



Four Year Report (2020)

Visual Arts Undergraduate Programs (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 programs offered by the Department of Visual Arts which were examined as part of the review were:

- BA in History of Art and Visual Culture
- BA in Studio Art
- Concurrent BA/BED - Visual Arts

2. The Review Committee consisted of: Sally Hickson (University of Guelph), Sue Lloyd (University of Toronto) and Jeff Boggs (Brock University).
3. The site visit occurred on February 28-March 1, 2016.
4. The Final Assessment Report was approved by Senate on November 9, 2016.
5. The reviewers assigned the programs 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 programs in the Department of Visual Arts will be in 2023/24.

B. Recommendations

Recommendation #1

- a) All VISA majors be required to take both of these Winter courses [VISA 1P95 (Intro to Digital Images and VISA 1P97 (Studio Now)], along with VISA 1P96 (Foundation Studio) - only the latter is now required for all students. The completion of these three courses would provide each student with a broad and interdisciplinary foundation from which to diverge into selected media practices, or from which they can merge into inter-media practices, later in the program.
- b) In their upcoming curriculum discussions, the faculty consider what media are not represented in course offerings and whether or not courses in these media might in some way be offered, to be accommodated within the present facilities. The faculty might consider meeting with students or student representatives in order to get a sense of what media students feel they do not have the opportunity to work with.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. In addition to the curriculum review planned for spring/summer 2016, the Committee encourages the Department to undertake an ongoing process of curriculum review and revision.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

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

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Schedule Department curriculum review to discuss the recommendation.	Y1	Y1, 2, 3
Action #2 Review curriculum and make changes.	Y1	Y1, 2, 3

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

The Department met spring 2017 for an in-depth curriculum review. Full complement of HAVC faculty conducted History of Art and Visual Culture (HAVC) curriculum review Nov. 2, 2017. Studio Art (STDA) curriculum review conducted in in spring 2017, and spring 2018.

Student feedback was solicited as part of the process. It was unanimously decided that requiring all three courses would be too many 1st year courses. We made small alterations to 1P96 (Foundation Studio) to better represent studio needs and dropped 1P97 (Studio Now). VISA majors are now required to take 1P95 (Digital Foundation) and 1P96 (Foundation Studio). The department feels this gave students a broad knowledge base more appropriate to upper level needs. Creation of 3M90 allows students to integrate media not represented in other coursework. We have followed up with ongoing yearly curriculum review.

Recommendation #2

VISA develop clearer 3rd-year course paths.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee expects that the curriculum review referenced in response to Recommendation #1 will also address course pathways, with a view to improving the student experience.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

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

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Schedule department retreat to discuss curriculum review to clarify 3 rd year paths	Y1	Y2, Y3

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

The Department and program committees (HAVC and STDA) reviewed the curriculum in 2017, with a view to clarifying course pathways in the 3rd year. Submissions were brought to UPC to make changes to the program: VISA 3P11 was cancelled when the department felt it was not integrated enough and one course, 3M90 was offered on a trial basis to provide an interdisciplinary option for 3rd and 4th year students wishing to actively integrate writing, studio, digital, sound and/or animation, etc.

HAVC faculty made decisions for clearer 3rd year pathways. They stated: “VISA is trying to develop the HAVC major. We have found that there was a heavy number of classics courses populating our 3rd-year offerings which obscures or weights our major. We are moving away from periodization and towards thematic courses for various reasons including: keeping up with trends and changes in the field of art history & visual culture so that we remain on the cutting edge of the discipline; we are unable to provide a range of courses across *all* periods - that would require many more faculty - so we have proposed to re-vamp our course offerings in ways that support our collective and unique expertise, our aspirations to model a history of art and visual culture BA degree that is germane to a new generation of students and to continue offering contextual courses that support our studio majors.”

As a result, CLAS cross listed courses VISA 3P31, VISA 4P31, VISA 4P34 were delisted in 2018 to clarify HAVC choices in 3rd year. VISA 2P98 was discontinued in 2019 as it does not fit in with the curriculum design. 3M90 has been successful (enrolments, student experience/art outcomes) and will continue to be offered yearly. In 2019/20 3M90 was renamed to 3Q90, as a regular offering A 3rd year Advanced Sound Design class was implemented for additional 3rd year Studio Art options, added to UPC in 2018, implemented in 2019. Studio classes have been moved in the schedule to align, so that students can more easily schedule courses (IE. Video Art in D2 occupies same time slot as Advanced Video in D3. Same alignment now occurs with all media-based studio classes: photography, drawing, painting, video, animation). In 2019/20 alignment in student schedules between all introductory and advanced studio classes offered in same time slot of D2 and D3 terms is completed.

Recommendation #3

VISA make a tenure-track hire for a specialist in photographic practice with a focus on contemporary photography.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be worthy of consideration but realizes that it lies outside of the jurisdiction of the Committee. It is expected that the program will proceed through normal channels of advocacy for faculty resources.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

Visual Arts Department Chair submitted a proposal to convert LTA appointment to tenure track on Oct 5, 2017. Conversion was approved/signed Dec 1, 2017, tenure track appointment began on July 1, 2018. Prof. Photography appointment applied for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor on October 1, 2019. The application was unanimously supported by the Visual Arts T&P committee, and this has been reported to the Dean of Humanities.

