to be undertaken.**

**Program Response**

The program has requested such a course rubric – i.e. “MDST” – in the past, and agrees with the recommendation. Students who are unfamiliar with the calendar may have a hard time identifying courses that are part of the program, and narrowly select from the departments offering MDST courses with which they are already familiar. Introducing a MDST course rubric to the timetable and calendar would be a small technical change that would streamline this process. Additionally, it would provide course instructors and the Media Studies Program Coordinator with useful information concerning the students in their class and the number of majors selecting into different departments’ courses.

**Decanal Response**

An MDST course code would help in the ways indicated above. It has not been pursued to date in part because it is not a small technical change for the Registrar’s Office. Given the number of students in MDST and the advantages of adding the code, it seems a worthwhile undertaking.

**Recommendation 5**

**That the terms of reference for the Media Studies Program Committee be formalized.**

**Program Response**

The Committee agrees with the recommendation and intends to establish formal terms of reference in the following year.

**Decanal Response**

Sounds appropriate provided the Terms of Reference fall within the bounds of the TUFA Collective Agreement and that committee acknowledges that the CA takes precedence.

**Recommendation 6**

**a) That the current lack of coordination between Traill and Durham offerings of the program be addressed;**

**b) That the Media Studies Program Committee establish authority over both branches of the program;**

**c) That the division of financial and reporting authority between the Dean of Arts and the Head of Campus be eliminated.**

**Program Response**

a) The program does not view the redundancy of certain courses between campuses as a problem, since students in Oshawa may well not be able to travel to Peterborough and vice versa. The slight divergence between the programs on the two campuses reflects the academic freedom of professors on different campuses or in different courses to offer different material.

b) To the best of our understanding, the Media Studies Program Committee already has “authority over both branches of the program.”

c) The program has no comment on the subject of inter-campus financing.

**Decanal Response**

There will be administrative and curricular developments in Durham over the next few years and matters can be addressed as they arise.

**Recommendation 7**

**That the administrator’s job description be reviewed with the goal of adding responsibility for Media Studies and determining where additional program specific administrative support can be provided.**

**Program Response**

The program has previously suggested that the administration of the Media Studies program be added to the job description of the Cultural Studies Academic Administrative Assistant. The Committee agrees with the recommendation.

**Decanal Response**

The program is housed administratively in the Cultural Studies Department and is therefore automatically in the purview of the AAA.

**Recommendation 8**

**That a space audit be undertaken to find adequate permanent space to accommodate production aspects of the program.**

**Program Response**

This recommendation requires a substantial response and will be addressed in the following year by the Committee.

**Decanal Response**

A space audit sounds like a reasonable activity for the program committee to undertake. However, a clear set of academic objectives should frame the process, and discussion with the dean about the feasibility of those objectives is an important first step.

**Recommendation 9**

**That resources be provided to fund a technical coordinator, who can assist with equipment acquisition, ongoing inventory maintenance, and classroom assistance.**

**Program Response**

A technical coordinator would be helpful if the program’s resources were to be centralized. The Committee is declining to comment on this recommendation for the time being.

**Decanal Response**

As the technical capacities of Trent grow, various units may wish to jointly forward a budget request for a technical coordinator.

**Recommendation 10**

**That the Program develop a targeted equipment acquisition plan that allows for sensitivity to curricular development and student demand, and which can add appropriate technology supports in an incremental manner.**

**Program Response**

Following the reviewers’ visit, the program acquired additional equipment, including two DSLR cameras and an upgraded 3D printer. The Coordinator also discussed the possible acquisition of new audio/video editing hardware and software for the use of MDST students at Traill campus. The program does not have a proper acquisition plan and will work on a plan in the following year.

**Decanal Response**

A plan would be useful and should contain an explication of the academic reason for the requests.

