

**CANADIAN STUDIES AND INDIGENOUS STUDIES  
PROGRAM QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE (PQAC)  
CYCLICAL REVIEW - FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

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<b>DEGREE PROGRAMS:</b>	<b>MA Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies</b>
<b>REVIEWERS:</b>	<b>Dr. Bonita Lawrence (York University) Dr. Valerie Korinek (University of Saskatchewan) Dr. Lorrie Clark (Trent University)</b>
<b>DATE OF REVIEW VISIT:</b>	<b>March 21-22, 2013</b>
<b>OVERALL ASSESSMENT:</b>	<b>Good Quality with Report</b>
<b>SUBMITTED FOR SENATE APPROVAL:</b>	<b>February 2014</b>

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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During the academic year 2012-2013, the Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies MA degree program was reviewed. The MA in Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies was initiated in 1986 and offers an interdisciplinary program to introduce students to debates in Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies scholarship. The program is currently housed at the Frost Centre (FC) for Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies.

The External Reviewers conducted a site visit on March 21-22, 2013, and met with senior administrators, faculty, staff and students. The reviewers assessed the degree program as being of good quality. After a thorough review of the Self-Assessment, the Reviewers' Report, Departmental and Decanal Responses, the Program Quality Assurance Committee (PQAC) would reassess the degree program as being of 'good quality with report.' Readers should note that the Decanal response was made by the former Dean of Graduate Studies.

In their report, reviewers noted that the interdisciplinary orientation and the research strength of faculty members contributed to the unique character of the program, which offers a challenging and rigorous curriculum to its students. Reviewers were particularly impressed with the commitment of faculty member to the program, particularly given that the current funding system does not guarantee remuneration to home departments for interdisciplinary graduate teaching nor do individual faculty receive compensation for thesis supervision. The Program Quality Assurance Committee (PQAC) concurs with this assessment.

Reviewers remarked that while the program attracts strong applicants with averages in the mid-eighties, fewer applications are received from outside Trent. The FC acknowledges this challenge and the reviewers suggested that this could be remedied with better recruiting strategies. PQAC concurs that attracting candidates from outside Trent is vital to the long-term sustainability of the program.

Reviewers stated that some students expressed concerns about "the limited course options and the lack, at times, of indigenous content in their classes". They noted that although "there was a breadth of classes available in various years and faculty are engaged in the latest research in their fields", the program is now delivered by less faculty than at the time of the last review. The reviewers' report indicates that faculty renewal is imperative for the future viability of the program. Given that 12 faculty members have retired in recent years and another 5-7 further retirements are expected, the reviewers stress that Trent should reinvest in faculty renewal. Both the FC and the Dean concur with this assessment. PQAC acknowledges the seriousness of the issue of faculty renewal and recommends that, when budgets allow, new faculty positions should be allocated to discipline specific areas.

The reviewers noted in their report that the completion times are slightly longer than the expected two years for the MA thesis program and one year for the major research paper (MRP). Reviewers identified a lack of funding and the field-work component as the main reasons for delay. PQAC notes that the FC response also points to additional factors that

may adversely impact completion times and states that the FC would support additional measures taken by the Graduate Studies to assist FC MA students to complete their study in a timely fashion. PQAC acknowledges the importance of graduate student funding and notes that this is a general concern to all graduate programs at Trent. The PQAC concurs with the FC's response that there are additional factors, such as supervision and timely supervisor-student feedback loops, and endorses the recommendation that there should be closer coordination with Graduate Studies to facilitate timely completion.

