

# Final Assessment Report

## Visual Arts

### Undergraduate Programs

(reviewed 2023/24)

#### A. Summary

1. The Department's Self-Study was considered and approved by the Senate Academic Review Committee November 24, 2023.
2. The Review Committee consisted of two external reviewers: Nina Levitt (York University) and Jennifer Crane (University of Saskatchewan), and one internal reviewer, Liz Clarke (Brock University).
3. The site visit occurred March 27-28, 2024.
4. The Reviewers' Report was received June 6, 2024.
5. The Department response was received September 3, 2024.
6. The Senate Undergraduate Program Committee response was received September 10, 2024.
7. The Dean, Faculty of Humanities, response was received October 18, 2024.
8. Annual Implementation Reports will be submitted from 2025-2028.
9. The next Cyclical Academic Review is scheduled to take place in 2031/2032.

The review was conducted under the terms and conditions of the June 2023 IQAP. The Self-Study was prepared prior to the ratification of the 2023 IQAP.

## Program Outcome Categories:

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

Program(s)	Excellent Quality	Good Quality	Good Quality with Concerns	Non-Viable
BA in History of Art and Visual Culture (Honours)		X		
BA in History of Art and Visual Culture (Pass)		X		
BA in Studio Art (Honours)		X		
BA in Studio Art (Pass)		X		
Concurrent BA/BEd				
Combined Major Program (Honours, Pass)		X		
<i>If you have chosen 'Good Quality with Concerns', please summarize the specific concern(s) briefly below. If you have chosen 'Non-Viable', please summarize the specific reason(s) below.</i>				
NOTE: There is no ranking for the concurrent BA/BEd as our understanding is that it was not subject to this review.				

## Executive Summary:

### The Reviewers wrote:

The Department of Visual Arts (VISA), in the Faculty of Humanities, is a vibrant community of faculty, staff and undergraduate students located in an exceptional new building—the Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts (MIWSFPA)—in downtown St. Catharines.

The school offers two interconnected BA streams: Studio Art (STDA) and History of Art and Visual Culture (HAVC). In student surveys, the program rates highly in teaching critical thinking skills and overall student satisfaction.

Full-time and sessional VISA faculty are respected artists and scholars in their fields, offering excellent professional expertise in a range of areas with a strong emphasis on studio art production, visual culture, and the environment. Collegiality among faculty and staff is excellent, generating a positive work environment and a strong sense of community. The students we met with were very positive about their teachers, the academic program and the MIWSFPA facilities.

The staff are student centered, highly skilled, professional, and dedicated members of the department adding support to faculty and enhancing the student experience. The Art Store in the building is unique among similar programs and provides art students with equitable access to high quality materials for their course work and knowledgeable staff and creates part-time jobs for students.

Recent faculty retirements, one long-term leave of absence and one resignation, as well as the “loss” of a CRC position last year, has resulted in the need to hire a concerning number of sessional faculty in the next few years. There are no BIPOC faculty or staff- an absence that needs to be addressed immediately. The disproportionate number of sessional faculty places an

increased workload on full-time faculty and the Chair, and effects continuity in course content.

The closing of Rodman Hall (professional gallery, curator, staff, and a large senior student studio space) also resulted in the loss of access to the university's significant art collection are still negatively impacting the program. Although the MIWSFPA is an excellent purpose-built facility, there are several facility and staffing deficiencies that must be addressed to improve the program.

## **B. Program Strengths**

### **The reviewers noted the following strengths:**

Overall, Visual Arts (VISA) is a very good program, comparable to other post-secondary programs of a similar size. The faculty are highly skilled professional artists who are dedicated and extremely knowledgeable. The recent curricular shift in art history courses to a much more expansive approach to visual culture is commendable and forward-thinking. A commitment to counter-narrative approaches, decolonization and diversity are evident in many courses. Very small class sizes are a great asset for faculty and students, fostering a positive supportive environment for teaching and learning.

The Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts (MIWSFPA) is an outstanding purpose-built facility with spacious classrooms, production spaces, studios, offices, and common areas. Faculty, staff, and students are proud of their building. It is light-filled, well designed, and accessible for people with disabilities. Its location in downtown St. Catharines enables easy access to downtown services, other art events, a large public theatre with parking on site, and good transit. It is a vital cultural destination for the wider community, faculty, staff, and students.

Our meetings with MIWSFPA staff and Brock services personnel revealed teams of skilled and knowledgeable professionals who exhibit a strong commitment to their roles. Although we did not meet with every staff member, those we did were welcoming and positive, and displayed a deep sense of loyalty and dedication to the school and larger university.

Consistent with Brock's mission, VISA offers "transformational and accessible academic and university experience" with curriculum that emphasizes mentoring students through small class sizes, access to experts and professionals in the field with visiting artists and curators, and special workshops and field trips. Students have opportunities to gain excellent practical work experience with paid positions in media labs, the Art Store and MIWSFPA Student Gallery.

## C. Opportunities for Improvement and Enhancement

NOTE: Supporting/clarifying text was provided for each recommendation.

**Recommendation #1: Review Faculty complement, focusing on the hiring of BIPOC faculty and the number of courses taught by Sessional Instructors.**

### **The Department responded:**

We agree that increasing diversity in our department through attracting, supporting, and retaining BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and scholars with intersectional identities is very important. We will review our faculty complement as there is a need for additional full-time faculty, and we will seek to attract diverse candidates.

We are currently operating with a small number of full-time members due to retirements, leaves, and sabbaticals, and we are heavily relying on part-time hires to deliver our program. Our highest and most urgent priority is to replace the position affected by our most recent retirement. The retirement leaves us without a full-time faculty member with disciplinary expertise in the field of painting, which is a highly subscribed area of our program.

In recommendation #6, the external reviewers also recommend that we need a full-time member with expertise in sculpture and they highlight student demand for greater offerings in sculpture. We agree that there is a demand and need for a full-time position with a focus in sculpture and we would welcome that position, in addition to a position with a focus in painting.

We recognize that the diversity of our faculty is critical to the success of our program and our students. In March 2024, we did re-apply for a Canada Research Chair Tier 2 in Embodied Indigenous Art Practices in collaboration with the Departments of Dramatic Arts, Music and the Centre for Studies in Arts and Culture. We will continue to seek opportunities to apply for cluster hires and future CRC opportunities with the specific intention of attracting BIPOC faculty, but it does not preclude us from continuing to seek diverse hires from regular position postings. We recognize that we cannot rely on special positions alone to increase diversity in our department, and we recognize that increasing diversity will not happen with a singular hire.

### **The Dean of Humanities responded:**

Recognizing that this scope is outside of the current exercise, the Dean encourages the Department of Visual Arts to follow the established practices for faculty position proposals. VISA's commitment to increasing the diversity of their faculty complement will strengthen and expand the Department's curricular offerings.

### **ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC acknowledges that the recommendation to review its faculty complement is worthy of consideration but outside of the Committee's jurisdiction. The Committee advises the Department to advocate through normal channels for additional faculty positions.

**No Implementation Plan required.**

**Recommendation #2: Review staff roles and responsibilities to identify more efficiencies and enable greater delegation of work from Department Chair.**

**The Department responded:**

When a department has a small full-time faculty complement, a high reliance on part-time teaching, and an active program, there is necessarily a higher workload for the Chair and increased service needed from full-time faculty members. The demand for individual faculty involvement in departmental work, recruitment initiatives, independent study courses, events and programming, etc., is higher when there are fewer members to carry the load. This is certainly the case for our department.

