CARLETON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON
QUALITY ASSURANCE
Cyclical Review of the PhD Program in Cultural Mediations
Executive Summary and Final Assessment Report

This Executive Summary and Final Assessment Report of the cyclical review of Carleton's PhD Program in Cultural Mediations are provided pursuant to the provincial Quality Assurance Framework and Carleton's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The PhD Program in Cultural Mediations reside in the Institute for Comparative Studies in Literature, Art and Culture a unit administered by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

As a consequence of the review, the programs were categorized by Carleton University's Senate Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (SQAPC) as being of good quality. (Carleton's IQAP 7.2.13).

The External Reviewers' report offered a very positive assessment of the programs. Within the context of this positive assessment, the report nonetheless made a number of recommendations for the continuing enhancement of the programs. These recommendations were productively addressed by the Director of the Institute for Comparative Studies in Literature, Art and Culture, the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs in a response to the External Reviewers' report and Implementation on Plan that was submitted to SQAPC on October 28th, 2021.

Note: This document is forwarded to Senate, the Quality Council and posted on the Vice- Provost's external website.

Introduction & General Comments Please include any general comments regarding the External Reviewers' Report.

We thank both external assessors for a thorough and balanced review of the program. We were particularly receptive to, and take pride in, their assessment of the real and unique contributions the doctoral program in Cultural Mediations makes to the Faculty and University as a whole. Of particular relevance to us is the clear connection they established, early in the report, between the academic value of the program to Carleton and ICSLAC as the independent structure that nurtures and sustains it. From our inception, the autonomy we enjoy as a full-fledged academic unit has proven fundamental to the success repeatedly met by our students and the program. The rigorous yet far-reaching interdisciplinary training at the core of our educative mission cannot be achieved from within the field-based constraints and dynamics of traditional academic units. It is precisely because ICSLAC is, by design, structured to address interdisciplinary scholarship that the Institute can dedicate to the program the administrative expertise and targeted resources it requires to thrive.

The report lays out a detailed range of recommendations we are grateful for as we initiate the next cycle of ongoing enhancements and strategic planning. The three resource-based concerns they raised and the ten opportunities for enhancement they identified were all given careful consideration, often leading to concrete sets of action being put forward. The document below provides a unit-generated blueprint to which we brought balance and perspective, regardless of the level of agreement we documented. Of course, strategic planning is a continuous process we engage with and, accordingly, we took care to identify courses of action already under way. In addition to what is reported below, our strategic planning for the program is informed by further initiatives which remain cornerstones of the Institute's continued development. These were documented in section H of our *Self-Study*. Although not raised in the externals' report, the following are initiatives to which we are committed:

- Seek to secure the substantive (more than 0 %) cross-appointment of a CRC relevant to the program, to benefit more fully from the synergies and visibility it can provide (section H, # 2, p. 65)
- Limit the program's dependence on non-core course offering initiated by other units (and then cross-listed with Cultural Mediations) by offering one CLMD seminar per academic year resourced by the Institute (section H, # 4, p. 66)
- Assist students with implementing, and then provide support to, a student caucus more fully representative of needs and interests across cohorts (section H, # 6, p. 66)
- Seek to expand our curricular relevance to the Faculty and University by developing targeted curricular opportunities around the Cultural Mediations program (section H, # 7, p. 67)

We conclude these general comments with one clarification pertaining to the process for programming cross-listed non-core courses. Contrary to that which is reported on the bottom of page 4, programming such courses does not fall to the Graduate Supervisor. Rather, the process is committee-driven (at the level of the Program Management Committee), with a call for interdisciplinary non-core course proposals issued in early fall to all cross-appointed members, followed by a committee adjudication to ensure fit-to-program as well as balance across PhD streams and academic terms.

For each recommendation one of the following responses must be selected:

Agreed to unconditionally: used when the unit agrees to and is able to take action on the recommendation without further consultation with any other parties internal or external to the unit.

Agreed to **if additional resources permit:** used when the unit agrees with the recommendation, however action can only be taken if additional resources are made available. Units must describe the resources needed to implement the recommendation and provide an explanation demonstrating how they plan to obtain those resources. In these cases, discussions with the Deans will normally be required and therefore identified as an action item.

Agreed to in principle: used when the unit agrees with the recommendation, however action is dependent on something other than resources. Units must describe these dependencies and determine what actions, if any, will be taken.

