




## **Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan – Executive Summary** **MA in Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies**

Completed by the Cyclical Program Review Committee (CPRC)

<b>Degree Programs Being Reviewed</b>	Master of Arts in Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies
<b>External Reviewers</b>	Dr. Dan Malleck, Brock University Dr. Deanna Reder, Simon Fraser University
<b>Internal Representative</b>	Dr. Michael Epp, English and Cultural Studies, Trent University
<b>Year of Review</b>	2021-2022
<b>Date of Site Visit</b>	February 3 <sup>rd</sup> and February 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2022
<b>Due Date for Implementation Report from the Program</b>	November 1, 2023
<b>Date Prepared by CPRC</b>	October 19, 2022
<b>Date Approved by Provost &amp; VP Academic</b>	November 22, 2022
<b>Signature of Provost &amp; VP Academic</b>	

The Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies MA program is one of two graduate programs housed within the School for the Study of Canada. It offers a unique and exciting graduate school experience, drawing students with wide-ranging interests and diverse disciplinary backgrounds. With support from Trent's multidisciplinary faculty, MA students initiate and undertake research projects that range across the humanities, social sciences and other interdisciplinary fields. In addition to their course work, students explore a research subject that they define and structure under the guidance of their supervisor and supervisory committee, producing either a Major Research Paper (MRP) or an MA Thesis.

This program provides a platform that challenges students to explore the many intersecting topics and themes of relevance to Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies.

### **Overview**

During the 2021-2022 academic year, the Master of Arts in Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies program underwent a review. Two arm's-length external reviewers, Dr. Dan Malleck, Brock University and Dr. Deanna Reder, Simon Fraser University and one internal representative, Dr. Michael Epp,

English and Cultural Studies programs were invited to review the self-study documentation. The virtual visit took place on February 3 & 10, 2022.

This Final Assessment Report (FAR), in accordance with Trent University's Institutional Quality Assurance Policy (IQAP), provides a synthesis of the cyclical review of the degree programs. The report considers: the Self-Study, the External Reviewers' Report, the Program Response, and the Decanal Response.

A summary of the review process is as follows: the academic unit completed a self-study that addressed all components of the evaluation criteria as outlined in Trent's IQAP. Appendices included: Curriculum Vitae, Course Syllabi, Data Tables, Student and Alumni Surveys and a Library Statement of Support. Qualified external reviewers were invited to conduct a review of the programs that involved a review of all relevant documentation (self-studies, appendices, and IQAP policy) and participation in a virtual visit. During the virtual site visit, reviewers met with senior administration, faculty, students and staff. Once the External Reviewers' Report was received, the Program and Dean provided responses to the Report. The Cyclical Program Review Committee (CPRC) reviewed and assessed the quality of the degree programs based on the four review documents and reported on significant program strengths, opportunities for improvement and enhancement, and the implementation of recommendations. CPRC identified seven (7) recommendations for implementation to improve the quality of the program for students.

The Implementation Plan identifies those recommendations selected for implementation and specifies the proposed follow-up and the person(s) responsible for leading the follow-up. The Academic Unit, in consultation with their Dean, will submit an Implementation Report in response to the recommendations identified for follow-up. The Report is due November 1, 2023.

### **Significant Program Strengths**

The CSID-MA program fosters a larger learning environment, with community and academic partnerships that extend beyond the boundaries of the Trent campus. It is a program which gives equal weight to Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies, in order to meet the objective of having "foster[ed] an environment where Indigenous knowledges are respected and recognized as a valid means by which to understand the world".

Since the establishment of the MA program, the research and work done has contributed to the building of knowledges; served communities; fostered deeper understanding of Canada in local, national, and international contexts; challenged systems of oppression; worked for greater social, cultural, political, and environmental justice and transformation; contributed to Indigenous resurgence and the work of decolonization; and endeavoured to foster reconciliation efforts and address colonialism, inequality, and discrimination in Canada.

More recently, there has been an increased commitment in the program to learning from Indigenous scholars, Elders, artists, and Knowledge Keepers to reflect our focus on both Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies. The program has also greatly benefitted from collaborations with others at Trent, to provide training for graduate students on Trauma-Informed Teaching and exercises developed to educate about colonialism and residential schools.

