



Four Year Report (2020)

Studies in Arts and Culture Undergraduate Program (reviewed 2015/16)

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 program offered by the Centre for Studies in Arts and Culture which was examined as part of the review was:

BA in Studies in Arts and Culture

2. The Review Committee consisted of: Randi Warne (Mount Saint Vincent University), David Cecchetto (York University) and Sheridan Houghten (Brock University).
3. The site visit occurred on March 2-4, 2016.
4. The Final Assessment Report was approved by Senate on November 9, 2016.
5. The reviewers assigned the program an outcome category of “Good Quality”.

Excellent Quality	Good Quality	Good Quality with Concerns	Non-Viable
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6. The next review of the undergraduate program in the Centre for Studies in Arts and Culture will be in 2023/24.

B. Recommendations

Recommendation #1

Replace outgoing full-time faculty member.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be worthy of consideration but outside of the Committee's jurisdiction. It is expected that the program will proceed through normal channels of advocacy to address this recommendation.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Comments

In 2019, STAC created two new concentrations and cross-listed several courses with MLLC. A combined major was approved by Senate in 2019, to start in 2020-2021. The Centre also conducts important student recruiting. The Centre is functioning for the moment with a 0.5 full-time position. STAC recommends a 1.0 full-time position.

Recommendation #2

Plan future program directorships to consist in two consecutive three-year terms.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside the jurisdiction of the Committee. The appointment and renewal of the Program Director is governed by the Brock University/Brock University Faculty Association collective agreement.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #3

Hold regularly scheduled social events three times per year to strengthen student engagement and sense of cohort.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and will build on current practice. The Committee agrees with UPC comments and encourages the Program to examine the curriculum with the intent of identifying core courses in all years to reinforce and build a sense of community.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Program
Responsible for resources:	Dean of Humanities, Program
Responsible for implementation:	Program
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by end of academic

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Hold a student gathering	2016	ongoing
Action #2 Coordinate opportunities for students academic and social engagement	2016	ongoing

Comments

Given the interdisciplinary nature of the STAC program, students, faculty and publics are regularly offered the opportunity to engage with the academic and research outcomes of the Centre, collaborating programs and MIWSFPA/Brock University programming. Whether exhibitions, performances, guest lectures, etc., STAC events include and encourage strong and meaningful outreach and social engagement. These events are marketed and promoted by sponsoring Faculty, Departments, and the MIWSFPA. The MIWSFPA also reports about events. Many of the events listed below are collaborative efforts with other departments, which also serves to increase visibility and provide opportunities for students to meet and mingle.

2017-2018:

- MIWSFPA orientation activities.
- 1-3 November 2017. Five-day residence: Visual artist and bookmaker Bernard Cella (Vienna, Austria), as part of the STAC Walker Cultural Leaders Series, incl. public lecture (1 November, Rodman Hall) and book-making workshop (3 November, Niagara Artists Centre).
- 30 November 2017. Opening reception for STAC/VISA/FREN student exhibition *Colour Constructs* (Rodman Hall).
- 25 January 2018. Public lecture by Canadian author Daniel Dugas at the MIWSFPA, in partnership with Modern Languages and Interdisciplinary Humanities.
- 8 March 2018. Opening reception for student exhibition *Expressions of Today* at the Niagara Artists Centre, in partnership with French Studies.
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2018-2019:

- MIWSFPA orientation activities.
- 18 Oct 2018. Zine-making workshop, as part of the STAC WCL series.
- 29 Nov. 2018. Opening reception of STAC/VISA/MLLC student exhibition *Manifestoes in a Room* (Rodman Hall).
- 3 Dec. 2018. STAC Improv, Mahtay Café.
- 18 March 2019. Author's talk (poet Adam Dickinson), as part of STAC WCL series.
- 4 April 2019. Opening reception of STAC/VISA student exhibition *Erasures* (MIWSFPA Art Gallery).

- April 2019. publication of STAC students' creative work in *ti*< 8.1.
- 6 May 2019. Small Walker Press book launch (2 books launched); guest speaker Noelle Allen (Publisher, Wolsak & Wynn), as part of STAC WCL series.

