

Final Assessment Report

Medieval & Renaissance Studies (MARS) Undergraduate Programs (reviewed 2021/22)

A. Summary

1. The Centre's Self-Study was considered and approved by the Senate Academic Review Committee on November 23, 2021.
2. The Review Committee consisted of two external reviewers: Susannah Ferreira (University of Guelph) and Robin Vose (St. Thomas University), and one internal reviewer, Angela Book (Brock University).
3. The virtual review occurred on March 7, 9, 10, 2022.
4. The Reviewers' Report was received on April 8, 2022.
5. The Senate Undergraduate Program Committee response was received on May 10, 2022. They had no comments related to the recommendations provided.
6. The Centre response was received on May 18, 2022.
7. The Dean of Humanities response was received on June 14, 2022.
8. Annual Implementation Reports will be submitted from 2023-2026.
9. The next Cyclical Academic Review is scheduled to take place in 2029/2030.

This review was conducted under the terms and conditions of the IQAP approved by Senate on May 25, 2016 and the Codicil to the Brock IQAP, approved by Senate December 15, 2021, which serves until the revised IQAP is fully approved by the Quality Council and Senate.

Program Outcome Categories:

Based on their knowledge of the discipline, the content of the Self-Study and the interviews conducted during the virtual site visit, the Review Committee gave the programs the following Outcome Categories:

Program(s)	Excellent Quality	Good Quality	Good Quality with Concerns	Non-Viable
Combined Major (Honours and Pass)	X			

Executive Summary:

The Reviewers wrote:

It was a pleasure to undertake this review, and to have met with such engaged colleagues, staff, and students. MARS is an impressive program that provides Brock with a distinctive, innovative, and valuable academic resource at extremely low cost. Inevitable challenges facing all Humanities programs under conditions of financial insecurity and pandemic restrictions have impacted morale and enrollments, but with appropriate support MARS has the potential to become an even greater asset to Brock and the communities it serves.

Please see the attached Review Schedule (Appendix A), which outlines the individuals that the Review Committee met with during the virtual site visit.

Please see the attached 2018 Four-Year Report (Appendix B), which outlines the steps taken to continuously improve the program since the last review in 2013-14.

B. Program Strengths

The Reviewers noted the following strengths:

The MARS program is clearly a valuable asset to the Brock community. Its transdisciplinary character is more fully developed than in many comparable programs, as is the breadth of its vision. For a smaller undergraduate setting, the sorts of opportunities MARS offers for relevant and thematically-connected learning across multiple fields and disciplines is indeed quite unique. MARS thus contributes a great deal to Brock's goal of providing transformational academic experiences that enhance students' lives; the program's growing emphasis on global and colonial encounters also holds great potential to further inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization. MARS is truly a dynamic program that makes a positive difference in the lives of individuals through leadership, innovation and excellence in learning, teaching, research, scholarship and creativity across disciplines.

Of particular note, the first-year course's introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Studies not only serves to intrigue and "hook" potential co-majors; it also provides non-majors from across the university community with a taste of program content that is both intellectually

salutary and popular. Co-majors and interested non-majors alike can also benefit from informative MARS-based public events, directed travel (when available), and special experiential learning opportunities. These features alone make MARS a worthy contributor to the university and broader communities, but there is also the potential (and the will) to do more if appropriate institutional support and encouragement should be forthcoming.

Well-structured programs are nothing without the buy-in and contributions of dedicated faculty and support personnel, and here too the reviewers were more than impressed with the quality and potential of MARS. The energy and enthusiasm of participating faculty for this sort of collaborative work was infectious and indeed inspiring, as was praise for the professionalism of administrative staff. Evidently, this is a community with a sense of purpose and common cause where colleagues' individual strengths and interests are supported. Students reflected this as well, and despite the obvious challenges of a two-year pandemic, efforts to maintain their engagement with the program and its enthusiastic academic culture have paid off.

In sum[mary], MARS is a stellar example of an academic "intentional community" in which faculty, staff, and students freely engage in shared academic pursuits. This is all the more impressive given the minimal resources available to support the program in recent years, as well as pandemic restrictions and growing concerns about the program's future stability. MARS' resiliency and value-for-money deserve to be acknowledged, and its potential for still greater contributions nurtured.