Not agreed to: used when the unit does not agree with the recommendation and therefore will not be taking further action. A rationale must be provided to indicate why the unit does not agree (no action should be associated with this response).

Calendar Changes
If any of the action items you intend to implement will result in calendar changes, please describe what those changes will be. To submit a formal calendar change, please do so using the Courseleaf system.

UNIT RESPONSE AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN					
Programs Being Reviewed: PhD Cultural Mediations					
Prepared by (name/position/unit): Dr. Pascal Gin					
External Reviewer Recommendation & Categorization	**Unit Response:** 1- Agreed to unconditionally 2- Agreed to if additional resources permit (describe resources) 3- Agreed to in principle 4- Not agreed to Rationales are required for categories 2, 3 & 4	**Action Item**	**Owner**	**Timeline**	**Will the action described require calendar changes? (Y or N)**
1. **Concern:** Provide technical support for technology associated with program spaces and ensure maintenance of dedicated seminar room and other program spaces.	2, resources required: Funds for upgrade to laptop, projection equipment, and audiovisual capabilities Folding support into standard university operations	1. Institutionally identify 201D as a multipurpose room essential to program delivery and to the running of the Institute (governance, research, examinations) 2. Engage ODFASS about how to best address financially AV equipment upgrade and ongoing support for 201D, with IMS also consulted as required around technical expertise.	Director	21-23	N
2. **Concern:** Provide shared second administrative staff support person, particularly in key periods of program and institute activity.	2, resources required: Base or fiscal expensing for 15 hours a week of increased administrative support	Continue to explore with ODFASS possible avenues for securing incremental administrative support, whether fiscal or base, through cross-unit collaborations.	Director	ongoing	N
3. **Concern:** Formalize a mechanism for the extension of library privileges for withdrawn student actively engaged in dissertation completion.	1	Because jurisdiction over such matters rest with FGPA and the Library, action the unit can commit to is in the form of advocacy. A suggestion to put forward might be to formalize some level of borrowing for ABD doctoral students, on the model of community or alumni patronage but with extended privileges.	Graduate supervisor and director	ongoing	N

| 4. **Opportunity:** Explore alterations to the structure of the core courses/comprehensive exam system (as indicated above) to enhance academic training, reduce student stress, and improve timely completion of program milestones. | 3 (in part) with respect to the core course CLMD 6900: Objectives geared towards preparing students for both the second comprehensive examination and the thesis proposal remain essential to a sound progression in the program and to assisting with improved time-to-completion, particularly in light of the improved guidance around research methodologies identified as the leading concern in the student satisfaction survey (see p. 46 of the *Self-Study*). Objectives tied to professionalization (eg publishing practices) and standard research practices (*eg* library research) also remain essential but may however need to be prioritized and reassessed in terms of timing and/or alternative modes of delivery | Initiate discussion around prioritization, timing, and alternative modes of delivery for professionalization-focused training, whether in the form of workshops or collaboration with other units or services, and partial scaling back within 6900. | Deliberation: Program Management Committee with input from CLMD 6900 instructors

Monitoring: Director and Graduate Supervisor | 21-22 | N |
| | 3 (in part) with respect to the first comprehensive examination tied to the core theory course (CLMD 6101): Its pedagogical merit is assessed as essential to the intellectual maturing leading to sound and rigorous interdisciplinary research. The demands it puts on first-year students are nonetheless legitimate concerns to be looked into.

4, with respect to non-core Cultural Mediations course: Their interdisciplinary breadth does not match the systemic review, historical progression, comprehensive theoretical grounding and comparatist approach carefully built into the core theory course (CLMD 6101). The former cannot be substituted for the latter. Non-core courses are also for the vast majority initiated by other departments, although assessed by ICSLAC for cross-listing relevance. It remains essential that we retain full curricular control of a limited subset of courses (core courses, essentially). | Explore possible alterations to the comprehensive examination, whether in terms of communication around expectations and pedagogical relevance and/or format, duration, scheduling, etc. | Program Management Committee with input from CLMD 6101 instructors | 23-24 (to coincide with term of incoming Graduate Supervisor) | |

