

# Two-Year Progress Report

## Peace and Conflict Studies (BA, Minor, Diploma, MPACS)

### April 2022

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#### Background

The Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS) program at UWaterloo is an interdisciplinary program focused on a holistic understanding of peace and justice with content that engages many in the broader university community at the undergraduate level, and develops professional competencies at the graduate level. In recent years, PACS undergraduate and graduate enrollments have remained strong (see chart below). PACS continues to work at nurturing relationships with faculties and programs on campus, and at increasing the program’s visibility.

This progress report provides an update on PACS program activities undertaken in response to the cyclical self-study, the external reviewers’ recommendations and the program’s implementation plan, summarized in the [Final Assessment Report](#) (Feb. 21, 2021).

To review, the PACS self-study (Volumes I, II, and III) was completed November 13, 2019. Two arm’s-length external reviewers, supported by an internal University of Waterloo appointee, conducted a site visit to the University on March 2-3, 2020. Following the site visit, the external reviewers submitted a report on their findings with recommendations. The program then responded to each recommendation and outlined a plan for implementation that was reviewed and endorsed by the Dean of Arts and the Academic Dean at Conrad Grebel. The Final Assessment Report summarized the findings, responses and implementation plan.

#### Enrollment over the past two years

	BA			Minor	Diploma	MPACS
	General	Honours	Honours Co-op			
2021-2022	6	33	29	35	0	44
2020-2021	9	44	27	42	2	39

### **Progress on Implementation Plan**

The External Reviewer's Report contained a high degree of affirmation for PACS programs and offered twelve recommendations to "keep the already excellent PACS programs operating at optimal levels" (2020). At this point, PACS has completed three recommendations, and responses are substantially underway for the six further actionable recommendations. Three of the recommendations (5, 11 and 12) are not uniquely actionable at this time, and we therefore list them either as "if opportunity arises" or as "ongoing." Our responses to date are detailed below.

### **Recommendations**

1. The department should undertake a retreat to map [review] the existing curriculum to help determine gaps and overlaps, and define future emphases of the program.

Status: **In progress**

Details:

A series of retreats to review and revitalize the curriculum began in 2021. The initial focus is on reviewing the MPACS curriculum (2021-23), followed by a review of the undergraduate PACS curricula (to begin in 2023). The first MPACS curricular retreat was held August 26, 2021, and a follow-on faculty curriculum meeting occurred in spring 2022. The meeting discussed the MPACS curriculum in relation to decolonization and anti-racism, and led faculty to review and update MPACS core course content. A follow-on curriculum retreat was scheduled for 2023. The curriculum review process is being supported by CTE.

2. Increased attention must be paid to issues of difference and diversity throughout the curriculum, which means that the department needs to stretch beyond its existing stable of scholars and practitioners that are normally hired to fill sessional positions, to search for qualified sessional instructors who could fill other gaps. It also means that any new hires at the full-time, tenure-track, or tenured level need to be able to contribute to issues of difference and diversity in the curriculum.

Status: **In progress**

Details:

In 2020-2021, PACS undertook a faculty search with additional attention given to inviting diverse candidates. PACS hired its first faculty person of colour whose research, among other areas, centers the contributions of Black women to restorative and transformative justice. Chairs have also begun advertising new opportunities for teaching more broadly.

3. The PACS programs should incorporate more “local” concerns, particularly as they relate to structural inequality and violence against Indigenous people living in Canada.

Status: **In progress**

Details:

An ability to address “local” concerns was included as a criteria in the 2020-2021 faculty search. In August 2022, PACS faculty initiated a review of MPACS core courses for content related to coverage of Indigenous and racial justice issues, as well as engagement with critical local and decolonizing perspectives. Faculty added additional content related to structural inequality and other critical local issues in the graduate core courses. Further work is ongoing. An inventory of current PACS course content began in spring 2022 and will set a foundation for a more careful review of undergraduate curricular content that will begin in 2023.