C. Opportunities for Improvement and Enhancement

Recommendation #1

That all possible avenues be explored to further publicize the MARS program and associated events within the University and the broader community.

The Centre responded:

Prior to the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic in March 2020 MARS had worked diligently to publicize and enhance awareness of its program through a variety of means and social media. As the COVID pandemic hopefully recedes and as university and public health guidelines allow, MARS will pick up where it left off on these initiatives and will continue to publicize and enhance awareness of its program through an expanded schedule of public events and will consider the options suggested by the reviewers (including medieval and renaissance-themed musical performances and films, as well as academic speakers, workshops, and conferences). MARS will continue to work closely with the FoH Social Media Co-ordinator [name deleted], who is keen to report on Humanities events and activities and potentially engage a wider audience. MARS remains committed to community outreach and to sponsoring public events.

The Dean of Humanities responded:

The Dean supports the unit's plans to return to a pre-Covid level of events and promotion, and is happy to work with the unit on this.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. With pandemic-related restrictions lifting, the Centre has already resumed promotions and event planning.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Centre
Responsible for resources:	Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Centre
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2022-2023.

Recommendation #2

That steps be taken to offer MARS study abroad opportunities on a regularized, stable basis at least once every 2-3 years.

The Centre responded:

MARS intends to begin to plan for study abroad opportunities as it becomes safe and responsible to do so and as university, public health, and federal travel guidelines permit, emerging from the COVID pandemic. Since significant advance planning is required for study abroad courses, it may be several (2-3?) years before we are able to offer such an opportunity. Some previous MARS study abroad courses have been cross-listed with Classics, History, and Visual Arts, and co-operation with other programs will continue to form an important facet of our study abroad planning.

The Dean of Humanities responded:

The Dean supports the unit's intention to plan for overseas opportunities for students, especially in partnership with other units. As the unit notes, the planning and organization of these activities is onerous and time consuming, but the results for students are very valuable indeed. Cross-listed courses will ease the burden on a small unit.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee believes that the Centre, in consultation with Brock International, is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to move forward with regularized and stable study abroad opportunities for students.

Implementation Plan (2nd Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Centre
Responsible for resources:	Centre
Responsible for implementation:	Centre
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2023-2024.

Recommendation #3

That MARS explore opportunities to make further links between its curriculum and local historical resources, including museum and library collections housing pre-modern texts and/or artifacts.

The Centre responded:

The Centre will continue to support and explore links with local historical resources, such as visits to Archives and Special Collections at Brock University, the Mackenzie Printery and Newspaper Museum (Niagara-on-the-Lake), the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library (University of Toronto), the R.O.M, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies (University of Toronto). Such endeavours have been successful in the past and have included visits and presentations in collaboration with Archives and Special Collections at Brock University (especially in MARS 4P01 Sources and Methods of Medieval and Renaissance Studies), field trips to the R.O.M., historic fencing and Renaissance martial arts with the Niagara School of Arms (2017), and events in collaboration with the Concordia Lutheran Seminary at Brock University (2017).

The Dean of Humanities responded:

Pre-Covid, MARS was very successful in establishing links with external organizations and providing opportunities for students in this way. Rebuilding these links may take some time, and the Dean's Office is happy to support the unit in this rebuilding.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee believes that the Centre is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to rebuild linkages to local historical resources and resume field trips.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Centre
Responsible for resources:	Centre
Responsible for implementation:	Centre
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2022-2023.

Recommendation #4

That MARS collaborate with Library and IT services personnel to develop further “Digital Humanities” initiatives aimed at enhancing research, teaching, and/or experiential learning.

The Centre responded:

MARS is committed to exploring collaborations with the Library and IT Services in the development of Digital Humanities projects that will enhance teaching, research and experiential learning. For example, MARS will explore how the Library can help support the creation of digital exhibits using the Omeka-S platform, either for faculty research projects or as classroom assignments. Building digital exhibits in this way can be a valuable experiential learning opportunity that teaches history, exhibit design and writing, and the importance of metadata. The Library can also provide access to and workshops on ArcGIS and ArcGIS StoryMaps, which can be used to create interactive maps. It can offer some support with computational text analysis through the Introduction to Text Analysis with Python workshops. It is noteworthy that courses such as MARS 2P95 Reading the Middle Ages, already work in collaboration with the Library, in the development of an Omeka exhibit, created to showcase student work in the course.

