

# Two Year Progress Report

## Fine Arts (BA, MFA)

### October 2018; updated January 2020

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#### Background

The last review of Fine Arts undergraduate and graduate programs was completed on December 31, 2014 when we received the report from external reviewers Alex Poruchnyk (University of Manitoba) and Brian Merritt (Western University). Their initial site visit took place on November 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014.

#### Progress on Implementation Plan

#### Recommendations

1. Recommendation: The Department [should] continue to find ways to promote its distinct strengths and uniqueness on campus, as well as within the region and larger cultural community.

**Status:** completed, instituted and ongoing

**Details:** Fine Arts instituted a faculty administrative position in public relations in 2015, which was meant to strengthen its communication efforts through the Fine Arts website, Facebook, Instagram, Akimbo, etc. This administrative position was also tasked with creating a 'splash-page' that would run parallel and is linked to the official UW site. The intent was is to appeal to the art-focused audience that is the Department's primary audience.

UWAG was able to employ a part-time Audience Coordinator (through the UW Work Study program) for two years which helped increase UWAG's profile (and, by extension, the Department's) regionally and nationally. Both positions were not ongoing as the focus of personnel priorities shifted and additional resources are not unavailable. The department is considering adding social media (public relations), in consultation with the Dean of Arts, as a responsibility of the Administrative Coordinator, Undergraduate Studies, as a central repository for accounts, passwords and content.

The University of Waterloo Art Gallery (UWAG) continues leading edge programming of regional, national and international significance. [S.A.I.L.](#) (Student Art Innovation Lab: our Airstream trailer community outreach project) launched in the summer of 2017 and runs annually from June through August. This program is run by alumni and current students and has been very successful; in 2019, the team facilitated 33 events to 3905 participants.

Feedback collected from participants has been generally positive. Students who have worked with S.A.I.L have found the experience invaluable and it has led to employment opportunities for a number of students.

The MFA program has been advertised in three nationally significant art journals: *Canadian Art*, *Border Crossings* and *Images Festival* (Toronto), as well as on the key arts and culture online newsboard Akimbo and Akimbits. Our MFA students also participated in the province-wide exhibition of Graduate level art *First Art Fair* (Hamilton). Each summer, our Undergrad and Grad students are offered an opportunity to apply for a juried exhibition at Art Múir Gallery (Montréal), and 3 undergrads are chosen by the faculty to apply to the *BMO Art First!* juried exhibition. In 2017, 3 students were nominated but not selected for final exhibition.

2. Recommendation: The University, Department and University of Waterloo Art Gallery work together to determine the most effective means possible to place appropriate public signage identifying the location of the Gallery to the campus and larger community.

**Status:** incomplete

**Details:** Ivan Jurakic, Director/Curator of UWAG has reached out to Plant Operations, particularly the University Architect to request permission to install appropriate public signage but has thus far been met with resistance. Since the responses to this report began, UW has recently completed the signage but it does not include the Department or the gallery in ECH. Those with decision making authority in Plant Operations have indicated that what currently exists in terms of signage (East Campus Hall and the street address) is all that will be provided.

3. Recommendation: The reviewers strongly recommend the University work with the Department to find the means to increase technical support for the Fine Art program. We would consider the addition of at least one .5 technical position critical to current program delivery. We also recommend the Department explore the feasibility of hiring appropriately skilled and trained graduate students or senior undergraduate students to aid with wood and metal shop supervisions.

**Status:** incomplete

**Details:** As of December 2019, funding for such a position is not yet available. The Administrative Manager has started communication for both a 0.5 staff member for UWAG as well as an additional 0.5 technician position but has been told, by decision makers in the Dean of Arts Office that only staff positions that will generate revenue (Development, Marketing, etc.) will be approved at this time.

The Department has considered hiring appropriately skilled and trained graduate students or senior undergraduate students. The complexity of supervision needed with respect to

policies, procedures, and guidelines from the Safety Office (i.e., after hours supervision) and the budget restrictions for Policy 30, Point 5 (for graduate students) has hampered the efforts to consider this part of the recommendation. For example, if a graduate student is employed either separately or as a TA, the hourly wage (for Arts) will be \$34 per hour; for the same work from an undergraduate, our current budget allows \$15 per hour. This is a violation of Policy 65 – Equality in Employment.

- 4. Recommendation:** The University consider the means of increasing Fine Art studio space to meet the demands of recent enrolment and teaching area expansions. During the Appraisal Committee visit there was mention of possible future annexation of spaces in ECH currently occupied by other programs. In the reviewers' view, this would be an ideal solution. In the interim, we feel the Department consider limiting undergraduate enrolment growth until more campus space comes available.