4. Prerequisites should be established for PACS 401. These should include the successful completion of two of PACS 201, 202, or 203.

Status: **In progress**

Details:

This recommendation misunderstood the PACS program structure, however PACS interprets it to mean examining how research and analytical skills are built through courses in our undergraduate curriculum, and this will be examined as part of recommendation 1.

5. MPACS should become a research-based Master of Arts in Peace Studies.

Status: **If opportunity arises**

Details:

Follow-up on this item is pending Spring 2023 or later, when post-pandemic funding opportunities become clearer. We note there is currently a moratorium on new graduate program development, which the Faculty of Arts Dean noted in the Final Assessment Report in responding to this item. MPACS is a course-based Master’s program and the current funding model does not provide guaranteed funds for students, which a research-based program would require. In order to pursue this research-based option PACS would need to propose a new research graduate program and funding agreement.

6. The department should establish a committee structure to manage the PACS programs more effectively. These should include the establishment of committees for graduate admissions, the undergraduate program, and the graduate program.

**Status: Completed**

## Details:

Action on this item began with discussions of a faculty curriculum committee in PACS Administrative Group (PACS AG) in winter 2021. The first meeting of the curriculum committee occurred in August 26, 2021. PACS notes that since the graduate program's inception it establishes an annual graduate admissions committee that reports to PACS AG.

7. The department must take steps to ensure that there is increased diversity in the faculty members teaching in the PACS programs. This relates to equity, diversity, and inclusion of the people who teach in the program, but also to content and methodological diversity

**Status: In progress**

## Details:

In 2020-2021, PACS hired a new full-time, tenure line faculty member in July 2021. Dr. Johonna McCants-Turner is PACS' first faculty person of colour. Her research, among other areas, centers the contributions of Black women to restorative and transformative justice. The program is also offering courses and hiring sessional instructors who bring important content and methodological diversity to the program annually, such as PACS 301 Settler Colonial Violence (Spring 2021) being taught by Rowland Keshena Robinson.

8. PACS should cultivate an active Alumni Network that could be harnessed to help with recruitment and could build a suite of activities in which existing students could participate.

**Status: Completed**

## Details:

To respond to this recommendation, PACS proposed two steps in its implementation plan: 1) to engage with other PACS-related programs to gather ideas; and 2) to develop a plan for energizing our alumni network. In winter 2021, two MPACS students researched two similar graduate program's alumni models and presented a report on their findings to PACS administrators and the Grebel Office of Advancement. PACS and communications staff then developed a plan to increase outreach to MPACS alumni. Implementation of the plan began in 2021, and includes a bi-annual MPACS alumni newsletter (fall and winter respectively), and hosting two alumni-focused events (one each term in fall and winter).

9. Staff working in the PACS program need to be given professional development opportunities. Such opportunities already exist for UW staff, but staff at the Affiliates are prevented from accessing this training. An institutional agreement should be reached to allow Affiliates staff to participate.

Status: **Completed**

Details:

Grebel staff are able to access University professional development opportunities; many are free although some require fees. Grebel is committed to staff professional development per Grebel's policies. PACS further augments these funds as possible in a given budget year. As the Dean of Arts noted in the Final Assessment Report (Feb. 2021), fees for participating in UW professional development events are established in the equity agreements and any revisions would need to be negotiated mutually by all parties.

10. Sessional instructors should be given a space where they can meet with students to hold office hours. Every effort should be made to maintain their email accounts so that students may contact them easily even after having completed their coursework.

Status: **In progress**

Details:

Discussions with senior administrators regarding space concerns for adjunct instructors are ongoing in planning for a full return to campus in Fall 2022. Consistent access to emails for instructors completed.

11. Conrad Grebel and UW should explore the possibility of hiring joint appointments with Environmental Studies or Computer Science. We understand that there are constraints imposed by the "across the creek" relationship between UW and the Affiliates, but this could be overcome by institutional-level collaboration.