The Dean of Humanities responded:

MARS has some good plans for extending its reach in this area, and the Dean’s Office is happy to help with these connections.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee expects that the Centre will work with the Library, Information Technology Services (ITS) and the Brock LINC and move forward as appropriate in the development of digital initiatives.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Centre
Responsible for resources:	Centre
Responsible for implementation:	Centre
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2022-2023.

Recommendation #5

That the MARS program be provided with the institutional support and acknowledgement necessary to continue its excellent work.

The Centre responded:

We in MARS agree with the need for sustained institutional support and acknowledgment of the Centre, its activities, and its curriculum, perhaps especially for study-abroad opportunities. Once the COVID-19 travel restrictions are phased out, greater administrative institutional support for the organization and maintenance of study-abroad courses would help support faculty commitment to this important experiential component of the MARS program.

The Dean of Humanities responded:

As the reviewers note, this recommendation lies outside the purview of the current process.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of the Committee's jurisdiction. It is expected that the program will proceed through normal channels of advocacy for resources.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted as it lies outside of the jurisdiction of the Committee.

D. Summary of Recommendations:

First Priority:

Recommendation(s) 1, 3, 4

Second Priority:

Recommendation 2

Not Accepted:

Recommendation 5

APPENDIX A

Medieval & Renaissance Studies Cyclical Academic Review Brock University

March 7, 9, 10, 2022
Via Videoconference (Microsoft Teams)

Meeting Connection Information:	
Platform:	Microsoft Teams
Meeting Name:	Review-MARS
Join by Video:	Click here to join the meeting
Video Conference ID:	116 169 593 2
Join by Audio:	1-888-862-4985 CANADA
Phone Conference ID:	792 309 815#
Find a Local Number:	Find a local number
	Learn More Help

FINAL Schedule

Monday, March 7	
9:00 - 9:45am	<u>Review Team Orientation</u> Brian Power, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President, Academic Carol Merriam, Dean, Faculty of Humanities Christina Phillips, Manager, Quality Assurance
9:45 - 10:00am	Transition
10:00 - 10:30am	<u>Meeting with Centre Director</u> Felipe Ruan, Associate Professor, MLLC
10:30 - 11:00am	Discussion
11:00 - 12:00pm	<u>Faculty Advisory Committee</u> André Basson, Sessional Instructor MARS Renée-Claude Breitenstein, Associate Professor, MLLC Fanny Dolansky, Associate Professor, CLAS Colin Rose, Associate Professor, HIST Felipe Ruan, Associate Professor, MLLC & Director MARS Ernesto Virgulti, Associate Professor, MLLC
12:00 - 1:00pm	Lunch Break

1:00 - 1:30pm **Faculty & Part Time Instructors**
Teresa Russo, Sessional Instructor, MARS (PT)
Renée-Claude Breitenstein, Associate Professor, MLLC
Fanny Dolansky, Associate Professor, CLAS
Ernesto Virgulti, Associate Professor, MLLC

1:30 - 2:30pm Discussion/Writing time

2:30 - 3:00pm **Faculty & Part Time Instructors**
André Basson, Sessional Instructor MARS (PT)
Colin Rose, Associate Professor, HIST
Michael Carter, Professor, CLAS

Wednesday, March 9

9:00 - 9:30am **Administrative & Academic Advising Supports**
Elaine Aldridge-Low, Administrative Assistant
Liz Hay, Academic Advisor, Faculty of Humanities

9:30 - 10:00am **Co-op, Career and Experiential Education**
Cara Krezek, Director, Co-op, Career and Experiential Education
Koreen McCullough, Experiential Education Coordinator

10:00 - 10:15am Transition

10:15 - 10:45am **Library**
John Dingle, Librarian
Alicia Zorzetto, Head of Collections

10:45- 11:00am Transition

11:00 - 11:45am **Meeting with Students**

11:45 - 12:00pm Discussion

12:00 - 1:00pm **Lunch Break**

1:00 - 2:00pm Discussion/Writing time

2:00 - 2:30pm **Faculty & Part -Time Instructors**
Michael Driedger, Associate Professor, HIST
Leah Knight, Associate Professor, ENGL
Andrew McDonald, Professor, HIST
Candice Bogdanski, Sessional Instructor, MARS (PT)

