

Department of Studio Arts Year of appraisal 2015

To: Sandra Gabriele, Vice-Provost, Innovation in Teaching and Learning
From: Annie Gérin, Dean
Faculty of: Faculty of Fine Arts
Date: 22 December, 2020

Please find enclosed the finalized Implementation Plan for the Department cited above as part of the academic program appraisals process. This Plan was duly discussed with:

The Department Chair

As mentioned in the Concordia University Academic Program Appraisals Manual, 5th edition revised, the Faculty and Department will follow-up on this Plan in two years, when prompted by your office.

Sincerely,

Faculty Dean's name Annie Gérin

Faculty Dean's signature 

The Faculty Dean is invited to summarize the department's positioning in the Faculty, and the vision of the Faculty on maintaining or improving the performance of its programs.

Department Overview

The Department of Studio Arts is comprised of seven areas: Ceramics, Fibres and Material Practices, Intermedia (Video, Performance and Electronic Arts), Painting and Drawing, Photography, Print Media, and Sculpture. Created in 1998, it is now the largest department of its kind in Canada. Studio Arts teaching and creative research activities encourages material and non-material-based forms of inquiry so as to challenge and rethink what knowledge and research can be. Among the numerous strengths from which Studio Arts undergraduate and graduate students benefit are the Department's commitment to interdisciplinarity as well as the strong connections of both full-time and part-time faculty with Montreal arts community. The numerous national and international distinctions awarded to students, faculty, and alumni testify to the excellence of the art practice and scholarship conducted within this Department.

Mission statement:

The Department of Studio Arts challenges and stimulates students to view the construction of culture with an analytical and critical eye. Our faculty of practicing artists provide instruction in the craft, tools and techniques of creation in discipline-specific studios. (source: <https://www.concordia.ca/finearts/studio-arts.html>)

Programs offered by the Department of Studio Arts:

Undergraduate

- BFA Major in Studio Art
- BFA Major in Ceramics
- BFA Major in Fibres and Material Practices
- BFA Major in Intermedia (Video, Performance and Electronic Arts)
- BFA Major in Painting and Drawing
- BFA Major in Photography
- BFA Major in Print Media
- BFA Minor in Print Media
- BFA Major in Sculpture
- BFA Major in Art History and Studio Arts

Graduate

- MFA in Studio Arts

Research strengths and future directions

Full-time and part-time faculty members of the Department are active in their research, achieving a high level of local, national and international recognition for their work. In their research and teaching activities, they demonstrate a deep commitment to surmounting the conceptual and material challenges of art-making in a rapidly-changing cultural sphere.

Interdisciplinarity already exists and is encouraged within many areas in the Department. Through curriculum innovation, the Department will continue to explore ways of increasing this interdisciplinarity – including between their own programs and with other departments in the Faculty of Fine Arts – in order to better prepare students for the increasingly interdisciplinary world of contemporary art. With the hiring of Nadia Myre, Hannah Claus and Mark Igloliorte, the Department is well placed to become a leader in the integration of Indigenous knowledge within their programs. The expertise and research of these three faculty members should inform the work by the Department as a whole towards decolonizing and Indigenizing their curriculum and teaching. The inclusive pedagogy imagined for the programs in Studio Arts is also supported by the recent hiring of Aaron McIntosh, Juan Ortiz-Apuy, Deanna Bowen and Jaret Vadera.

Finally, keeping in mind the need for decolonizing and for promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout all areas, the current need for faculty replacements should be used as an opportunity to reimagine the Department to align with the wider University strategic vision in these areas.

Identification of exceptional facilities

Studio Arts facilities and resources are divided into those housed in the VA building and those housed in the EV building: <https://www.concordia.ca/finearts/studio-arts/facilities.html>

The VA building is exhibiting deficiencies associated with its age and although several infrastructure projects have been realized, eg: addition of air conditioning, upgrade to Ceramics studios including state of the art equipment, it is frequently in need of repairs and is also at a disadvantage being serviced with only one passenger size elevator. What the VA building does have to offer is a more flexible and spontaneous use of space. Facilities housed in the building include, for eg, BLAAUW gas and electric kilns for both high and low temperature firing, as well as outdoor facilities for raku and sawdust firings; a smaller wood shop, metals area/foundry, and mould-making are also housed in the VA. The VA also offers two sought after galleries; the student run VAV for UG and the MFA Gallery for graduate activities.