**Status:** complete and instituted

**Details:** Fine Arts took possession of the available Finance & Procurement office spaces in ECH in the summer of 2016, cleared them, and converted the entire space to faculty offices, and a Grad computer lab. We prioritized the space and dedicated most of it to the senior (4<sup>th</sup> year) studio/lab. The senior (4<sup>th</sup> year) studio/lab in the former ECH Finance and Procurement space is complete, with all renovations conforming to contemporary building codes. The acquisition of this space has allowed Fine Arts to move the Graduate studios up to the previous 4<sup>th</sup> year studios (ECH 2105).

The ECH 2105 MFA studios are complete, with all renovations conforming to contemporary building code. The former MFA space (ECH 1237) is renovated and complete, and is used as a multi-purpose “clean” fabrication and performance space and is used regularly by several different disciplines, with an emphasis on electronic applications and installations, and performance. Blinds to cover the large picture windows facing Philip Street have been installed for diversified utility and student safety. As a result of these changes we were able to increase our graduate cohort from 8 in 2016 to 10 in 2018.

- 5. Recommendation:** The Department consider revising the Experiential Learning course requirements to allow intern students the possibility of repeat assignments with employers and sufficient time to follow through on initiated projects.

**Status:** Complete.

**Details:** The Department faculty agrees that pedagogically appropriate FINE 243-343 courses can appear 4 times on a student transcript (as opposed to the current 2).

- 6. Recommendation:** The Faculty of Arts and Fine Arts Department work together to find a way to offset the current workload of the Department Administrative Assistant, particularly during peak program enrolment periods.

**Status:** complete and instituted

**Details:** In November 2015 Fine Arts hired a new part-time contract position Undergraduate Coordinator to assist the Associate Chair Undergraduate Studies, which freed up the Administrative Assistant/Graduate Coordinator to properly assist the Associate Chair Graduate Studies and the Department Chair. The part time position was converted to a fulltime contract in March 2016 and in April 2017 it became an FTE.

- 7. Recommendation:** The Department consider extending the weekly visits of a main campus librarian to Visual Resource Centre to advise students in their broader research needs to promote the acquisition of information skills through in-class bibliographic instruction at both the undergraduate and graduate level.

**Status:** completed, instituted but discontinued

**Details:** It was Department consensus that students were not making effective use of the service and therefore it was discontinued.

- 8. Recommendation:** The Visual Resource Centre work with the University to enable Fine Art students to gain access to its holdings from remote locations.

**Status:** partially complete and under consideration

**Details:** The Visual Resources image database is made available via a link on its web page, and an account is sent at the beginning of every term to each faculty member teaching in Fine Arts (including those of cross-listed courses). The Visual Resources Curator has doubts about the wisdom of publishing the DVD holdings online but intends to have the book holdings online in the near future.

- 9. Recommendation:** The University review its art collection holdings and consider hiring a third party consultant to undertake a systematic inventory and assessment, including appraisals and condition reports, in order to determine policies appropriate to the handling, storage, display, and insuring (or potential deaccessioning) of its contents.

**Status:** incomplete

**Details:** As of December 2019, there are no funds for such an appointment. Based on donation and purchase values recorded in the collections database, the insurable value of the collection is currently listed as \$814,500. That being said, without a thorough appraisal we have no way of knowing whether the value of the artworks has increased or decreased over time. Since 2011, aside from artworks still on display in offices and public spaces across campus, the bulk of approximately 720 artworks has been amalgamated in East Campus Hall 1238, adjacent to the Gallery. In 2015, we secured funds from the Faculty of Arts to new vertical and loft storage capacity, and updated the collection database during that same period. Since then, we have maintained the bulk of the collection in storage.

The Department would, if funds were to become available, allocate monies in these ways:

- a) Hiring a third-party consultant on a limited-term appointment to undertake condition reports, ascertain the value of the permanent collection, and update or replace the existing Excel database with a more user-friendly collections software.
- b) Hire a second full- or part-time Gallery staffing position or establish a co-staffing arrangement with Fine Arts for a shared technical staffing position with viable experience in handling, conserving, and collections management.

- 10. Recommendation:** The Department consider the feasibility of providing Fine Arts student interns the opportunity of working with the University permanent collection to develop appropriate interpretative signage for each piece from the permanent collection currently installed around campus.