2:30 - 3:00pm Discussion

Thursday, March 10

9:00 - 10:00 am Discussion/Writing time

10:00 - 10:45am **Closing meeting with Provost & Vice-Provost**
Lynn Wells, Provost and Vice-President, Academic
Brian Power, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President, Academic

10:45 - 11:00am Transition

11:00 - 11:30am **Closing meeting with Dean, Faculty of Humanities**
Carol Merriam

Reviewers:	
Susannah Ferreira	Associate Professor Department of History Guelph University
Robin Vose	Professor Department of History St. Thomas University
Angela Book	Associate Professor Department of Psychology Brock University

APPENDIX B

Medieval and Renaissance Studies Undergraduate Program Review Four-Year Report (2018)

A. Summary of Review

This review was conducted under the terms and conditions of the IQAP approved by Senate on June 6, 2011.

1. The academic programs offered by the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies which were examined as part of the review were:
2007-2012 -BA Pass and Honours, Minor
2012-Present -BA Pass and Honours Combined Major, Minor
2. The Review Committee consisted of two external reviewers: Paul Dutton (Simon Fraser University) and Kenneth Graham (University of Waterloo) and an internal reviewer: Paul Zelisko (Brock University).
3. The site visit occurred on March 5-7, 2014.
4. The Final Assessment Report was approved by Senate on December 3, 2014.
5. The reviewers assigned the following Outcome Category: Category 2, “Good Quality”.
6. The next review of the graduate and undergraduate programs in the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies will be in 2021/22.

B. Recommendations

The reviewers provided 16 recommendations.

Recommendation #1

that MARS design standard and cleaner course outlines.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

Implementation Plan (First Priority)

Responsible for approving: Centre
 Responsible for resources: Centre
 Responsible for implementation: Centre
 Timeline: Dean of Humanities to report by end of academic year 2014/15

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 MARS Committee addressed the recommendation, and implemented a template for all MARS syllabi.	2014-15	2014-15

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

MARS continues to use a standardized course outline template for all core courses offered.

Recommendation #2

that MARS develop and maintain a list of digital addresses (e-mail, twitter, etc.) by which to communicate with its students and faculty about up-coming events, future courses, and developments in the field.

ARC Disposition of the recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

Implementation Plan (First Priority)

Responsible for approving: Centre
 Responsible for resources: Centre
 Responsible for implementation: Centre
 Timeline: Dean of Humanities to report by end of academic year 2014/15

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 MARS Committee met to address the recommendation.	2014-15	2014-15
Action #2 With the help of the MARS Administrative Assistant we developed a list of students and faculty (full & part time) to use in promoting events.	2014-15	2015-16

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

The MARS Administrative Assistant continues to keep an up-to-date list of students and faculty to use in promoting events. As well, this year we have been working with the Humanities Social Media Coordinator, and the Director and Administrative Assistant revived the student association (BUMARS) to help promote events and new courses. If an event interests another Department (e.g., 500th Anniversary of Martin Luther's Theses; the Viking Exhibit), we also seek the help of the Admin. Assistant of the other Department (in this case History) to send out announcements to faculty and students.

Recommendation #3

that once a year or once a semester MARS mount a social event with its faculty, majors, and minors, and interested visitors.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be consistent with existing practice and no additional action is required.

Implementation Plan

No further action required.

Recommendation #4

that MARS be granted its own, permanent meeting room for holding its meetings, student gatherings, common room service, and other activities.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of ARC's area of responsibility. The Committee expects that the Centre will proceed through normal channels of advocacy for space resources.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #5

that MARS find ways to raise its profile at Brock beyond the creation of a mailing list (see Recommendation 16 as one of the possible activities), both within the university and outside.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and believes that the Unit is best-positioned to determine appropriate strategies to move forward on this issue.