Status: **Ongoing**

Details:

PACS and the Faculty of Arts pursue creative approaches to collaboration in Grebel-UWaterloo and AFIW-UWaterloo meetings as opportunities arise. Joint hiring initiatives are difficult and not being pursued at this time.

12. Cross-institutional funding problems need to be worked out at the institutional level.

Status: **Ongoing**

Details:

As above, PACS is alert to creative approaches to collaboration and support in suitable Grebel-UWaterloo and AFIW-UWaterloo forums and meetings. The program's funding model is not open for review at this time.

Three additional points to note. First, the pandemic affected how we address some of the recommendations, in particular delaying aspects of our curricular review. Second, PACS anticipates hiring a new tenure-line faculty member beginning in July 2023, who will further help the program implement these recommendations. Finally, PACS looks forward to continuing to be a vibrant contributor to innovative, interdisciplinary programming at the University of Waterloo.

**Updated Implementation Plan** update table below to reflect timelines etc.

### Implementation Plan

	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Proposed Actions</b>	<b>Responsibility for Leading and Resourcing (if applicable) the Actions</b>	<b>Timeline for addressing Recommendations</b>
1.	The department should undertake a retreat to map the existing curriculum to help determine gaps and overlaps, and define future emphases of the program.	Convene a retreat or a series of shorter meetings. The first meeting was held in August 2021. The UW Centre for Teaching Excellence is being consulted and supporting the process.	The PACS Chair and the PACS Administrative Group (PACS AG)  The PACS Chair will request funds FY2022-3	MPACS review began in 2021, will continue in 2022-3 PACS undergraduate review will begin in 2023
2.	Increased attention must be paid to issues of difference and diversity throughout the curriculum, which means that the department needs to stretch beyond its existing stable of scholars and practitioners that are normally hired to fill sessional positions, to search for qualified sessional instructors who could fill other gaps. It also means that any new hires at the full-time, tenure-track, or tenured level need to be able to contribute to issues of difference and diversity in the curriculum.	Actively spread the word about tenure-track opportunity during Fall 2020-Winter 2021 faculty search. Invite applications from diverse candidates.  Re-evaluate existing practices for hiring adjuncts, in conjunction with larger conversations about adjunct hiring at Grebel and at the University of Waterloo. Define a set of principles to guide adjunct hiring.	PACS Chair  PACS Search Committee  PACS AG  Grebel Dean	First PACS faculty of colour hired in 2021  Practices for hiring new sessional instructors revised (2021)  See timeline for “curriculum review” above

3.	The PACS programs should incorporate more “local” concerns, particularly as they relate to structural inequality and violence against Indigenous people living in Canada.	<p>Assess “local” content during curriculum review.</p> <p>Review and update “PACS Approved” course list to optimize “local” content.</p> <p>Make the ability to address “local” concerns a criterion for the Fall 2020-Winter 2021 faculty search.</p>	<p>PACS Chair</p> <p>PACS AG</p> <p>PACS Search Committee</p>	<p>See timeline for “curriculum review” above</p> <p>Faculty hire process completed with criterion included</p>
4.	Prerequisites should be established for PACS 401. These should include the successful completion of two of PACS 201, 202, or 203.	Examine overall coherence of approach to teaching analytical and research skills during the “curriculum review” described above (Recommendation 1). Determine appropriate steps to prepare students for PACS 401 .	<p>PACS Chair</p> <p>PACS AG</p>	See timeline for “curriculum review” above
5.	MPACS should become a research-based Master of Arts in Peace Studies.	Explore feasibility of a Master of Arts in PACS with Arts Dean and Associate Vice President, Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs.	<p>Grebel Dean</p> <p>Grebel President</p> <p>PACS Chair</p>	If opportunity arises
6.	The department should establish a committee structure to manage the PACS programs more effectively. These should include the establishment of committees for graduate admissions, the undergraduate program, and the graduate program.	<p>Collect information about committee structures used by other comparably sized departments in the Faculty of Arts.</p> <p>Deliberate within PACS AG on possible committee structures and their advantages or disadvantages.</p>	<p>PACS AG</p> <p>PACS Chair</p> <p>PACS Administrative Staff</p> <p>Grebel Dean</p>	Completed. Curriculum committee discussed at PACS AG in winter 2021, and began meeting August 2021.