2019-2020:

- MIWSFPA orientation activities.
- 22 Oct. 2019. Book-cover making workshop, as part of the STAC WCL series (displayed in November and December in the Learning Commons, MIWSFPA as well as in a downtown second-hand bookstore).
- 2 Dec. 2019. STAC chorus, downtown St. Catharines.
- 21 January 2020. STAC Walker Cultural Leader series, artist Donna Szoke (Public lecture).
- 30 January 2020. Opening reception of STAC/VISA student exhibition *Imagined Urban Gardens* (Rodman Hall).
- 12 March 2020. Reception of STAC/VISA student exhibition *Crisscross* (MIW Art Gallery).
- 14 March 2020, Rodman Hall, STAC Research Centre exhibition 'Mechanical Eye, Ear and Motion: Industrial Niagara' (Curator Derek Knight).
- 21 April 2020. MIWSFPA. Small Walker Press book launch (2 books launched); guest speaker Renée van der Avoird, Assistant Curator of Canadian Art, Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO).
- April 2020. publication of STAC students' creative work in *ti*< (forthcoming).

Recommendation 4

Hold program faculty meetings at least once per term. Include all program instructors in these meetings.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to hold a faculty meeting at least once per term to describe current practice as found in the Collective Agreement. The Committee notes that the Centre has the right to determine its own membership in these meetings.

Implementation Plan

No further action required.

Recommendation 5

Continue to leverage Rodman Hall as a key and effective component of the program.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside the Committee's jurisdiction. The Committee wishes to confirm that all available information regarding Rodman Hall was made available to the reviewers during the review. The Committee understands that the university is exploring options for the future of Rodman Hall, and that key to this will be maintaining artistic, curatorial and research services to faculty, students and the community moving forward.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Comments

Please see answer to Question C.5.

Recommendation 6

Implement sound studies stream as outlined in Self Study.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be worthy of consideration, but understands that it is dependent on resources which are not yet available to the program.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation 7

Consult with art and design Universities (namely OCADU, NSCAD, and Emily Carr) in order to be able to bring alternate labour categories to the bargaining table in future contract negotiations between the Faculty Association and the employer, specifically “permanent part time” designations that allow for instructors who maintain arts practices beyond their work for the University.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside the Committee’s jurisdiction. Any such changes would be a matter of negotiation between the university and its labour partners.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation 8

Expand the program’s visibility to prospective students by ensuring that it is prominently featured in all arts related advertising.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The program is encouraged to work with the Communications Director of the MIWSFPA to ensure that the profile of STAC is communicated externally and internally.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving: Program

Responsible for resources: Program

Responsible for implementation: Program

Timeline:

Dean of Humanities to report by end of academic year 2016/17

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Ensure STAC's presence in MIW publicity documents	2016	2017
Action #2 Develop more STAC publicity materials for circulation	2016	2017
Action #3 Define a clearer direction for STAC.	2016	2018
Action #4 (in MIWSFPA with direct impact in STAC) Hire of a MIWSFPA Recruitment Officer	2017	2017

Comments

Action #1

Publicity documents that originate in the Marilyn I Walker School support all four units of the school, which includes STAC. The School's Viewbook profiles all four units. STAC's website is supported by the School's publicity office. All STAC events are advertised by the MIW office (posters, articles, social media, viewbook).

We observe the absence of a permanent salaried Communications Officer at the MIWSFPA since 2017 and highly commend the current Director of the MIWSFPA whose high professional standards, expertise and hard work are of invaluable help to the School's units (including STAC). We recognize that his work goes beyond regular work hours, and are deeply grateful to him. His term ends in June 2020. We note that interim and ad-hoc staffing cannot achieve the professional results and successful outcomes we are currently benefiting from at the MIWSFPA.

Action #2

Please see the explanation to Action 1# above. STAC is given its share of space in the many items of publicity that come out of the MIW: website support, Brock News articles, social media presence, Viewbook publication, and event posters. Unique STAC specific communication and marketing pieces have been generated.

Action #3

Since Fall 2018, STAC has actively positioned the Centre, (1) as an interdisciplinary program welcoming not just students in the creative arts and arts management (from MIWSFPA), but also students from other disciplines (from main campus) who are interested in what we do and appreciate the expertise we provide (Note: STAC has historically deep roots in interdisciplinary learning experience); (2) as a Research Centre in Interdisciplinary Arts and

Creative Culture, home to The Small Walker Press; and (3) as a vibrant cultural scene with year-round cultural events and outreach activities involving students, faculty as well as local and international cultural leaders, for instance through the Walker Cultural Leader series at the MIWSFPA (please see above). For further appreciation of STAC's activities, please note that STAC's operational budget is under \$1500 yearly.