Implementation Plan (Second Priority)

Responsible for approving: Centre
 Responsible for resources: Centre
 Responsible for implementing: Centre
 Timeline: Dean of Humanities to report by end of academic year 2015/16

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Discussed by the MARS Committee and agreed that MARS needed more visibility within and outside the university.	2014-15	2014-15
Action #2 To improve visibility, the Director of MARS organized three successful events for students, faculty and the general public: Lectures on Gothic Architecture in England and in Canada, a film night, and a presentation on Historic Fencing and Martial Arts in the Renaissance. The Director also revived the student association (BUMARS).	2014-15	2015-16
Action #3 The Director of MARS co-organized 2 major successful events: i) "Sweet '16: Centenaries from 1016-2016" (Conquest of England, Cervantes, Shakespeare etc.); ii) the 38th Canadian Conference of Medieval Art Historians on (March 17 & 18, 2017).	2014-15	2016-17

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

MARS continues to improve its visibility both on and off campus. For example, the Conference of Medieval Art Historians was held in the Marilyn Walker complex not only to improve Community Outreach, but also to allow participants to experience our new venue in downtown St. Catharines. This year MARS organized lectures to mark the 500th Anniversary of Martin Luther's 95 Theses at the Lutheran Seminary, and are in the process of organizing a trip to the ROM for the Viking Exhibit.

Recommendation #6

that MARS appoint a library representative to maintain closer contact with its liaison librarian and the collections side of the library.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

Implementation Plan (First Priority)

Responsible for approving: Centre
 Responsible for resources: Centre
 Responsible for implementing: Centre
 Timeline: Dean of Humanities to report by end of academic year 2014/15

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 The MARS Committee elected a library representative, and the position is now included in the Centre's Rules of Procedures.	2014-15	2014-15

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

The role of MARS Library Representative has been added to our Rules of Procedure (and therefore permanent), and the Rep will be elected at the beginning of every academic year.

Recommendation #7

that MARS continue to keep prerequisites for enrolment in its courses low or absent so that it might serve the wider community of interest in medieval and renaissance Studies at Brock.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be consistent with existing practice and no further action is required.

Implementation Plan

No further action required.

Recommendation #8

that some means be found to offer a second section of 1F90 each year.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to find some means to increase enrolment in MARS 1F90 to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee expects that the Centre is best positioned to determine strategies to move forward on this issue.

Implementation Plan (First Priority)

Responsible for approving: Centre
Responsible for resources: Centre
Responsible for implementation: Centre
Timeline: Dean of Humanities to report by end of academic year 2014/15

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 MARS Committee discussed ways to increase enrolment in 1F90, and look into offering another section.	2014-15	2014-15
Action #2 Due to budgetary restrictions, it was not possible to add another section of 1F90. The Director consulted with the Instructor and all Teaching Assistants, and it was decided that a full online course was not in the best interest of the students; therefore, a blended course was instituted (with the online component limited to the seminar).	2014-15	2015-16
Action #3 The blended course (with a seminar online component) seemed to work rather well for TAs and students. If enrollment increases, a case will be made to add another section of 1F90.	2014-15	2016-17

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

The blended course is working quite well and enrollment remains satisfactory at just over 100. We shall continue to monitor enrollment and - if warranted - we shall request the necessary funding for a second section of MARS 1F90.

Recommendation #9

that MARS consider creating a course on the Science of the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be worthy of consideration. The Committee believes that the Centre is best positioned to determine strategies to move forward on this issue.

Implementation Plan (Second Priority)

Responsible for approving: Centre
 Responsible for resources: Centre
 Responsible for implementation: Centre
 Timeline: Dean of Humanities to report by end of academic year 2015/16

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Action taken with the History Department to cross-list HIST 2P75 (“Western Science from Aristotle to Newton”)	2014-15	2014-15
Action #2 The cross-listing of MARS/HIST 2P75 became permanent.	2015-16	2015-16

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

MARS is pleased with the cross-listing of HIST/MARS 2P97, “Western Science from Aristotle to Newton”, which helps expand our offerings and choices for the students.