We will review roles, responsibilities and service commitments in the department. We agree that better utilizing committee structures within the department will help to relieve some of the work from the Chair. Our department fell into a pattern of relying on individual faculty members to handle the work of department committees. We will review our Departmental Rules and Procedures document to revise and reinvigorate our committee structures, especially our Curriculum Committee, Recruitment Committee, and Gallery Committee. Additionally, if we are permitted to secure additional full-time faculty positions, this will also help to spread the work of committees and departmental service across more hands.

We work closely with our staff, who each carry significant administrative workloads. We will continue to work with our staff and HR to review their positions for efficiencies and evaluate the potential benefits (and workload implications) of increased or shifted responsibilities. Increased training for administrative staff related to technology and process changes would be useful and having access to support when there are staff absences would help to alleviate some unnecessary workload.

We agree with the suggestion to expand the role of the Gallery Coordinator (especially given our loss of having access to both a Curator and a Preparator at Rodman Hall), however expanding the role of the Gallery Coordinator would require the hiring of an additional position, ideally a Preparator or similar position, to handle more of the day-to-day work of the gallery. The gallery is an invaluable hands-on training ground for students, as it provides them with professional-level experience installing work, thinking through curatorial issues, interacting with the public, presenting their work visually, verbally, and through written statements, etc. The gallery is an important factor in recruitment and retention, and it is a key public-facing component of our program. If we can expand the role of the Gallery Coordinator, we can increase our capacity to offer greater access and more professional-level experiential learning opportunities to our students, it will create more opportunity to connect outward with community and local organizations, and it will enable us to secure more opportunities to showcase student work off-campus.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

Recognizing that this is outside the purview of the current exercise, the Dean supports the Department's interest in reviewing departmental staff job roles with the aim of better efficiencies.

### **ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC acknowledges that the recommendation to review staff roles and responsibilities is worthy of consideration but outside of the Committee's jurisdiction. The Committee encourages the Department to determine appropriate strategies to identify more efficiencies and enable greater delegation of work.

**No Implementation Plan required.**

**Recommendation #3: Investigate ways to enhance the technology used in curriculum delivery and improve its overall use within the Department.**

#### **The Department responded:**

We will investigate ways to enhance and better utilize technology within the department.

We do have smart carts (computers and projectors) available in our studios and classrooms for sessional and full-time faculty, however the reviewers are correct in pointing to the need to update the technology in these spaces. The computers being used on the smart carts in many of the spaces are nearing the end of their life (they no longer have capacity for system updates) and projectors are also in need of replacing (resolution and colour projection are noticeably decreasing).

Technical supports are working well during daytime hours, but after-hours support in the evening is lacking. Ideally, we need onsite technical support in the Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts (MIWSFPA) building for our evening courses, especially support that is versed in Apple computers and software.

The MIWSFPA collectively has been asking for smoother functioning proxy access and point-of-sale capabilities for a decade. For our department, the point-of-sale would allow us to facilitate the sale of artwork, catalogues, and other transactions that would allow us to fundraise and further professionalize experiences for our students. A point-of-sale would also increase our ability to engage the community in our events and activities (e.g., drop-in figure drawing sessions, low-cost workshops, or day trips to galleries and museums, etc.).

#### **The Dean of Humanities responded:**

Recognizing that visual and audio technology supports are crucial to course delivery in Visual Art, the Dean encourages the Department to continue to work with this office to find the necessary resources (of all sorts) to sustain the programmes.

### **ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee believes the Department, in consultation with the Dean's office, is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to enhance the technology used in curriculum delivery and improve its overall use.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

**Recommendation #4: Investigate ways to improve the Facilities, particularly the Gallery and studio spaces.****The Department responded:**

We appreciate the reviewers' interest in us having better studios for our thesis course, more storage space for the VISA gallery, and additional space to offer sculpture classes. We welcome these suggestions and while we could absolutely make use of additional space, we have maximized our use of the spaces allotted to us in the Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts building (including our use of the First Performing Arts Centre where many of our History of Art and Visual Culture courses are held). Without physical revisions/additions to the MIWSFPA building, or access to additional space off-site, we do not have a direct way to proceed with this recommendation.