## Opportunities for Program Improvement and Enhancement

While there are many aspects of the Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies MA program that adequately provide for student learning and experience, the addition of a coursework-only stream could improve time of completion and also alleviate the strain of supervision. Similar to course-based Masters' programs available at other Ontario universities, the CSID-MA could require coursework only, and in this way, ensure that the students benefit from a curated, sequential curriculum with enough time in the classroom to adequately cover a breadth of material.

As identified by the external reviewers, the program is also ideally situated to amend its curriculum and begin to address the gap between Truth and Reconciliation. Rather than considering both Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies to be equal and separate, the opportunity to study both in light of the 94 Calls to Action in the post-TRC era would allow difficult histories to be reviewed and assumptions about Canada to be unlearned. Dedicating the content of the Core colloquium to truth, redress, and reconciliation would have the potential to further unite the two streams. This would open up the opportunity to find faculty members able to spark these conversations, not just within the CSID-MA but throughout the university.

As a function of continuous improvement, it is also critical to identify ways in which the program can regularly monitor and assess the level of student satisfaction and success to ensure curriculum remains relevant, current and effective within the discipline. The program is encouraged to review curriculum offerings on an annual basis and begin to offer exit surveys to recent graduates.

## Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan identifies those recommendations that require action by the academic unit. The Chair or Director, with members of the academic unit, will be responsible for leading the follow-up in consultation, and where appropriate with Dean(s) and other university departments. The Academic Unit will report on actions taken and the status of each recommendation by the due date provided. The Dean will be responsible for Reviewing the Implementation Report and submitting the final report to the Office of the Provost.

Recommendation	Proposed Follow-Up	Specific Timeline	Position Responsible for Leading Follow-up
<b>Curriculum Review</b>  <b>Recommendation 1</b> That Reconciliation and the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action be integrated into the core curriculum of the degree  <b>Recommendation 2</b> That Indigenous ways of knowledge-sharing be consistently integrated into	That the program review the curriculum and provide a consultative process to consider revising curriculum to address Recommendations 1, 2 and 7.  The Implementation Report should specifically include consultation process, results/discussion points, and a description of changes made to curriculum, if any. If recommendations will not be pursued, the program should	Fall 2023	Director of School, in consultation with members of the program

<p>core courses</p> <p><b>Recommendation 7</b> CPRC encourages the program to consider how global connections for both Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies could be incorporated into the curriculum and program.</p>	<p>provide a rationale for their decision.</p>		
<p><b>Recommendation 3</b> That a course-based option be created for the MA that would require completion of courses only</p>	<p>That the program consider creating a course-based option in consultation with faculty.</p> <p>The Implementation Report should report on any consultation that took place and a decision on whether a course-based option would be pursued with rationale for the decision.</p>	<p>Fall 2023</p>	<p>Director of School, in consultation with Dean of Graduate Studies</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4</b> That regular retreats be implemented to engage in building a community of incoming students faculty involved with the program</p>	<p>That the program develops regular opportunities for engagement of students, faculty and others associated with the program to build a scholarly community.</p> <p>The Implementation Report should outline how often retreats are held and outline any additional, current and new, opportunities that have been developed to strengthen community engagement.</p>	<p>Spring 2023</p>	<p>Director of School, in consultation with Dean of Graduate Studies</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5</b> That a name change be considered to better convey what the program offers, and what the degree could be if it considers the TRC Calls to Action</p>	<p>The program should provide a consultative process to reflect on the name of the degree and whether a change would better reflect the program.</p> <p>The Implementation Report should include the consultation process, and a decision as to whether a new name will be considered. If the program's name will change, a rationale for this decision should be provided.</p>	<p>Fall 2023</p>	<p>Director of School, in consultation with the Dean of Graduate Studies</p>

<b>Recommendation 6</b> That a Faculty Renewal Plan be developed to replace senior faculty members near the end of their careers who have sustained the Master's degree in the past several years.	The Dean of Graduate Studies will work with the Director of CSID to consider faculty renewal for presentation to the Dean of Social Sciences and Humanities.	Spring 2023	Dean of Graduate Studies with Director of School, in consultation with Dean of Humanities & Social Sciences
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