Recommendation #10

that Brock work with the Ontario Universities Application Centre (OUAC) to improve the application and registration process for combined or double majors.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of the Committee’s area of jurisdiction. The Committee believes that this recommendation brings up an issue that should be referred to the attention of the Provost.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #11

that MARS and the History Department find a way to address the problem that MARS students have gaining access to History's courses.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

Implementation Plan (First Priority)

Responsible for approving: Centre, Dept. of History, Dean of Humanities
 Responsible for resources: Centre, Dept. of History, Dean of Humanities
 Responsible for implementation: Centre, Dept. of History, Dean of Humanities
 Timeline: Dean of Humanities to report by end of academic year 2014/15

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 An important recommendation, and MARS moved forward to try to implement it.	2014-15	2014-15
Action #2 The History Dept. agreed to stagger its registration. With HIST students still having priority, MARS students were able to register for those cross-listed courses before they opened to general registration.	2015-16	2015-16
Action #3 MARS continued to collaborate with the History Dept. to ensure that MARS students have access to cross-listed courses (housed in HIST) before general registration.	2016-17	2016-17

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

MARS will continue to collaborate with the History Dept. and Scheduling to ensure that MARS students have priority (after HIST students) to HIST/MARS cross-listed courses. However, since Directors and Admin. Assistants often change, this matter will have to be handled on a year-to-year basis. N.B.: MARS has proposed 3 additional cross-listings with HIST in order to enhance our offerings and provide students with more options.

Recommendation #12

that MARS and Brock try to mount a study-abroad course or courses every second year since this is a popular and innovative feature of the program.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted as worthy of consideration but recognizes that implementation will depend upon the availability of fiscal resources.

Implementation Plan (Second Priority)

Responsible for approving: Centre
 Responsible for resources: Centre
 Responsible for implementation: Centre
 Timeline: Dean of Humanities to report by end of academic year 2014/15

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 The MARS Committee agreed that Study Abroad courses are valuable experiences for students would give our Program greater visibility.	2014-15	2014-15
Action #2 The MARS Committee discussed a plan for study abroad courses. It was agreed that every two years, MARS would try to offer (or be involved in) a cross-listed study abroad course. The Director proposed the cross-listed course: HIST/ITAL/MARS/VISA 3F50 (“Reading the Italian Medieval and Renaissance City”) for Spring-Summer of 2016.	2015-16	2015-16
Action #3 In Spring 2016, HIST/ITAL/MARS/VISA 3F50 (“Reading the Italian Medieval and Renaissance City”) was organized and taught by the Director of MARS. The course included 3 weeks of classes on campus, followed by a 15-day Study Tour of 4 Italian cities. An unprecedented number of students registered: 29, and the course was a great success (a “life-changing” experience for many students).	2016-17	2016-17

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

While the Course in Italy was hugely successful, it was also extremely demanding to organize. Brock offers very little support for Study Abroad courses. The students need some financial support (however minimal), while the instructor needs assistance in promotion, organization, and especially in finance-related matters. Brock’s International Services would be in the best position to provide support (more than just general travel orientation). As well, the university must acknowledge that organizing study a abroad courses requires much more preparation than a regular course offered on campus. Organizing travel (flights and

ground transportation abroad), accommodations, meals, itineraries, galleries, museums etc. (in 4 cities) require weeks of preparation (equivalent to at least a half-course), and the additional work must be recognized.

Recommendation #13

that Brock consider increasing the Administrative Assistant's hours from 8 to 12 per week in order to better accommodate student needs.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of the Committee's jurisdiction. It is expected that the Centre will proceed through normal channels of advocacy for these administrative resources.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #14

that the Dean maintain the MARS faculty complement of 1.0 by hiring tenure-track replacement upon [the Director's] retirement.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of the Committee's jurisdiction. It is expected that the Centre will proceed through normal channels of advocacy for these teaching resources.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #15

that MARS remain a Centre. In the event that [the Director] is not replaced, which we would regret, we recommend that interdisciplinary MARS not be incorporated for administrative or other reasons into an established discipline and department (which would constitute a contradiction of their natures), but retain its autonomy as a Centre, perhaps under the aegis of the Dean of Humanities' office, and that the resources be supplied, even if stipendiary, to replace the lost teaching resources and to support the director of MARS in maintaining the program.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of the Committee's jurisdiction.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #16

that MARS develop and sponsor a community outreach program similar to the one successfully pioneered within the retirement community of greater Victoria by the University of Victoria, which has over twenty years sponsored a popular annual medieval conference each year.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to develop community outreach to be worthy of consideration. The Committee believes that the Centre, in consultation with the Dean, is best-positioned to determine strategies to move forward on this issue.