We are willing to investigate the possibility of accessing Dramatic Arts' (DART) woodshop to enable us to offer additional sculpture offerings, but we respect that DART uses this space for their own courses and programming.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

This recommendation is outside of the scope of this review. The Department correctly noted that the space allotted to Visual Arts within the MIWSFPA building is at capacity, however the suggestion of cooperation with Dramatic Arts scenic shop to expand the curricular offerings to sculpture is worth exploring.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC acknowledges that the recommendation to investigate ways to improve the facilities is worthy of consideration but outside of the Committee's jurisdiction. The Committee advises the Department to advocate through normal channels for any additional resources.

**No Implementation Plan required.****Recommendation #5: Investigate ways to create sculpture studios.****The Department responded:**

Despite our current limitations related to space, we are interested in exploring the possibility of expanding our sculpture offerings. We currently run our sculpture course in the Spring term. It is a practical choice because we can utilize our studios in a dedicated way for sculpture in the Spring (whereas in the Fall/Winter terms the studios are booked with rotating studio classes in drawing, painting, foundation, interdisciplinary courses, etc.). A dedicated space for sculpture is being

recommended because sculptural practices involve specific equipment, messier, heavier materials, and because the physical nature of the three-dimensional work requires more square footage per student. Offering sculpture in the Spring has worked relatively well as a solution for offering sculpture, but we receive constant requests from students to offer additional courses in sculpture and to offer sculpture in the Fall/Winter terms. Without a dedicated sculpture space, offering sculpture outside of the Spring term has not been possible.

We are open to the idea of partnering outside of the institution to gain access to space during the regular Fall/Winter terms to enable us to offer sculpture, especially if a suitable partnership can be found. However, working through complicating factors such as associated rental costs, distance from campus, insurance, and security, is likely to make any potential outside partnership a long road to travel.

As mentioned above in Recommendation #4, we are willing to investigate the possibility of accessing DART's woodshop to enable us to offer additional sculpture offerings.

Sculpture methodologies and practices do appear in a few other studio courses, so although we only currently offer one full credit in sculpture, there are options for students to continue building their skills and experience working three-dimensionally. We will continue giving thought to how we can grow our sculpture offerings and note that a dedicated faculty position in sculpture could assist us in planning and enacting this welcome expansion of offerings.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

Sculpture courses that run in the spring/summer session have remained consistently popular, and therefore considerations to increase offerings in this medium is encouraged. However, as the Department correctly indicates, dedicated sculpture facilities would require additional space, technology and technical support, or reliance on external studio rentals—both of which are beyond the current budget limitations. As in recommendation # 4, the Dean does support the Department's exploration of utilizing the Dramatic Arts' scenic shop to expand the materials and methods in spring/summer sculpture courses.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers the recommendation to investigate ways to create sculpture studios to be accepted but acknowledges that the allocation of resources lies outside the jurisdiction of ARC. The Committee advises the Department to advocate through the usual channels for any additional resources.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.



## **Recommendation #6: Ensure continued and ongoing Curriculum review.**

### **The Department responded:**

The department is undertaking a full curricular mapping and degree review and will be working to tie courses more explicitly to course learning outcomes and DLEs which will ensure greater consistency and less duplication in courses. The department will also be revising course descriptions, particularly in drawing and painting to add clearer progression and distinction between the courses. Similarly, with our History of Art and Visual Culture offerings, curriculum is being reviewed for redundancies in Canadian Art content and the addition of new thematic courses will allow for greater contemporary and global diasporic content, and we will examine possible cross-listings as suggested.

As suggested by the reviewers, the department will reduce the number of in-class studio hours from 5 hours to 4 hours (with perhaps a few exceptions). We agree that this reduction will result in greater scheduling flexibility for students, increase access to open studio time for students, and will provide students with more opportunity to access campus supports and resources. It will also have the benefit of providing greater flexibility for our own course scheduling.

