

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan

1 Review Summary

Program(s) Reviewed:	Diaspora & Transnational Studies (HBA): Major, Minor
Unit Reviewed:	Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebecca J. Lester, Chair and Professor of Sociocultural Anthropology, Professor of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Department of Anthropology, Washington University, St. Louis • Rachel Salazar Parreñas, Doris Stevens Professor in Women's Studies, Professor of Sociology and Gender and Sexuality Studies, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, Princeton University
Date of Review Visit:	March 27, 2024
Review Report Received by VPAP:	May 29, 2024
Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:	March 3, 2025
Date Reported to AP&P:	April 10, 2025

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: March 31, 2015

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- Unique, vibrant and important program; only program of its kind within the North American academy
- Students are thrilled with the program
- Faculty are producing excellent individual research
- Rapid program enrolment since its inception in 2005, and program is poised to continue to grow

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Reviewing the substantial number of cross-listed courses and clarifying the impact of this on the program's learning objectives
- Gathering information on the accomplishments of its graduates in order that students might better understand the range of careers and opportunities open to them on completion of the program
- Making better connections to help the program address the barriers students have to taking courses in other departments, engage faculty from other units, increase the number of experiential learning opportunities, and improve the Centre's research profile
- Addressing the resource-intensive nature of the tri-campus undergraduate program
- Better using the program's physical space

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Terms of reference; Self-study; Appendices; Previous review report including the administrative response(s); Access to all course descriptions; Access to the curricula vitae of faculty.

Consultation Process

Faculty, students, administrative staff and senior program administrators as well as members of relevant cognate units as determined by the commissioning officer: Vice-Dean Academic Planning, Interim Associate Dean, Unit-level Reviews; Program Director; Faculty; Administrative staff; Undergraduate students; Chairs and Directors of Cognate Units (Criminology & Sociolegal Studies; Religion; Germanic Languages & Literatures; Centre for Industrial Relations & Human Resources).

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Objectives
 - ▶ Diaspora & Transnational Studies (DTS) mission includes diverse research approaches, geographies, theories, and historical eras; program engages with disciplinary questions outside of Eurocentric worldviews
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Program takes an inclusive approach by not requiring a minimum grade point average for majors and minors
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Program curriculum appears to work, with no major adjustments recommended
 - ▶ Potential students have "tremendous flexibility" to meet requirements, in consideration of DTS often being a second major
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students report no difficulty meeting program completion requirements including the year-long introductory 200-level course, 300-level methods course, and upper-level courses
 - ▶ Students are strong advocates for the program and highly value its current approach
 - ▶ Students commend DTS classes for providing tools to understand concepts and issues across all their courses, including those outside the program
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ Students report a positive experience in DTS classes, reflected in high course evaluations
- Quality indicators – faculty
 - ▶ DTS faculty maintain a highly intellectual, conceptual-focused approach to teaching, rather than an area- or identity-based approach

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Program currently has a single course to fulfil the university's "qualitative and qualitative reasoning" requirement; other courses might also meet this standard
 - ▶ Students do not have the opportunity to apply their skills and knowledge in a capstone course

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Continue offering year-long introductory 200-level course

- ▶ Revisit syllabi of various courses to explore potential options for expanding the range of qualitative and quantitative reasoning courses beyond DTS300H1
- ▶ Consider developing a senior capstone course, with community engagement and research tracks, to help students solidify and integrate their learning
- ▶ Explore options for increasing one-on-one research opportunities with faculty through Research Assistantships
- ▶ Expand experiential learning opportunities for students, such as internships, fieldwork, or community-based learning; “These are especially important given the intellectual focus of the Centre, and Toronto provides an ideal setting for creating such opportunities”
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Enhance advertising strategies to attract prospective majors and minors

2. Graduate Program(s) N/A

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ “Highly accomplished and intellectually diverse” faculty have broad expertise across multiple fields including religion, sexuality, race, labour, history, and governance
 - ▶ Faculty have received prestigious fellowships and grants, including the Guggenheim Fellowship and Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar
- Research
 - ▶ Faculty research interests cluster around key areas including religion, diaspora, and transnationalism; ethnography; political economy; African diaspora; and Jewish diaspora
 - ▶ Faculty research covers diverse geographical areas, including Africa, Europe, and the Americas, with specific focus on the Caribbean, Canada, Brazil, and Mexico

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ Hires seem to have occurred without a “strategic masterplan,” which has led to a narrow range of faculty disciplines, limited diversity among senior faculty, and gaps in research on Middle East/North Africa, Asia, and Indigeneity in the Americas
 - ▶ Literary and cultural studies minimally represented among DTS faculty