Regarding the teaching component, two curriculum review meetings were held in 2016-2017, facilitated by the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation. STAC has accomplished the following since Fall 2018:

- introduction of a full-year context-credit course and required course for all STAC majors and minors;
- creation of a Concentration in Languages, Arts and Cultures (with MLLC) as well as, to replace the Curatorial Studies concentration discontinued by VISA, a Concentration in Cultural Transmission and Cultural Heritage (with History and Geography/Tourism Studies)
- creation of a co-major (ARC and Senate approval obtained; to start in Fall 2020);
- important revisions of the existing Major and Minor, as well as of the existing Concentration in Cultural Management;
- several cross-listings with MLLC courses;
- several recruitment activities at the MIWSFPA and Rodman Hall, in addition to open houses and OUF.

Action #4

The MIWSFPA Recruitment Officer promotes and communicates STAC learning opportunities to the broad applicant pool, on campus, in province-wide recruitment campaigns, in printed and online communications, and in the field (e.g. individual school visits). She organizes and supports outreach and engagement activities for STAC at the MIWSFPA, Brock University and the Rodman Hall Art Centre.

C. Unit Summative Analysis and Evaluation

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

STAC has exceeded all expectations set in the program review, despite its small budget, its reduced staff, and space challenges (administrative assistant's office located on main campus; the university's plans at Rodman Hall). The STAC committee is composed of hard-working and enthusiastic experts whose commitment nurtures a collegial culture of interdisciplinary excellence. STAC is also proud to work with highly qualified part-time instructors, some of whom have long professional experience in arts management outside the university environment. STAC has had the privilege to work with supportive Associate Deans, Academic who fully appreciate the teaching mandate of and the professional outcomes envisioned in STAC. STAC also demonstrates a continued practice of experiential learning. (For example, the Summary of Status of Course Composition & Experiential Reporting in the Faculty of Humanities presented at the Chairs & Directors Meeting of 9 January 2020 indicates that all Fall 2019 STAC courses include Experiential Learning).

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

Please see above. STAC has changed in major ways since the last program review and has systematically addressed all identified issues. Although a small centre, its interdisciplinarity and activities have gained visibility at the MIWSFPA, in the Faculty of Humanities, and beyond. Most STAC instructors already report how much the learning environment has recently developed, as more students come from different programs and diverse backgrounds. The amount and quality of collective learning and work has significantly improved, so has the students' involvement and readiness to share their skills with and learn new transferable skills from their peers. The STAC committee expects that the creation of a co-major will attract more students to the program. The creation of The Small Walker Press and of the Research Centre in Interdisciplinary Arts and Creative Culture has significantly reinforced the presence and the academic, intellectual and creative legitimacy and visibility of STAC, not only among faculty and professionals in the field, but also among students enrolled in STAC courses. This research component also allows STAC to be a strong partner for projects outside the program.

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

Please see above. STAC continues to develop contacts with other units, and vigilantly observes how the curriculum changes it has introduced impact the program. The forthcoming APC exercises will reflect any modification we deem to be required. STAC also keeps informed of potential connections with local partners to develop experiential learning throughout the program. In terms of pedagogy, STAC is excited to work with highly motivated instructors, some of whom with a long teaching experience in STAC, who are now renewing their teaching strategies and adapting to more diverse class dynamics. The Director of STAC completes all steps of the APC submission process and is the contact person for all part-time instructors' queries. The STAC committee is a collegial group of faculty members who converse freely and often about STAC's curriculum and outcomes. STAC receives strong and essential support from the office of the MIWSFPA Director.

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

The Brock University Institutional Strategic Plan 2018-2025 lists four priorities. STAC is contributing to all:

- Transformational and accessible academic and university experience: STAC's increasing diversity among students and the interdisciplinary nature of the program allows instructors to implement innovative pedagogy reinforcing team and experiential learning. STAC's cultural and outreach events, often in cooperation with other units, increase the sense of cohort and often offers students the opportunity to gain professional experience, for instance in the curation or participation in student exhibitions, as well as in publication in *ti*. STAC courses are also an opportunity for students to work with peers coming from different programs and with different skills.