5. **Opportunity:** Consider modifications to the "single discipline" orientation of the second comprehensive exam as the current structure may be impeding rather then enhancing the interdisciplinary orientation at the centre of the program's mission.	4 In practice and intent, the second comprehensive examination is in fact geared towards grounding interdisciplinary research within a more focused engagement in a defined set of disciplines or interrelated fields. As such, it aims to provide a scaffolded approach to interdisciplinary training, by building on the broad theoretical perspectives of the first year (CLDM 6101, first comprehensive examination) to situate, in the second year, interdisciplinary research within defined fields or intersecting fields of knowledge. This fields-specific focus is of particular relevance to future employability of graduates, whose knowledge breadth stills needs to meet discipline-specific expectations.	Bring further clarity to the second learning outcome of the program (*Situate research within a disciplinary body of knowledge*) by making explicit the de facto interdisciplinary dimension of research training within the Cultural Mediations program. Prioritize the review of this one learning outcome, tied for a large part to the second Comprehensive Examination (CLMD 6908) as a program component. Improve communications to student (advising, graduate handbook) and committees (graduate handbook, briefing documentation) around the expectations for the second Comprehensive Examination (CLMD 6908)	Program Management Committee Program Management Committee Director, Graduate Supervisor, Administrator	21-22 21-22 ongoing	N
6. **Opportunity:** Discuss greater allowance of non-traditional forms of academic output as a part of thesis, comprehensive exams and other program work. While not building a formal "research creation" option, the program could explore (and publicize) greater use of hybrid forms of academic production.	3 This discussion was already under way at management committee level in 20-21. In line with the recommendation, the CPR review team concurred that inclusion of a research creation dimension requires to be integrated within the existing dissertation structure of the PhD and its interdisciplinary theoretical orientation as a program-defining feature. A stand-alone option is	Develop internal guidelines (graduate handbook) for students and committees around the integration of a research creation component within the dissertation. Consider the possibility of focusing on the researching and planning dimensions of such a component rather than on its execution, to assist in managing workload	Program Management Committee	21-23 (to coincide with term of incoming Graduate Supervisor)	N

	neither feasible in terms of the increased faculty expertise then required for adequate supervision across all four PhD streams nor advisable in connection with the established notoriety and focus of the program. Integrated initiatives around research creation would need to be publicized in such a way as not to introduce confusion around program profile and student expectations. Such initiatives would also require to be assessed against time-to-completion requirements and manageable workloads for students.	and in keeping with ongoing efforts to improve times-to-completion. As appropriate, alert students (advising) to the possibility of approaching faculty members with relevant expertise to supervise a directed reading course that could integrate a creative dimension. As appropriate, alert students (advising) to scheduled courses which already integrate an experiential dimension in addition to their scholarly focus (*eg* directed exhibit courses).	Graduate Supervisor Graduate Supervisor	Ongoing Ongoing
7. **Opportunity:** Seek opportunities for the program to expand (and better publicize) its engagement with issues of indigeneity and expand community and cultural outreach in this area.	2 The program should build on the pioneering engagement developed, for two decades now, around matters of indigeneity in the visual arts and museum practices. This legacy relates directly to the close institutional relationship (50 % cross-appointment) the program had enjoyed until recently with a tier-one CRC focused on the intersection of Indigenization and the arts in Canada. Renewing this level of affiliation and the full extent of collaboration it then enables is here crucial. 1 The program also ought to further capitalize on the wealth of student and faculty research, course programing, and research partnership closely tied to issues of transnational cultural analysis, social justice and inclusivity. Faculty and student expertise in such areas as postcolonialism, capital, class, racialization, gender and sexuality, should be harnessed as part of the expansion of our	Continue efforts to renew a substantive appointment with a CRC whose research mission can further contribute to the program's strong foundations in matters of Indigenization, transnationalism, postcolonialism, social justice and inclusivity, as well as other relevant areas and approaches. Expand on the very concrete forms of engagement this affiliation enabled in the past, whether in the form of graduate seminars initiated by and for the program, student involvement in research initiatives in the form of RAships, doctoral supervision and recruitment as well as enhanced program visibility as it concerns such matters. Undertake a thorough scan of all doctoral and faculty research and initiatives that inherently speak to and critically inform issues of social justice. As part of efforts (ongoing) devoted to review and organize ICSLAC's research clusters and provide them with targeted visibility, closely	Director Steering Committee Director and Graduate Supervisor	Ongoing 21-23	N