Our department has been active in seeking and successfully securing funding for experiential learning opportunities for our students. While the internal experiential funding, that many of our faculty have tapped into in recent years, is unfortunately no longer available, there are still external funding opportunities, like CEWIL, for experiential learning. We anticipate some challenges in being able to sustain the level of experiential opportunities that we have been able to provide our students given the reduction to internal experiential leaning and tighter departmental budgets.

We will continue to seek opportunities to provide our students with meaningful placements and internships. This Spring we had a student do an internship at The Power Plant (a major contemporary public art gallery) in Toronto as a component of our VISA 3F99 Honours Tutorial independent study courses, and in our recent discussions with the Rodman Art Institute of Niagara (RAiN), they expressed interest in the possibility of hosting future internships for our students. Internally, we provide opportunities to students to gain work experience through studio and gallery monitor positions, and this Fall 2024 we are requiring VISA 3Q92 Professional Practices for all our fourth-year thesis students, but the course is available to all our students. This professional practice course will provide practical instruction and skill-building in the areas of grant writing, self-promotion, networking, and understanding gallery structures, among other topics. This course will help to prepare students for working as an artist or in an arts and culture position.

### **The Undergraduate Programs Committee responded:**

Any changes to courses should come back to UPC for review and recommendation to Senate.

### **The Dean of Humanities responded:**

The Department outlines the ways it is conducting a thorough review of the Visual Arts curriculum, and the Dean supports these efforts. The plans include the reduction of studio courses from 5 hours (6 with a lunch break) to 4 hours should alleviate scheduling strain on the studios, enabling additional sections with increased enrollment, and more independent work time for students. Working with clearer course and program learning outcomes will reduce replication and clearer paths for progression. Exploring opportunities to cross-list courses from other departments on campus to expand HVAC options has already been in practice, and where suitable, can continue to be explored.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee recognizes that the Department will undertake the necessary review and determine appropriate strategies.

<b>Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)</b>	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

**Recommendation #7: Investigate ways to enhance student Recruitment & Retention.**

**The Department responded:**

We continue to review and update our application and portfolio processes for new applicants to adapt to the changing times. We appreciate the reviewers’ concerns about the potential use of AI in applications, but reviewing video recordings for every new applicant will significantly increase the time commitment for faculty reviewing the applications. We are looking at alternative ways to ensure the application and portfolio process remains relevant, meaningful, and useful to new applicants and the department.

We agree with the recommendation that the department’s Recruitment Committee also take on the responsibility of retention. While the department does have a Recruitment Committee, regular reports have not been formalized in our departmental meeting agendas. We will add reports from departmental committees as regular agenda items moving forward.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

Recruitment and Retention have both been generally strong in this department, and the Dean appreciates the work that the members of the Department put in at recruitment events such as OUF and Fall Preview/Spring Open House. The new plan for a drawing competition for Niagara secondary school students has great recruitment potential. The Dean would like to acknowledge the time and effort the Department takes to review application portfolios.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee believes that the Department, in consultation with the Dean’s office, is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to enhance student recruitment and retention.

<b>Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)</b>	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

**Recommendation #8: Explore opportunities to enhance engagement with University Services (on main campus).**

**The Department responded:**

We will explore opportunities to further engage with ORS and to connect with students about their academic progression through our degree, as well as exploring opportunities to better support students in preparing graduate applications.

The reviewers' suggestion to have ORS host networking sessions for a diverse range of faculty is a fantastic idea. We agree with the reviewers that this could help to encourage greater awareness of the research being done on campus and these sessions could also function to connect potential collaborators. We would welcome ORS to come and speak to members of our department and to become more familiar with research-creation models in visual art and visual culture.