- Building research capacity across the University: the recently created Small Walker Press and the Research Centre in Interdisciplinary Arts and Creative Culture bring together grant-winning Brock scholars from different disciplines, as well as from outside Brock, nationally and internationally. The outcomes are publications, talks, exhibitions (forthcoming),

colloquia (forthcoming), outreach activities. Currently in its first year, the Research Centre is positioned to develop larger grant applications.

-Enhancing the vitality of the region and beyond: as demonstrated above, STAC is passionately contributing to cultural life in the Niagara Region and is also involved outside Niagara. For instance, The Small Walker Press has partnered with an established small press in Vienna, Austria.

-Fostering a culture of inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization: STAC is proud to maintain active contacts with international students, for instance in exhibition projects outside Canada, but also by welcoming Brock's international students in STAC courses. STAC's journal *ti* publishes regularly in several languages. STAC is also looking forward to welcoming the Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Art currently being recruited at the MIWSFPA as a member in our Research Centre. Should the STAC candidate be selected, our unit, in the spirit of collegial interdisciplinarity as well as in the spirit of the CRC search at the MIWSFPA, has proposed that the candidate be cross-appointment with a different unit.

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

As demonstrated above, STAC is prepared to move into the next review cycle and looks forward to developing its program and its local and research involvement. Following the many recent developments in teaching and research in STAC, and before the next review, the STAC committee is planning to yearly assess their impact so as to remediate any weakness and develop strengths. We are also interested in documenting changes the instructors are noticing in their teaching and interactions with students. Recruitment work (OUF, open houses, STAC-specific events) will continue.

Also, in 2019-2020, and for the first time since 2015, when intake into the program was "bundled" with a number of other Humanities programs, STAC is again a direct-entry program and can once again track a cohort from application to admission to a major. As of 23 January 2020, the numbers are 37 applications and 13 offers.

The Class "A" art gallery at the Rodman Hall Art Centre allows STAC to effect year-round successful experiential learning, professional experience for students, as well as research. In 2016, ARC noted above (please see Recommendation 5) that "the university is exploring options for the future of Rodman Hall, and that key to this will be maintaining artistic, curatorial and research services to faculty, students and the community moving forward." On 29 November 2019, the University posted a "Request for Expression of Interest for Agreement for Operations and Potential Development of the Rodman Hall Property." As of January 2020, the University has not communicated any plan to maintain the high level of teaching resources, teaching space, experiential learning and cultural/artistic activities Rodman Hall has been generously offering to Brock students and Niagara residents over the past years. This is a regrettable situation, as it takes one to two years to program cultural events.

Below are the lists of how STAC has used Rodman Hall in 2018-20. Please note that STAC was involved in a similar fashion at Rodman Hall in the preceding years.

2018-2019

- Fall 2018: STAC 2F94 taught at Rodman Hall, with student exhibition *Manifestoes in a Room* in cooperation with VISA (Nov.-Dec 2018)
- 11 March 2019: STAC 3P01 class meeting taught at Rodman Hall (20% of final grade is based on in-class and outside-class work at Rodman)
- April 2019: publication of Shawn Serfas' *Inland* by STAC's Small Walker Press (Walker Cultural Leader series), in cooperation with Rodman Hall. International distribution.

2019-2020

- Fall 2019: STAC 2P93 taught at Rodman Hall
- Sept. 2020: STAC Research Centre opening: Rodman Hall curator is member.
- 1 Oct. 2019: STAC 1F98 class meeting taught at Rodman Hall (10% of semester's grade is based on in-class and outside-class work at Rodman)
- 12 Sept. 2019: STAC 4P01 with focus on Museum Studies (100% of final grade); class meeting taught at Rodman Hall, with resulting exhibition (STAC/VISA *Imagined Urban Gardens*, February 2020)
- Winter 2020: STAC 4P68 taught at Rodman Hall
- March 2020: Research Centre's first exhibition "Mechanical Eye: Industria Niagara" (March 2020), funded through Explore Exchange grant.

D. ARC Final Summary

In final summary of the 2015/16 cyclical academic review of the BA in Studies in Arts and Culture, 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.