**Status:** complete and ongoing

- 11. Recommendation:** The Department work with the University to resolve issues associated with the implementation of the new UW Enrolment system in the Fine Art program. The current system has placed inordinate pressures on the faculty and staff, frequently requiring manual enrolment of its students.

**Status:** incomplete; ongoing

**Details:** As of December 2019, the Fine Arts Undergraduate Coordinator does not have access to the system to enroll students in courses with a cap. Courses with caps and reserves will continue to be required for enrollment because of the complexity of FINE studio courses. The Department has formally requested that the staff member be given access via the Arts Undergraduate Office (AUO), but this request has been denied. The rationale is that there are staff in the AUO who can do this task for FINE. This creates additional work for both offices and slows down the process; however, the final decision rests with the AUO.

- 12. Recommendation:** The Department limit further enrolment growth until such time that faculty workloads can be relieved through a reduction of required teaching loads or the creation of a further faculty position.

**Status:** complete and instituted

**Details:** In 2015-16 Fine Arts revised the undergraduate curriculum, which allowed a reduction to a 2 + 2 course load for all faculty in 2016.

- 13. Recommendation:** The Committee recommends that the University examine its promotion criteria in view of encouraging progress through the ranks and better reviews in supporting of faculty promotions, particularly promotion to the rank of full professor.

**Status:** Ongoing

**Details:** Joan Coutu was promoted to the rank of Professor in 2017. Other faculty are currently being encouraged to present themselves for promotion to the rank of Professor.

14. **Recommendation:** The committee strongly supports the Visual Culture Program Plan as it moves towards consolidation as an interdisciplinary degree with a home base in the Fine Art Program. We recommend it going forward with developed and formally instituted protocols to guarantee the commitment of faculty, space, and resources necessary to sustain its viability over the long term. We further recommend the institution of a governing body constituted by core faculty to coordinate and guide its optimal and ongoing delivery as an integrated program.

**Status:** ongoing and under consideration

**Details:** As a new program, Visual Culture is still in an early state of evolution. A governing body initially instituted the Visual Culture plan, and a governing body is currently being convened for its ongoing delivery.

15. **Recommendation:** The appraisers recommend the Department examine the feasibility of implementing a Studio and Visual Culture Major Degree stream to respond to increased student demand for an academic plan representative of a balance of courses drawn from the Studio and Visual Culture programs.

**Status:** ongoing and under consideration

**Details:** As a new program, Visual Culture is still in an early state of evolution. Currently a student cannot officially get a joint degree in Studio and Visual Culture because both programs are housed in the same department, although numerous students have completed the appropriate courses to get such a degree (the students' diplomas and transcripts will say a major in either Studio or Visual Culture, but not both). We will continue to discuss this issue with the Arts Undergraduate Office and will consider ways to more specifically acknowledge the work done in the area of Visual Culture.

After extensive work, Fine Arts has revised and re-developed the existing Honours Studio stream to be live in the 2021 undergraduate calendar. At this time, there was no further discussion to move forward with a Studio and Visual Culture Joint Degree stream.

16. **Recommendation:** In revisiting their current studio course offerings, we recommend a Department Curriculum Committee review of the content of current course offerings with eye to further minimizing students' experience of blind spots and redundancies of course content encountered by students in their progression through the program.

**Status:** complete and instituted

**Details:** A Departmental Curriculum Committee was formed, and the undergraduate curriculum was revised and updated, eliminating redundancies and was instituted in Fall 2016.

17. **Recommendation:** The Department continue its enhancement of professional practice workshops for the MFA students in order to assure their access to a broader set of professional skill sets.

**Status:** complete and instituted

**Details:** Over the past 2 years Fine Arts has provided increased professional practice experience for MFA students above and beyond the Keith & Win Shantz Research Scholarship by scheduling international field trips, professional workshops with visiting artists (typically in the winter term), and regularly as subjects in the Graduate Seminar.

\*Note: in 2016 the MFA program was expanded from 8 to 10 students.

18. **Recommendation:** The Department restore offering the course Topics in Museums, Galleries and Curatorship (FINE 330) and consider making the course a requirement of the Professional Practice Specialization stream. We also recommend the Department consider a renaming this Specialization stream to reflect its focus on gallery practices and provide it more explicit identification to the potential employers after students graduate.

**Status:** incomplete but under consideration

**Details:** Fine Arts agrees with the recommendation and is planning how to integrate such a course in the existing new curriculum. However, as of December 2019, the status of this recommendation remains incomplete.