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
 - ▶ Prioritize building a research cluster in Middle East/North African diasporic studies and expanding faculty expertise in Asia, Indigenous Studies, and Literary and Cultural studies
- Faculty
 - ▶ Address the lack of diversity among tenured faculty

4. Administration

Note: Issues that are addressed through specific University processes and therefore considered out of scope for UTQAP reviews (e.g., individual Human Resources issues, specific health and safety concerns) are routed to proper University offices to be addressed, and are therefore not included in the Review Summary component of the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Program maximizes resources and maintains a robust intellectual community outside the classroom through thematic seminars and outside speakers
 - ▶ Students benefit from robust alumni relations, with events including career panels and alumni lectures
 - ▶ DTS is well regarded within the university and has strong support from university leadership
 - ▶ DTS maintains robust ties with other university units through shared faculty appointments and students often combining DTS with majors or minors in other units; “this arrangement appears to run smoothly and to be enriching for the intellectual life of the Centre”
 - ▶ DTS is a good university citizen offering numerous talks and events open to the wider community
 - ▶ Program has a number of outward-facing activities, and faculty regularly collaborate with scholars at other universities
 - ▶ Faculty relationships within the Centre have historically been collegial and mutually beneficial
 - ▶ Faculty and students report a strong sense of community and commitment to the program
 - ▶ Despite differences, faculty show a shared commitment to the program’s mission that provides an “excellent foundation upon which to build”
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Program has achieved tremendous success in securing external grants
 - ▶ DTS is in an overall positive financial situation and receives sufficient funding from the Faculty of Arts & Science to support operating expenses, speaker series, alumni events, and faculty research

- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Broad, inclusive approach has provided flexibility for strategic planning around hiring, enrolment, and curriculum development
 - ▶ DTS is a “unique and exceptionally valuable program, especially in today’s world”
- International comparators
 - ▶ DTS is one of the longest running programs of its kind, uniquely structured as both a research centre and an academic department
 - ▶ Reviewers note that both DTS and the Yale Center for the Study of Race, Indigeneity, and Transnational Migration follow a similar hybrid model operating as a centre and a department, offering major and minor programs and supporting faculty research through fellowships and seminars; similar units in other institutions function as traditional academic departments

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Cross-appointed faculty can sometimes feel overburdened balancing expectations of both their home departments and DTS
 - ▶ In the aftermath of the events of October 7, 2023, faculty conflicts have disrupted the historically collegial and intellectually open environment in DTS; “differences have escalated to the point where some faculty are no longer speaking to one another and some report feeling an atmosphere of hostility”
 - Relationship tension is between groups of faculty with opposing political views who are also generationally distinct; differences in faculty rank led to a dynamic with one group feeling especially vulnerable to senior scholars in the other
 - Strong collegial relationships, and a foundation of mutual understanding and support, may not yet be well-established for new faculty members
 - Attempts to minimize interaction and avoid conflict between opposing groups appears to have reinforced divisions
 - DTS cannot effectively grow unless current tensions within the unit are resolved
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ DTS “does not currently have the human resources necessary for the smooth running of its programs”
 - ▶ Key leadership and administrative roles are overextended, with much operational/institutional knowledge concentrated in a few individuals and at risk of being lost should they leave
 - ▶ Administrative support staff have taken on tasks beyond the scope of their roles, limiting the ability to focus on core responsibilities
 - ▶ DTS cannot grow within its current spatial and infrastructural limitations; hiring of staff and faculty is limited by a lack of available office space
 - ▶ Some staff are currently working in inadequate workspaces
 - ▶ Many faculty offices are rarely used, while there is insufficient space for collective gatherings and socializing

- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Long-range planning challenges stem from four interconnected issues: leadership change, space and infrastructure constraints, curriculum development, and internal relations

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Create a dedicated alumni database to further strengthen relationships with alumni and preserve institutional memory
 - ▶ Improve internal communication and clearly define expectations for involvement in Centre activities, particularly for cross-appointed faculty navigating dual and sometimes competing responsibilities
 - ▶ Reviewers recommended several initiatives/actions toward repairing the division among the faculty, including: organizing a faculty retreat led by a trained facilitator specializing in trauma-informed discussions; holding regular faculty meetings; establishing an internal colloquium to foster engagement with each other's work; increasing opportunities for social interaction among faculty; encouraging cross-collaboration on joint projects that foster shared investment and engagement
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Consider allocating resources to support undergraduate research opportunities
 - ▶ Explore ways to optimize existing office space allocation to reduce inefficient use of space, identify space for essential needs such as collective gathering and socializing, and to better support students, staff, and future hires
 - ▶ Consider accommodations within the activity-based budget model with respect to DTS's unusual positioning as a trans- and interdisciplinary unit with faculty jointly appointed in other departments
 - ▶ Enhance administrative staff support to improve workload allocation, distribute institutional knowledge more broadly, and enhance workflow within the Centre
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Work to strengthen DTS's reputation by redefining its identity and mission, diversifying senior faculty, reallocating office space, and revisiting aspects of the curriculum
 - ▶ Engage in strategic planning with the goals of defining and consolidating a clear identity for the Centre, and addressing gaps in faculty research areas and in the program curriculum
 - ▶ Begin strategic planning in advance of DTS leadership transitions
 - ▶ Continue investing in DTS as both a Centre and an academic department with support for strategic growth to maximize its impact on students, the University, and the Toronto community