	commitment to indigenous issues and social justice. Documenting, connecting and communicating all existing resources and initiatives will require dedicated administrative support.	integrate the results of this scan within the revised structure of research clusters as published on the website and communicated both internally and externally. Build on this framework to enhance community engagement around relevant events and projects. Devise processes (review, update, webposting, etc.) and timelines for the administrative oversight of the research cluster framework (contingent in part on outcome of #2 above).	Administrator		
		Encourage internal practices around the sharing of information and expertise that are conducive to an institutional culture of engagement, within and outside the University. To this end, continue to develop an intranet portal specifically geared to networking and mentoring. Devise processes and timelines for the administrative oversight of this intranet initiative (contingent in part on outcome of #2 above)	Director and Graduate Supervisor Administrator	21-23	
		Assess opportunities for approaches correlated to faculty-level recommendations	Steering Committee	Ongoing	
8. Opportunity: Explore ways to streamline administrative committee structure, one that currently requires a significant number of participating faculty members.	1	Assess options to balance the requirement for representation and the need to scale back committee members. Explore alternative modes of executing committee work. Monitor any adjustment.	Steering Committee	21-23	N

9. **Opportunity:** Seek enhancements in domestic and international student support to reduce extra-institutional responsibilities (for all students) and increase intellectual and cultural diversity within the program (through international student support and recruiting).	2. The major impediment to existing support is limited financial funding. The situation is acute for international students (with funding limited to 2-3 k a year after tuition fees, under the current 13k package and domestic fees formula). The situation for domestic students is tied to a four-year limit on the departmental scholarship component of the funding package (whereas all students require a fifth year), high tuition fees over three terms (basically offset by the five-year TAship), and funding packages often outcompeted by those offered at other institutions for top students.	Continue to advocate at all relevant levels (FGPA, FASS, Senate) for increased financial support. Explore in particular the institutional viability of switching to a reduced tuition scale for ABD students and summer terms. Further explore untapped cotutelle potential. Take an active role in university discussions around internationalization policies, as limited financial support is significantly inhibiting the reach of the program despite a high-level of interest and strong potential internationally.	Director, Graduate Supervisor Director, Graduate Supervisor	ongoing	N
10. **Opportunity:** Request institutional recognition of faculty service to the program via a memorandum of understanding or similar document that would provide grounding for faculty credit for service outside of their home unit.	2. As per the existing collective agreement, service is not tabulated within faculty workload assignment. Credit-for-service is as such not an option under the current workload regime. Further, service from 0 % faculty cross-appointees is inevitably superseded by expectation of service commitment to home units.	Continue to focus on reasonable rotation of faculty members committing to service to the program and Institute. Ensure good communication with all sister units involved to foster workable collaboration around service.	Director	Ongoing	N
11. **Opportunity:** Consider rolling program appointments to mitigate the impact of a primarily O % appointed faculty and the resultant challenges in teaching, service, and supervision.	2. One such appointment will be introduced as of 21-22, with this ongoing model and any further resourcing development subject to discussion with ODFASS.	Monitor closely the newly introduced rotating cross-appointment position and consider other such opportunities.	Director, Steering Committee	Ongoing	N

12. Opportunity: Initiate a twice annual town hall program meeting, inviting all program faculty and students for an open discussion of issues, concerns, and opportunities.	3 (in part): With a cumulated number of meetings (all committees combined) currently averaging 20 a year, opportunities for further unit gatherings do not seem likely. Any initiative in this regard needs to be premised on outcomes for #8 above.	Explore the possibility of defaulting partially to a non-agenda based format for one of the three Committee of the Whole assemblies, providing no committee deliberation is required. Monitor and assess if implemented. Also draw from the experience of online governance format during 20-21, as we reengage with face-to-face operations.	Steering Committee	21-23	N
13. Opportunity: Examine ways to carve out more dedicated social and workspace for students, as this would likely improve the student experience and enhance program cohesion.	2. Any further student-focused space allocation expansion would require resourcing discussion with and approval from ODFASS.	Engage ODFASS around a student-focused reconfiguration of 201N (recording lab), 201P (archives) and possibly 201K (mail room), following the reassigning of 201N and the GRASAC server eventually moving out of 201Q (storage).	Director	Ongoing	N