



NOVA SCOTIA COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN (NSCAD UNIVERSITY)

EXTERNAL REVIEW GUIDE

For purposes of ensuring continued academic program quality and excellence, the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD University) has adopted a quality assurance program which includes a system of self-study, an external peer review, and a schedule of follow-up procedures. A quality assurance review process is essential to assuring the highest academic standards in order that NSCAD remains a primary university dedicated to the visual arts.

To assure that the best possible standards in program assessment, the University will appoint external reviewers who are **experts in their disciplines or professions with experience in institutions with which NSCAD University compares itself in terms of quality, aspirations, and achievements.**

In preparing the External Review Report, please use the preliminary material provided by the Self Study Committee as well as the information obtained during the site visit to respond to the following issues/questions. The categories are provided as a guide and are not intended to restrict the Reviewers from commenting on any additional areas of interest or concern not mentioned here.

1) Objectives and Identity

- What are the objectives of the program?
- How clear are the objectives?
- How do these objectives correspond to those of other similar programs?
- How do current trends in the disciplines relate to these objectives?
- What is the fit between the program objectives and the curriculum?
- Are there evidence of indicators demonstrating the achievement of the program objectives?
- What is the extent to which the program's goals and priorities match the academic plan of the University and the standards, educational goals and learning objectives of the degree?
- What are the strengths and limitations of the program?
- Comment on the program's involvement in ongoing self-assessment of the quality its program(s), its faculty, and its students?
- Comment on the appropriateness of the program in light of the University's mission, finances, and priorities

2) Curriculum and Pedagogy

Program Emphasis

- What are the primary areas of focus/expertise?
- What are the principal teaching, research interests and activities of faculty?
- In comparison with similar programs, are important activities or interests over or under represented?

- How has the curriculum changed to reflect current trends in the area of study?
- Comment on the clarity and coherence of the program requirements and designs
- Appropriateness of the number and variety of courses offered
- What, if any, is the public role of the program?
- Comment on the contribution of the program to public policy, environment, society and economy of Nova Scotia and beyond

Teaching and Curriculum

- What are the department's practices relative to identifying and remediating teaching issues and problems?
- How positive/negative are students' evaluation of teaching? What have faculty done to address student concerns regarding teaching, including those reflected in course evaluation?
- Comment on opportunities for initiatives in pedagogy and programming
- Comment on plans or proposals for future developments or initiatives

Inclusivity

- What initiatives has the program or unit made to become informed on issues of inclusivity in curricula, and/or to revise course content and curricula accordingly?
- Are programs available to students who wish to study part-time?
- Have any faculty members and teaching assistants in the academic unit acquired special expertise (training, consulting and/or publication) to better assure inclusive curriculums and institutions?

3) Regulation and Governance

- What are the current regulations for the program? (i.e. admission requirements, courses required, regulations and procedures for comprehensive examinations, regulations and procedures for theses and the examination of theses, academic standing, minimal grade point average, scores on language tests, i.e. TOEFL)
- Comment on the organizational structure and effectiveness of academic units, including governance, administration and resource management

4) Students

Enrollment

- What are the trends in enrollment and what might these trends illustrate?
- What is the quality and diversity of the students in the program taking into account self-designated groups?

Recruitment

- What are the current sources of referral/recruitment of students to the program (i.e. how do students find out about and choose academic programs)?
- What recruitment initiatives have been designed to attract students? Are there any special preparation programs to enable a wide range of students to qualify for admission to the program?

Selection

- What are the selection criteria for admission?
- What consideration has been given to remove non-academic barriers for capable students?

- Do the general profiles of the students admitted match the University's overall standards and goals?

Financial Support

- What proportion of students receive financial support and in what ways? (I.e. scholarships, bursaries, student employment, etc.)
- Are there any scholarships or bursaries which have been made available especially to any members of specific groups?
- What proportion of scholarship recipients are members of under-represented groups relative to their proportion in the academic unit?

Graduate Rates and Employment

- What is the average time to complete the degree? What proportion of students complete the degree?
- How are graduates of the program employed?

Performance

- Is the level of achievement of the students consistent with the educational goals of the program?

Student Experience

- What are the overall student satisfaction/concerns?
- Student participation in Co-op, exchange and experiential learning activities.
- What is the level of student involvement in extra-curricular activities (attendance at openings, lectures, etc.)?

Other Issues

- What student participation mechanisms exist in the unit's governance? In what ways are students now participating in governance?
- What issues emerged from the instructional assessment forms?

5) Faculty Profile

- Assess the quality of teaching in the program
- What are the principle areas of expertise?
- What are the faculty's current research activities (publications, presentations, shows, exhibitions, grants, contracts, commissions, etc.)?
- In what types of research work are faculty involved (e.g. individual or teamwork, within program, outside program, outside University)?
- How do these profiles fulfill the objectives of the program?
- In what ways do faculty research interests provide a range of scholarly/creative perspectives from which students may benefit?
- Appropriateness of faculty teaching loads
- What is the role/participation of graduate students in the program delivery? What courses are taught?
- How are graduate teaching assistantships and research assistantships determined?
- What is the balance between senior and junior faculty; full-time and part-time faculty; and areas of expertise of faculty?
- Are the faculty representative of the University's diversity and equity policies?
- Comment on the faculty/student ratio.
- Comment on the overall staffing for the program based on the total workload required of the Department?

- What vulnerabilities and opportunities does the unit face in terms of anticipated retirement and hiring?

6) **Resources**

- Are the library holdings adequate to sustain the program?
- Are the computing facilities sufficient for students and faculty?
- Are the equipment and facilities (space, materials, etc.) sufficient for the program(s)?
- Do students have space to study? Socialize?

7) **Please include an executive summary of recommendations**

CONTENT AND FORM OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT

When preparing the External Review Report, please refer to the headings and subheadings below for suggested content and form.

- i. **Cover Page**
Name of program reviewed
Names of reviewers, signatures and date
- ii. **Introduction**
- iii. **Objectives and Identity**
- iv. **Curriculum and Pedagogy**
 - a) *Program Emphasis*
 - b) *Teaching and Curriculum*
 - c) *Inclusivity*
- v. **Regulation and Governance**
- vi. **Students**
 - a) *Enrollment*
 - b) *Recruitment*
 - c) *Selection*
 - d) *Financial Support*
 - e) *Graduate Rates and Employment*
 - f) *Performance*
 - g) *Student Experience*
 - h) *Other Issues*
- vii. **Faculty Profile**

- viii. Resources**
- ix. Conclusions**
- x. Executive Summary of Recommendations**

For further information, please contact:

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