The EV building offers resources that are up to date with state-of-the-art facilities and housed in large spaces that generally provide well for the work students need to do in order to complete projects. For eg, Photography, Analog and Digital print, Print Media includes Intaglio, Screen printing and Lithography studios, while Fibres has studios for Papermaking, Dyeing and Screen Printing, and Structures (floor looms, knitting & sewing machines, including for digital embroidery), and Intermedia studios (Video, Hybrid, Sound & Electronics labs).

Students have access to Concordia's [Core Technical Centres](#), and Fine Arts Research Facilities which include post image lab (large inkjet printers), metal shop, wood and fabrication shops,

and Digital Fabrication Shop which includes laser cutting, 3D printing, and 3D laser scanning. MFA students also have access to a video production studio, recording studio and video editing suites.

The Faculty of Fine Arts will support the Department in planning for new facilities and continue to advocate in favour of their needs to the University.

The Faculty Dean is invited to include a numbered list of recommendations for improvement, as well as a rationale and implementation schedule (an Excel spreadsheet is also available by request to the Appraisal Coordinator).

Recommendations	Prioritized timeline for completion	Responsibility	Dean's comments and resource implications
<p>1. The Department is strongly encouraged to engage in a comprehensive visioning retreat to identify and prioritize its academic needs with the goal of developing a unified vision for the Department.</p>			
<p>Rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishing a shared and unified academic vision, including expected outcomes for graduates, will inform needed curricular review, faculty hiring, space requests, and administrative audits. - As per the Department's response to the UAC report, we understand that, as part of this visioning retreat, you are already committed to: articulating student learning outcomes; defining how new hires could fit into the Department; and discussing curriculum and curricular needs at all levels. 	<p>2022-2023 (or as soon as conditions will allow it)</p>	<p>Chair (to coordinate the retreat for all Full-Time Faculty)</p>	<p>The VPITL and CTL can provide resources and support in coordinating this retreat</p>
<p>2. The Department should create a Department Curriculum Committee (DCC) in order to proceed to a department-wide curriculum review. Being more systematic with regard to curriculum development should be one of the main purposes of this Committee.</p>			
<p>Rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The purpose of the DCC is to help the Department develop and implement a more unified vision for its curriculum. 	<p>2021</p>	<p>Chair, UPD, GPD</p>	<p>The Associate Dean, Academic Programmes and Pedagogy and their Facilitator can provide support.</p>

<p>The Faculty encourages consideration of the following by the DCC, as per EE and UAC (UAC-2) :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the creation of a First Year “Foundation Year Certificate” to address the disparity in skills and knowledge for incoming undergraduate students (EE-13) - Increasing interdisciplinarity between programs (EE-7, 49) at undergraduate and graduate levels - Exploring ways to better align BFA and MFA programs (EE-14) in coordination with the SGS - Addressing student demand for professional practices course (EE-56) by working with Future Ready (UG) and Grad Pro Skills (GRAD) (UAC-9) to create relevant workshops - Develop umbrella “research-creation methods” courses (EE-10) to help build FTE numbers (EE-13), grow interdisciplinary strengths, and generate cohesion/cohort among areas. - Reconsidering all possible concentrations (not just in Ceramics, EE-15) 			<p>The VPITL and CTL can also provide support.</p> <p>SGS can provide support for the graduate level.</p>
3. The Department should conduct an environmental scan regarding the length of the MFA in consultation with SGS.			
<p>Rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Given the changes in government funding and the burden on departmental resources during the unfunded third year, the Faculty supports the UAC recommendation (UAC-7) that the Department conduct an environmental scan of other MFA programs in Canada before committing to keeping the current 3-year format. 	<p>2021-2023 and ongoing</p>	<p>Chair, GPD</p>	<p>The SGS can help with this benchmarking analysis</p>