Recommendation 4

VISA complete a program application for a BFA.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee believes that the Department is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to move forward with this recommendation.

Implementation Plan (3rd Priority)

Responsible for approving: Department
 Responsible for resources: Department
 Responsible for implementation: Department
 Timeline: Dean of Humanities to report by end of academic year 2018/19

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Schedule department retreat to discuss application for BFA	Year 1	Delayed

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

There is unanimous agreement amongst the faculty members in the Department of Visual Arts in this regard. The department has been staggering under an abnormally high administrative load for the past several years due to a resignation in 2016, and multiple sabbatical, sick leaves, and a parental leave. The department is presently preparing to hire a tenure-track Professor in 2020 and is hopeful that our increased numbers will allow us to move forward with the BFA.

Recommendation 5

The university administration clarifies, as soon as possible, the future relationship between MWISFPA [MIWSFPA] and Rodman Hall.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside the jurisdiction of the Committee. The Committee understands that the university is exploring options for the future of Rodman Hall. Key to this will be maintaining artistic, curatorial and research services to faculty, students and the community moving forward.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation 6

VISA consult with Brock's Center for Pedagogical Innovation to guarantee consistency of learning outcomes across the program during VISA's planned curriculum review in 2016-17.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee understands that the recommendation is closely related to Recommendations #1 and #2 and the Department's responses to them.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

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

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Departmental curriculum review	Y1	Y2

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

VISA faculty are all in agreement about the necessity of conducting a curriculum review and it makes sense to consult the CPI as part of this process. This recommendation was delayed pending the expected return of the faculty complement expected in the summer of 2017. Chair consulted with CPI on October 19, 2017. CPI supported curriculum review choices and proposed changes in Recommendations #1 and #2. Ongoing curriculum review.

Recommendation 7

VISA 1Q98 (Intro to Visual Culture) and VISA 1Q99 (History of Western Art) be offered in face-to-face format.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee believes that the Department is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to address the delivery of these courses.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

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

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 1Q98 and 1Q99 offered face-to-face	Y2	Y3

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

Of the three members who teach in HAVC, one was on sabbatical, one was on medical leave, and one recently returned to work but is on ½ medical leave. Action on this recommendation had to await the return of members of HAVC. In 2018 1Q98 and 1Q99 were offered face-to-face in the Fall/Winter school terms. The course has high enrolment. Sections of 1Q98 and 1Q99 will be offered online in Spring term to accommodate students that wish to take these courses in distance education, etc. From 2019, going forward, 1Q98 and 1Q99 continue to be offered face-to-face in the Fall/Winter school terms and online in Spring term, with very good enrolment numbers.

Recommendation 8

VISA expand the curatorial component of the HVAC [HAVC] program.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation
ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside the jurisdiction of the Committee. The Committee understands that the recommendation is closely related to Recommendation #5.

Implementation Plan
Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation 9

VISA and IASC offerings be examined and coordinated to reduce repetition and duplication.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee expects that the curriculum review referenced in response to Recommendation #1 will also address repetition and duplication.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

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

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 VISA and IASC courses coordinated to reduce repetition.	Y2	Y3

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

This is delayed pending the return of the faculty complement expected in the summer of 2017. In 2018, Chair met with Chairs of IASC department and GAME program to move VISA sections of 2P97 and 2P99 to Digital Media Lab (MIW 147) to unify content across departments and programs. Ongoing review of VISA and IASC offerings with an eye to differentiation. In 2019, Sound design class was modified (via APC submission in Fall 2018) into two unique courses (VISA 2P99 Introduction to Sound Design in Contemporary Art; VISA 2Q99 Sound Design for Game Applications) to address unique knowledge areas of each field, specific to VISA or GAME majors. Changes accepted by APC. Ongoing review of effectiveness of GAME sections of VISA 2P97 and 2P99 offered on main campus seems effective.

Recommendation 10

VISA consider conducting Writing and Creative Practice workshops out of the Learning Commons.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be already in the process of implementation. The Committee expects that the Department will monitor progress on this initiative and make improvements as necessary.

Implementation Plan (2nd Priority)

Responsible for approving: Department
 Responsible for resources: Department
 Responsible for implementation: Department
 Timeline: Dean of Humanities to report by end of academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Consider conducting workshops in Learning Commons	Y2	Delayed

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

In 2017, action on this recommendation had to await the return of members of the Department after July 1st, 2017. In both 2018 and 2019, due to an exceptionally high administrative demand on faculty, we did not have the staffing power to complete this item. With the addition of a new staff hire of a Media Resource Coordinator (replacing former position of Visual Arts Resource Coordinator) it was hoped that the Media Resource Coordinator would be able to start organizing these workshops for 2019/2020. With the huge learning curve of the Media Resource Coordinator in their first year of the redesigned position, it was deferred to the 2020/2021 school year, if it can be realized within their allotment of work hours.