The reviewers devoted a significant portion of their report to the discussion of ongoing tensions between the FC and the Indigenous Studies Department and its impact on the CSID program. A significant portion of this discussion was related to the function of the FC. PQAC stresses that the degree program and the FC are separate entities and this review is mandated to study the quality of the MA program. While the structural relationship between the FC and the Indigenous Studies Department may be relevant in terms of the delivery of the program, the function and the organization of the FC as a research centre is outside the purview of this review. Apart from the difficult relationship between the FC and Indigenous Studies, the reviewers, in their report, identified the following issues as significant to the program itself: marginalization of Indigenous Knowledge in the program and lack of equivalency in course content between Indigenous Studies and Canadian Studies. The reviewers also remarked that the tension was also evident in faculty interviews "as the meeting scheduled with the Frost Centre faculty had no Indigenous studies faculty in attendance; instead they had their own meeting and submitted a two-page presentation outlining their perspective". Reviewers also stated that some students stressed that the "struggle around Indigenous Studies and Canadian Studies raised a lot of tension in their work". PQAC notes that the FC in its response to the review disputes some of these assessments. The FC response raises the following concerns about the reviewers' assessment of the relationship between the FC and the Indigenous Studies Department: a failure of drawing on the wealth of information in the self-study; not taking into account the full spectrum of views expressed in interviews; and not integrating differing perspectives in a meaningful way into the report. The FC response states that many of the issues raised in the review have been addressed in the self-study, which contains a wide range of data, putting some of the reviewers' assessment into context. The Dean also agrees with the FC's response and finds that the lack of attention to the self-study in the report is particularly troubling and raises a concern about the reviewers' failure to understand the full scope of CSID policies and selective use of statistics. The Dean notes that the review does not make helpful recommendations in resolving the ongoing tensions. PQAC shares the FC's and the Dean's concerns that the reviewers did not sufficiently draw upon the material in the self-study in order to situate their assessment within a proper context. Despite this apparent disagreement, PQAC notes that the reviewers, the FC and the Dean agree with the recommendation that two separate MA programs should be created: A Canadian Studies MA and an Indigenous Studies MA. PQAC acknowledges that given the ongoing difficulties, creating two separate programs may be a viable option. PQAC also notes that creating two separate programs may not be simply an internal matter but may require approval by the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance, which may involve creating two programs from scratch. If this is the chosen option, then the FC and Graduate Studies will have to explore potential pitfalls and risks of such action. PQAC also notes the ambiguity in the report that even though reviewers devoted significant attention to the ongoing tensions and the negative impact this has on the program, they nevertheless assessed the program with the highest-ranking of "good quality". PQAC believes that given some of the issues raised in the report, in addition to the FC and Decanal responses, the more accurate assessment of the program should be "good quality with report".

**PRIORITIZATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS SELECTED FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

*Please note: Only those recommendations selected for implementation are included in this report. Recommendations that do not require report have not been included.*

**Recommendation 1**

**That the splitting of CSID MA into a CAST MA program and an INDG MA program be investigated.**

<i>Approval required by</i>	<i>GSC; Senate</i>
<i>Resources provided by</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>
<i>Unit/person responsible for implementation</i>	<i>Graduate Dean; CSID Program Director</i>
<i>Recommended implementation date</i>	<i>April 2014</i>
<i>Report on progress of implementation to PQAC</i>	<i>October 2014</i>

**Recommendation 2**

**Faculty Renewal. Faculty renewal is essential. It is imperative that new Canadianists be hired in English, History, Indigenous Studies and Political Studies.**

<i>Approval required by</i>	<i>Provost &amp; VP Academic</i>
<i>Resources provided by</i>	<i>Provost &amp; VP Academic</i>
<i>Unit/person responsible for implementation</i>	<i>Deans</i>
<i>Recommended implementation date</i>	<i>Dependent upon approval</i>
<i>Report on progress of implementation to PQAC</i>	<i>October 2014</i>

**Recommendation 3**

**Investment in Graduate Compensation for Faculty in CSID. The compensation for faculty teaching in CSID should be formalized. The Graduate Dean should have a budget to fund graduate teaching with releases to Departments.**

<i>Approval required by</i>	<i>Provost &amp; VP Academic</i>
<i>Resources provided by</i>	<i>Provost &amp; VP Academic</i>
<i>Unit/person responsible for implementation</i>	<i>Graduate Dean</i>
<i>Recommended implementation date</i>	<i>Dependent upon approval</i>
<i>Report on progress of implementation to PQAC</i>	<i>October 2014</i>

**Recommendation 7**

**The Frost Centre recommends that the fields of study be revisited once new tenure-track faculty are in place.**

<i>Approval required by</i>	<i>GSC; Senate</i>
<i>Resources provided by</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>
<i>Unit/person responsible for implementation</i>	<i>Graduate Dean; CSID Program Director</i>
<i>Recommended implementation date</i>	<i>April 2014</i>
<i>Report on progress of implementation to PQAC</i>	<i>October 2014</i>

**Recommendation 8**

**Funding should be earmarked to begin stabilizing, and ultimately improving, the various budget lines in the Library and Archives.**

<i>Approval required by</i>	<i>Provost &amp; VP Academic</i>
<i>Resources provided by</i>	<i>Provost &amp; VP Academic</i>
<i>Unit/person responsible for implementation</i>	<i>University Librarian</i>
<i>Recommended implementation date</i>	<i>Dependent upon funding</i>
<i>Report on progress of implementation to PQAC</i>	<i>October 2014</i>