<p>-This analysis should include consultation with students and recent alumni, through surveys and focus groups, to establish comparatives.</p> <p>-Revisit previous discussions of 2-year & 3-year options and integrate new faculty to discussions.</p>			
4. The Department should develop a strategic hiring plan in coordination with the Dean. The plan should be informed by the outcomes of the visioning retreat and consider Department’s needs beyond replacing retiring faculty in each program area.			
<p>The Department is to be commended for their efforts to post for and hire diverse full-time faculty positions within and across departments in the last year.</p> <p>Rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clearer expectations and mentoring should be incorporated into the orientation process of these new faculty, which must be ongoing to ensure a sense of belonging and include guidelines for FT faculty on becoming department administrators (Key = better communicate with new hires, ensure leadership succession) - Consult the V-P, Faculty Development and Inclusion to assist in this leadership training - The plan must consider the desired FT/PT balance of faculty and should better align with the hiring of visiting faculty members - The plan should also work to sustain all areas within the Department, keeping in mind planned retirements, etc. 	2021-ongoing	Chair	<p>Work in collaboration with the Dean.</p> <p>The Office of Institutional Planning can provide data to inform this plan.</p>
5. The Department should continue efforts to build bridges with local Indigenous Communities and better integrate Indigenous knowledge within Studio Arts programs.			

<p>Rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This reflection/development of a strategy should be part of the visioning retreat goals and supported by the DCC - Work towards reconciliation with Montreal's host Kanien'kehá:ka Nation, and draw on and uphold the talents of recently hired faculty members Nadia Myre and Hannah Claus as well as those of upcoming new hire Mark Igloliorte (EE-4) 	2021 - ongoing		<p>CTL, SGS, and IDLC can provide support.</p> <p>Associate Dean, Academic Programmes and Pedagogy and their Facilitator can provide support.</p>
6. Review technical and administrative support services within the department looking for any redundancies and possible efficiencies.			
<p>Rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The need for added advising and training upgrades for technicians should also be addressed within this review (EE-32, 34, 35,47) - The Chair should support professional staff in making funding requests for professional development and informing the membership of their eligibility. - Ongoing review of staff needs, professionally, and to redefine scope of roles. 	2022-23- ongoing	Chair, Department Administrator	<p>The Director of Administration, Office of the Dean, Tristan Khaner, can provide support.</p> <p>Depending on need, the University's professional training through Udemy may offer support.</p>
7. Develop a budget plan for space and technology in consultation with the Dean and Manager of Planning and Academic Facilities			
<p>Rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a budget plan in close collaboration with the Dean's Office to address the division of the Department between the VA and EV buildings, establish a Chair's caucus for brainstorming/ think tank, leading consultative process across department on space planning. - Take into consideration health and safety concerns (EE-4, 27) to create a prioritized space plan in consultation with the Manager, Planning and Academic Facilities 	2022-23- ongoing	Chair, UPD, GPD (in consultation with Department administrator and technicians)	<p>Manager of Planning & Academic Facilities, Angela Tsafaras is already working on the budget plan with the Department and should continue to be involved and provide support.</p> <p>Consult with the Manager, Media & Information Technology, Pierre Genest, and the CDA regarding technological needs.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technology needs, including acquisitions and upgrades, should be part of this plan. Establishing a department technology committee could contribute to building a productive consultation across sectors. 			
8. Review the academic administrative governance structure of the Department in consultation with the Dean, looking for any redundancies and possible efficiencies.			
<p>Rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This should happen in conjunction with the technical and administrative support services audit (#6) in the Department to ensure alignment. - In recognition of the large size of the Department, the review is designed with a view to more evenly distributing its administrative governance work, and creating dialogue across the areas. - As part of this review, consider the creation of an Associate Chair position (UAC-6) as both alleviating the workload of the Chair and ensuring leadership transition and training. Consider program administration roles, remissions, leadership training and transition to new models of governance responsibilities. 	2022-23	Chair (with all full-time faculty members)	Work in collaboration with the Dean. The Associate Dean, Faculty Relations, may provide support.