Recommendation 11

The university and city improve directional signage to the MIWFPA [MIWSFPA] on Highway 406 and the downtown core.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of the jurisdiction of the Committee. ARC expects that the Department and MIWSFPA will work through available channels of advocacy to implement this recommendation.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation 12

Temporary parking passes be kept on hand for program-specific short-term parking.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be current policy. No further action is required.

Implementation Plan

No further action is required.

Recommendation 13

VISA actively integrate the Walker Cultural Leader Program into their pedagogy.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be current policy. No further action is required.

Implementation Plan

No further action is required.

Recommendation 14

Creation of an MFA programme.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted at this time. The Committee understands that the possible establishment of the BFA would come first and that the graduate degree would be a future consideration.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation 15

One of the factors keeping the VISA Program from being rated as “Excellent” in quality is that it does not currently have either a national or international reputation. With its new facilities, its current strong faculty both in studio and HAVC, and with the recommendations identified by the reviewers, we feel that with the support of the university, the VISA program is well-positioned to promote and recruit in a more national and/or international scale.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be a comment. The Committee encourages the Department to build on its strengths and work towards national and international recruitments for its programs.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

C. Unit Summative Analysis and Evaluation

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

The unit has made all major improvements but struggles with a few implementations (BFA, workshops) due to our current volume of administrative and service duties. We anticipate beginning Learning Commons workshops with our new and now fully trained support staff. We question whether BUFA faculty currently overseeing 15 student monitor positions should be done by a non-BUFA staff member to ameliorate our service loads. Additionally, the important non-academic, professional, and experiential unit, Rodman Hall Art Centre faces a lack of funding by administration, and potential divestment. We have done our utmost to aggressively recruit students, but this is paled by the negative local, provincial, and national attention to the perceived divestment of Rodman Hall Art Centre, which is key to nationalizing our program. Due to the University's handling of RHAC and the instability the Administration has generated, our program growth has been hampered by unclear paths of change and poor communication over the past four years.

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

We believe the positive effect of the implementations contributes to our steady growth in incoming first year students. The lack of faculty hire skews our course offerings to such an extreme extent that 97% of our media art courses are CUPE taught. Negative news about Rodman Hall directly leads to a lack of student retention. We understand that the university is exploring options for the future of Rodman Hall. Key to this will be maintaining artistic, curatorial, and research services to visual arts students, faculty, and the community moving forward.

We have seen very positive success in the curricular changes we have made. Dropping one of the Year One requirements has given students a clearer course pathway. Through working with CPI, we are able to articulate consistent learning outcomes. We are pleased with the clear 3rd year pathways we have implemented for students through the years in both HAVC and STDA coursework. Through coordinating more closely with IASC, we are happy with the new clarity between VISA and IASC course offerings as we have reduced repetition, and designed coursework specific to the needs of students in each program (IE. (VISA 2P99 Introduction to Sound Design in Contemporary Art; VISA 2Q99 Sound Design for Game Applications). HAVC 1Q98 and 1Q99 are now offered in both online and face-to-face formats, which has been very popular with students.

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

Yes, we continue to review the clarity of our pathways for students through each year, and the consistencies of learning outcomes. We look forward to a future survey among our studio students to get a sense of what media they feel they do not currently have the opportunity to work with in our program. We face questions of how to grow, given our five-hour studio time slots (which were seen as very positive in our last student review) and limited number of studio classrooms. We still want to consider developing a BFA and are hopeful for a future

with more BUFA faculty able to complete this administrative goal. We are still working towards Writing and Creative Practice workshops. While the university has progressed in terms of promoting and/or recruiting in a more national and/or international scale, we see this area as still holding a great potential for growth.

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

The Visual Arts Department excels at offering transformational and accessible academic experiential opportunities to our students. We build research capacity evidenced by the strong performance of our faculty at national and international levels, which we bring to a positive dynamic effect in our courses, and in our local arts community. In 2018, the Visual Arts Chair initiated the idea of a Canada Research Chair (Tier II) in Indigenous Art Practice as a pathway to decolonization, and this is now in the interview stages in Winter 2020. The continued support for Rodman Hall, as a flagship institution that evidences the indelible value of art and culture for our students and community is key to the quality of experiential education that distinguishes Brock University. As evidenced by the ITI Senate subcommittee research, Rodman Hall has been a leading force in decolonizing Brock University through its forward and inclusive exhibitions, publications, and other public presentations, fostering a culture of inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization.

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

This review offered many welcome steps of clarity for our student coursework and pathways. For our next review cycle, we anticipate implementing our delayed goals of the creation of a Visual Arts BFA degree and the creation of workshops in the Marilyn Walker School Learning Commons. We look forward to surveying and inviting feedback from current students and recent alumni as to the breadth and depth of our offerings. We move forward to the next review cycle with the question of how we will grow while also distinguishing our unique program offerings.

D. ARC Final Summary

In final summary of the 2015/16 cyclical academic review of the programs offered by the Department of Visual Arts, 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.