**Recommendation 11**

**That a review of the adequacy of the Library holdings in Media Studies be undertaken immediately.**

**Program Response**

The program is unsure of who would conduct such a review but will assist the library where needed. The Committee has targeted some of its yearly operating budget to the acquisition of books and other library resources each year. This has been helpful, but is clearly not enough to keep pace with current research. The Library has a strong preference for electronic acquisitions over physical ones. The Committee would like the freedom to recommend the acquisition of library resources in the format of its choosing.

**Decanal Response**

The program has the freedom to request and acquire materials for the library.

**RECOMMENDATION 12**

**That deficiencies in accessibility to the Scott Building be addressed.**

**Program Response**

The Committee understands this to be the ongoing business of Traill College, but is happy to provide input concerning the use that MDST students make of the campus.

**Decanal Response**

It is important to flag any new or unresolved accessibility issues with the coordinator, chair, dean, Physical Resources, and Accessibility.

**Implementation Plan**

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

The Academic Unit will submit an Implementation Report to their Dean reporting on the completion and/or status of each recommendation. The Dean will review the Implementation Report prior to submitting the report to the Office of the Provost.

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

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| **Recommendation** | **Proposed Follow-Up**  If no follow-up is recommended, please clearly indicate **‘No follow up required’** and provide rationale.  Indicate specific timeline for completion or addressing recommendation if different than Due Date for Implementation Report | **Position Responsible for Leading Follow-up** |
| 1. That additional full-time or cross-appointed, faculty in Media Studies be hired to stabilise course offerings. | No follow up required.  This is a faculty resource issue and is part of annual staffing plan discussions; under the purview of the Dean. |  |
| 1. That links be developed and strengthened with Indigenous Studies and International Development Studies. | Update to be provided. | Chair and Coordinator in consultation with Dean |
| 1. That a faculty member teaching in Media Studies have a clear and unequivocal voice in hiring decisions made by the Department of Cultural Studies. | No follow up required.  Faculty in Media Studies are members of the Department of Cultural Studies. The Dean has indicated that a new faculty hiring should include a faculty member that teaches in Media Studies. |  |
| 1. That a course rubric be introduced as a means of identifying program students and enabling comprehensive tracking measures to be undertaken. | Update to be provided. | Chair and Coordinator in consultation with Dean |
| 1. That the terms of reference for the Media Studies Program Committee be formalized. | Provide update on Media Studies representation on departmental committees. | Chair and Coordinator in consultation with Dean |
| 1. a) That the current lack of coordination between Traill and Durham offerings of the program be addressed;   b) That the Media Studies Program Committee establish authority over both branches of the program;  c) That the division of financial and reporting authority between the Dean of Arts and the Head of Campus be eliminated. | No follow up required.  Issues will be dealt with as they arise, and this will be increasingly important as the Durham campus expands. |  |
| 1. That the administrator’s job description be reviewed with the goal of adding responsibility for Media Studies and determining where additional program specific administrative support can be provided. | No follow up report is required.  The Academic Administrative Assistant is responsible for providing administrative support for all degree programs housed within Department of Cultural Studies. |  |
| 1. That a space audit be undertaken to find adequate permanent space to accommodate production aspects of the program. | Update to be provided | Chair and Coordinator in consultation with Dean |
| 1. That resources be provided to fund a technical coordinator, who can assist with equipment acquisition, ongoing inventory maintenance, and classroom assistance. | Update to be provided | Chair and Coordinator in consultation with Dean |
| 1. That the Program develop a targeted equipment acquisition plan that allows for sensitivity to curricular development and student demand, and which can add appropriate technology supports in an incremental manner. | Program to provide update on ‘targeted equipment acquisition plan’. | Chair and Coordinator in consultation with Dean |
| 1. That a review of the adequacy of the Library holdings in Media Studies be undertaken immediately. | Program to provide update on review. | Chair and Coordinator in consultation with University Librarian |
| 1. That deficiencies in accessibility to the Scott Building be addressed. | No follow-up report is required.  Dean should pass this information on to Physical Resources. |  |