19. **Recommendation:** The Department consider adding a media course to the core requirements of drawing and sculpture in the studio major program to balance students' interdisciplinary skill sets of its students.

**Status:** incomplete but under consideration

**Details:** Fine Arts agrees with the recommendation and is considering how to integrate such a course in the existing degree plans. As of December 2019, the status remains incomplete.

20. **Recommendation:** The Department continue to develop the MFA Pedagogy course, particularly in the areas of pedagogical theory and through workshops in student engagement strategies and critiquing approaches and the development of teaching philosophies.

**Status:** complete and instituted

**Details:** Fine Arts now offers a specific pedagogy elective stream in the MFA degree plan.

**21. Recommendation:** MFA professionalizing workshops adding to further for MFA (paralleling those offered in undergraduate program).

**Status:** see #17 above

**Details:** see #17 above.

**22. Recommendation:** As an alternative to the 20 still image documentation currently required in support of MFA applications, we recommend Department consider making explicit allowances for applicants to submit documentation of time-based media (i.e. media, video, sound, performance, installation etc.). This would fall in line with the broadened interdisciplinary orientation of the program and more effectively align with the goals of its evolving program.

**Status:** complete and instituted

**Details:** The MFA application web page now acknowledges the submission of time-based application material.

**Explain any circumstances that have altered the original implementation plan:**

N/A

**Address any significant developments or initiatives that have arisen since the program review process, or that were not contemplated during the review:**

- Addition of full time FTE Undergraduate Coordinator
- Establishment of Administrative Assistant/Graduate Coordinator
- New faculty office space, Grad computer lab, 4<sup>th</sup> yr. studio/lab
- Proposed new interdisciplinary fabrication studio/ lab (ECH 1237)
- Expansion of MFA program by 2 positions
- 10 new purpose built Grad studios (ECH 2105)
- Undergrad curriculum revision and resultant 2+2 faculty teaching load
- Addition of one Definite Term Lecturer (3 yr.)
- SAIL



**Updated Implementation Plan:**

	Recommendations	Proposed Actions	Responsibility for Leading and Resourcing (if applicable) the Actions	Timeline for addressing Recommendations
1.	UWAG signage (#2)	continuing	Director/Curator UWAG; Chair of Fine Arts	Winter 2020
2.	New technical support position (#3)	continuing	Chair of Fine Arts	Unclear
3.	UWAG Registrar (contract) (#9)	continuing	Director/Curator of UWAG; Chair of Fine Arts	Unclear
4.	Fine Arts UG Coordinator access to Registrar's enrollment system (#11)	continuing	Chair of Fine Arts	Unclear
5.	Studio/Visual Culture Major (#15)	continuing	Associate Chair, UG Studies	September 2022
6.	Restoration of FINE 330 (#18)	continuing	Chair of Fine Arts; Associate Chair, UG Studies	September 2020
7.	Core media course (#19)	continuing	Fine Arts Curriculum Committee	September 2022

The Department Chair/Director, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty shall be responsible for monitoring the Implementation Plan.

**Report on anything else you believe is appropriate to bring to Senate concerning this program: N/A**

Date of next program review: 2021  
Date

**Signatures of Approval:**

D. Kitter  
Chair/Director  
Date  
May 31, 2017

[Signature]  
AFIW Administrative Dean/Head (For AFIW programs only)  
Date  
25/x/17

[Signature]  
Faculty Dean  
Date  
Oct 26, 2017

[Signature]  
Associate Vice-President, Academic  
(For undergraduate and augmented programs)  
Date

[Signature]  
Associate Provost, Graduate Studies  
(For Graduate and augmented programs)  
Date  
Oct. 30, 2017

## Checklist for SUC/SGRC Reviewer Feedback Quality Assurance Office

**Two-Year Progress Report: Fine Arts**

**Name of Reviewer: Dan Wolczuk**

**Date: 7/28/2020**

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### **Does the Two-Year Progress Report:**

- |  |  |                                    |
|--|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. Clearly describe progress achieved on the various action items in the implementation plan?  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> |
| 2. Explain convincingly any circumstances that would have altered the original implementation plan?  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> |
| 3. For items that are behind schedule, propose an amended implementation schedule that is reasonable and credible?   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> |
| 4. Address significant developments or initiatives that have arisen since the program review process, or that were not contemplated by the program review process? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> |

### **General Comments**

**Now that a couple of pieces of information I had requested have been added, I feel that the report fully covers everything it needs to.**