We would like to clarify that course reserve materials can be held in the Learning Commons at MIWSFPA, and we have recently been working with the library to further improve access to library holdings and interlibrary loan at the MIWSFPA. The MIWSFPA is now a pick-up location in our Library Omni system.

In response to the reviewers' feedback related to preparing students for graduate level applications, we take a multi-prong approach. As mentioned in Response #6, we are now requiring VISA 3Q92 Professional Practices for all thesis students, and this course is also available to all students pursuing a Major or Minor in Studio or HAVC. This course is designed to provide students with grant writing experience, portfolio development strategies, statement writing, and will help to prepare students for graduate-level applications. We also have a portfolio submission and written proposal requirement for students who apply to take our Honours Studio course (mimicking practices of graduate-level applications) and we provide an annual workshop specifically dedicated to students preparing their portfolios. This application process is another way that we strategically engage students in practicing the skills related to graduate school applications. Many of our Honours Studio students have successfully gone on to graduate-level study. We will continue to look for additional ways that we can help to support students to apply for graduate programs.

We want to confirm that we do have a dedicated MIWSFPA Academic Advisor onsite twice a week, and the academic advisor is available virtually at other times.

Every Fall the Associate Dean of the MIWSFPA, along with the Department of Visual Arts, Dramatic Arts, Music, and Studies for Arts and Culture, hold an orientation for students to introduce them to our academic advisor, mental health nurse, BUSU, staff, faculty, etc. Students get to meet with faculty and students in their area of study, as well as meeting with students from other areas at the MIWSFPA. This orientation provides our students with a good sense of the resources that are available to them both at the MIWSFPA and on the main campus. We also include a full list of resources in our syllabi, we post physical posters in our hallways indicating available supports on and offsite, and many faculty also speak about available resources during class time.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

Again, this recommendation is outside the scope of this exercise, while there is appreciation for suggestions related to Office of Research Services (ORS) engagement at MIWSFPA. The Department also corrected errors from the reviewer's reporting, mainly that we should arrange to have reserve books for courses here (which is already happening), and that the Academic Advisor is only available

one day a week for students (when they are in-person for two days and available online for other days).

### 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 enhance engagement with University Services.

#### **Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

#### **Recommendation #9: Enhance alumni and community engagement.**

##### **The Department responded:**

We will explore opportunities to further enhance our engagement, although we regularly connect and engage with alumni. Over the past three years, as an example, we have worked with the Mann Gallery (formerly 13<sup>th</sup> Street Gallery) to exhibit the work of graduating students, alumni, and faculty in group exhibitions. We also host alumni exhibitions in our gallery. Alumni are welcome to submit applications to exhibit with us, and we also regularly put out calls to alumni and the wider community to submit artwork to juried and group exhibitions which we host in our gallery. These opportunities bring our alumni into direct contact with our current students, reunites them with faculty, and connects them with the wider community.

We also connect with alumni when we offer visiting artist workshops and guest speakers. These events draw in current students, alumni, and community members as participants and audience members.

Our alumni have also participated in career fairs hosted by Experiential Education at the MIWSFPA. During this event, alumni participate on a panel and speak about their experiences working in the arts and they answer questions from current students. The Associate Dean of the MIWSFPA has started keeping an alumni contact list for such events, and we keep a running list of alumni and their achievements also.

Marketing and Communications, Alumni Relations, and other units of the university help us to maintain connections and promote the achievements of our alumni.

##### **The Dean of Humanities responded:**

The Department rightly outlines the numerous ways in which alumni and community engagement is facilitated through departmental activities, and the Dean appreciates the work that members of the Department are doing in this area.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee believes that the Department is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to enhance alumni and community engagement.