				Graduate admissions committee already established.
7.	The department must take steps to ensure that there is increased diversity in the faculty members teaching in the PACS programs. This relates to equity, diversity, and inclusion of the people who teach in the program, but also to content and methodological diversity	See response to Recommendation 2 above.	PACS Chair  PACS Search Committee  PACS AG  Grebel Dean	See timeline for Recommendation 2 above.
8.	PACS should cultivate an active Alumni Network that could be harnessed to help with recruitment and could build a suite of activities in which existing students could participate.	Engage other PACS-related programs to collect ideas.  Develop a plan for energizing our alumni network and connecting current students with alumni.	PACS Staff  PACS AG  Grebel Office of Advancement	A report on two similar program's alumni models was produced in 2021.  Plan to increase outreach to alumni was developed in August 2021 and implementation is underway.
9.	Staff working in the PACS program need to be given professional development opportunities. Such	Consult internally and with University counterparts on ways to enhance staff access to PD opportunities.	PACS Chair  Grebel Dean	Consultations completed in spring and fall 2021.

	opportunities already exist for UW staff, but staff at the Affiliates are prevented from accessing this training. An institutional agreement should be reached to allow Affiliates staff to participate.		Grebel HR and Administration	
10.	Sessional instructors should be given a space where they can meet with students to hold office hours. Every effort should be made to maintain their email accounts so that students may contact them easily even after having completed their coursework.	<p>Pursue conversations within Conrad Grebel University College concerning the provision of spaces for adjunct instructors.</p> <p>Examine ways of providing more consistent access to UWaterloo email accounts.</p>	<p>PACS Chair</p> <p>PACS Staff</p> <p>Grebel Dean</p>	<p>Discussions with senior administrators regarding space concerns are ongoing.</p> <p>Consistent access to emails for instructors completed 2021.</p>
11.	Conrad Grebel and UW should explore the possibility of hiring joint appointments with Environmental Studies or Computer Science. We understand that there are constraints imposed by the “across the creek” relationship between UW and the Affiliates, but this could be	<p>Invite creative approaches to collaboration in suitable Grebel-UWaterloo and AFIW-Uwaterloo forums and meetings.</p> <p>Affirm value of existing initiatives and programs to the University system.</p>	<p>Grebel Dean</p> <p>Grebel President</p> <p>PACS Chair</p> <p>PACS Faculty Committee</p>	Ongoing program collaboration.

	overcome by institutional-level collaboration.			
12.	Cross-institutional funding problems need to be worked out at the institutional level.	<p>As #11 above:</p> <p>Invite creative approaches to collaboration in suitable Grebel-UWaterloo and AFIW-UWaterloo forums and meetings.</p> <p>Affirm value of existing initiatives and programs to the University system.</p>	<p>Grebel Dean</p> <p>Grebel President</p> <p>PACS Chair</p> <p>PACS Faculty Committee</p>	Ongoing program collaboration.

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

Date of next program review: \_\_\_\_\_ **2026-2027** \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Signatures of Approval:



July 24, 2023

Chair/Director

Date



July 25, 2023

AFIW Administrative Dean/Head (For AFIW programs only)

Date



September 13, 2023

Faculty Dean

Date

**Note:** AFIW programs fall under the Faculty of ARTS; however, the Dean does not have fiscal control nor authority over staffing and administration of the program.



July 11, 2023

Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs  
(For graduate and augmented programs)  
On behalf of Associate Vice-President, Academic

Date