Implementation Plan (Third Priority)

Responsible for approving: Centre
 Responsible for resources: Centre
 Responsible for implementation: Centre
 Timeline: Dean of Humanities to report by end of academic year 2016/17

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 This recommendation would be part of an ongoing discussion at regular MARS meetings. Since this has budgetary considerations, an incremental strategy would need to be developed.	2014-15	2014-15
Action #2 The MARS Committee agreed that Community Outreach is needed to help improve promotion of events and activities. As stated in REC. 5, MARS organized 3 very successful events in 2015-16. We intend to do more Community Outreach (an event in the Downtown Campus) and collaborate with other departments.	2015-16	2015-16
Action #3 As indicated in Recommendation 5, MARS organized a symposium and an international conference; the latter intentionally held in the Marilyn Walker Downtown Campus to target Community Outreach.	2016-17	2016-17

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

The MARS Program has been active in organizing lectures, symposia, conferences and events (see Recommendation 5) both on and off campus (currently organizing a trip to the ROM for the Viking exhibit). While our Community Outreach includes - where possible - the retirement community, it is not the sole target. Perhaps the Faculty of Humanities as a whole can devise strategies for specifically targeting the retirement community.

C. Unit Summative Analysis and Evaluation

1. To what extent has the Unit achieved the improvements suggested by the reviewers?

Our Unit has definitely achieved the improvements included in the recommendations suggested by the reviewers (some of which we had already undertaken).

2. What overall impact has it had on the Unit's programs?

Program Review offers the opportunity to examine the quality and delivery of a unit's program, from both internal and external perspectives. The Reviewers' recommendations provided objective insights on ways to improve our program, but also reinforced existing practices. Overall, MARS was happy to address and implement the recommendations, since they were quite consistent with our vision and desire to move forward (especially following the elimination of our single major option). As a relatively new program (10 years old), we have always looked at ways to improve and enhance our course offerings, curriculum, activities and direction, and this (our first) review has encouraged us to create a better and more active Centre and Program.

3. Is the Unit adopting a process of continuous quality improvement for its programs?

As stated above, MARS has always carried out a process of quality improvement. It must be noted that we do not have a full time appointment in MARS, and survive with only 3.5 full course stipends and the goodwill of superb, dedicated faculty from other Departments to offer overload or cross-listed courses. A bare-bones budget indeed. However, despite these limitations, we have always looked at ways to improve the quality and breadth of our program, as outlined in the Actions taken above. Our next challenge will be integrating digital technologies to enhance traditional areas of study, but this will require additional resources.

4. How well do the programs now align with Brock University strategic priorities?

Notwithstanding its limited resources, MARS aligns well with Brock's strategic priorities (which will soon be in the review process as well). Its expert and competent faculty, dedicated to excellence in teaching and research, delivers an outstanding program that contributes to a very positive and enriching student experience. MARS student experience is further enhanced by opportunities to engage in our many community events and activities (conferences, symposia, lectures, trips, film nights etc.) and especially our study abroad opportunities (Internationalization). Drawing on dedicated participating faculty from most Departments in the Faculty of Humanities (CLAS, ENGL, HIST, MLLC, MUSI etc.), and offering courses in History, Literature, Culture, Philosophy, Religion, Art, Architecture,

Music and Women's Studies, the MARS program is inherently Interdisciplinary and Transcultural, and could very well be a model for small programs.

5. How does this review and its results position the programs as the Unit moves into the next review cycle?

The Centre for Medieval & Renaissance Studies is an excellent Program, one of the few truly Interdisciplinary and Transcultural programs in the university. We have an expert and dedicated teaching faculty, and student satisfaction is consistently high. We have always endeavored to improve our course offerings and overall program every year; therefore, we look forward to the next review with great interest and confidence.

D. ARC Final Summary

In final summary of the 2013/14 cyclical academic review of the programs offered by the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, ARC has determined the following:

1. The Reviewers' Recommendations have been addressed satisfactorily.
2. The Unit has established a direction for next steps as it prepares for the next review cycle.
3. The Unit has achieved a broad-based, reflective and forward-looking self-assessment.