<b>Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)</b>	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

**Recommendation #10: Explore ways to collaborate with the Rodman Art Institute of Niagara (RAIN) and access the Brock University Art Collection.**

**The Department responded:**

We will explore ways to collaborate with Rodman Art Institute of Niagara (RAiN), but we must clarify that the art collection that belongs to RAiN is not the same collection as the Brock University Art Collection. There was some confusion on the part of the reviewers about this. To further clarify, we do not have the right to RAiN’s collection as a resource or as a financial asset. It does not belong to Brock University, nor to us.

We agree that RAiN’s art collection offers us an opportunity to access a valuable teaching resource. While RAiN’s physical art collection is currently in storage, they have been working to make their 1000+ art collection fully available online. This will be a great resource for our faculty, students, community, and beyond. We have already started to establish our connection and relationship to RAiN. We see the potential for the department and RAiN to have a mutually beneficial relationship supporting one another’s programming and goals, and we do see opportunity for future collaboration, especially as it relates to experiential learning opportunities for students to gain first-hand experience with not-for-profit cultural organizations.

The Brock University Art Collection is a collection of artworks displayed on campus. The collection exists in hallways, in offices, and as sculptures displayed around campus. There is a Brock University Art Collection Committee working to document, archive, and value the collection. Our department has representation on this committee.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

The Department corrected the reviewer’s understanding about the previous Rodman Hall Art Collection and the Brock University Art Collection. Collaboration with many arts organization is already undertaken by Visual Arts (including with the newly formed RAiN) and continues to be explored.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee believes the Department is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to collaborate with RAiN.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

**Recommendation #11: Consider changing the STDA degree from a BA to a BFA.****The Department responded:**

We agree. During our curriculum review we will work towards creating a pathway for a Bachelor of Fine Arts. We will begin by exploring whether this change will require a major modification or new program proposal. We think it will be possible to achieve the BFA without needing to add significant new course offerings. Our understanding is that our current course offerings for the BA Honours in Studio are similar, if not equivalent, to course offerings in other BFA offering programs in Ontario and Canada. We anticipate the addition of the BFA will bolster our growing enrollments and raise our profile as a visual arts program. The BFA will also help students who are looking to pursue their Masters in Fine Art, as the BFA is the accepted undergraduate degree.

**The Undergraduate Programs Committee responded:**

If the program introduces a BFA this should come to UPC for review and recommendation to Senate.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

The studio arts program within the Visual Arts BA degree is already operating similarly to BFA degrees across the country through its course offerings and professionalizing opportunities, particularly the 4 year Honours degree. The recommendation to explore a change from the BA to BFA has the Dean's support. The Department's arguments for potential increased enrollment and profile of the program with this potential change to a BFA are sound.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted for consideration. The Committee encourages the Department to work with the Dean's office as they consider the viability of changing the degree to a Bachelor of Fine Arts.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

**Recommendation #12: Explore ways to enhance the Department’s Committee Structure.**

**The Department responded:**

We will explore ways to enhance our committee structure. As mentioned in our response to Recommendation #7, we will now add space for regular reports from departmental committees to our department meeting agendas. We will also reinvigorate our Curriculum Committee as a departmental subcommittee.

Given that we have our Gallery Coordinator, who does outreach and facilitates our connections with alumni and community partners, we will consider the need to establish a Community Engagement committee down the road. Our current priority, as mentioned in Recommendation #2, is to focus on better utilizing the committee structures that we do have, and to not add additional service work for full-time faculty at this time.

As mentioned in our response to Recommendation #9, we also have Marketing and Communications, Alumni Relations, and other units of the university helping us to grow and maintain connections. The MIWSFPA, led by our Associate Dean, also does significant community outreach. We do not feel that we must do it all ourselves.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

The Department of Visual Arts currently is reinvigorating the curriculum committee to examine changes to both the Studio Arts and History of Art and Visual Culture programmes, which are relevant to this review.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee believes the Department is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to enhance committee structures within the Department.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

**D. Summary of Recommendations:**

Recommendations 1, 2, 4	No Implementation Plan required
Recommendations 3, 5-12	First Priority