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

March 3, 2025

Professor Nick Rule
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
University of Toronto

RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies

Dear Prof. Rule,

I write in response to your letter of November 29, 2024, regarding the March 27, 2024, UTQAP cyclical review of the Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies (CDTS) and its undergraduate programs and requesting our Administrative Responses. The programs reviewed were: Diaspora & Transnational Studies (HBA): Major, Minor.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers: Professor Rebecca J. Lester, Washington University, and Professor Rachel Salazar Parreñas, Princeton University, for their very comprehensive review of the CDTS. We would also like to thank the Director of the program, faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study. We also wish to thank the many staff, students, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided thoughtful feedback. The UTQAP cyclical review process is an invaluable exercise that affords us the opportunity to take stock of our academic units and programs, to recognize achievement, and identify areas for improvement.

The review report was finalized on May 29, 2024, after which the director shared it widely with faculty, staff, and students in the CDTS. We are extremely pleased with the reviewers' positive assessment of the overall strength of CDTS and its outstanding, productive faculty. The reviewers noted that the Centre engages in diverse research approaches, geographies, theories, and historical eras, and with disciplinary questions outside of Eurocentric worldviews; students report a positive experience in DTS classes; and DTS faculty are highly accomplished and intellectually diverse" and have broad expertise across multiple fields including religion, sexuality, race, labour, history, and governance. The review report also raised several issues and challenges and identified areas for enhancement, including that students do not have the opportunity to apply their skills and knowledge in a capstone course; cross-appointed faculty can sometimes feel overburdened balancing expectations of both their home departments and DTS; there is relationship tension between groups of faculty with opposing political views; and leadership and administrative roles are overextended.

Each of these recommendations has been addressed in the attached Review Recommendations Table that outlines the unit's response, the Dean's response, and an Implementation Plan identifying action items and timelines for each recommendation. My Administrative Response and Implementation Plan was developed in consultation with the Interim Director and with the

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Sidney Smith Hall, 100 St. George Street, Suite 2005, Toronto, ON M5S 3G3 Canada

Tel: +1 416-978-3383 • Fax: +1 416-978-3887 • officeofthedean@artsci.utoronto.ca • www.artsci.utoronto.ca

Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, and senior leadership within my office. The Implementation Plan provided identifies timeframes of immediate- (six months), medium- (one to two years), and longer- (three to five years) term actions and who (Faculty, Dean, unit) will take the lead in each area. I also identified any necessary changes in organization, policy, or governance, where appropriate, as well as any resources, financial or otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.

The next UTQAP cyclical review of CDST will take place no later than the **2031-32** review cycle.

My office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with chairs and directors. I also acknowledge that your office will request a brief Interim Monitoring Report midway between the March 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2031-32 to report on progress made on the Implementation Plan as outlined in the accompanying Review Recommendations Table.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to respond to the review report. The reviewers' comments and recommendations will help inform future priorities of the Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies and its undergraduate programs.

Sincerely,



Melanie Woodin
Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Professor, Department of Cell & Systems Biology

cc.

Ken MacDonald, Interim Director, Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies, Faculty of Arts & Science

Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science

Caitlin Burton, Senior Manager, Curriculum, Change & Reviews, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science

Lachmi Singh, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Andrea Benoit, Academic Planning & Review Officer, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science

2023-24 UTQAP Review of FAS Diaspora & Transnational Studies - Review Recommendations

Please do the following for each recommendation in the table:

- If you **intend** to act on a recommendation, please provide an **Implementation Plan** identifying actions to be taken, the time frame (short, medium, long term) for each, and who will take the lead in each area. If appropriate, please identify any necessary changes in organization, policy or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.
- If you **do not** intend to act on a recommendation, please briefly explain why the actions recommended have not been prioritized.
- In accordance with the UTQAP and Ontario's Quality Assurance Framework, "it is important to note that, while the external reviewers' report may include **commentary** on issues such as faculty complement and/or space requirements when related to the quality of the program under review, **recommendations** on these or any other elements that are within the purview of the university's internal budgetary decision-making processes must be tied directly to issues of program quality or sustainability" (emphasis added)
- You may wish to refer to the [sample table](#) provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Unit Response	Dean's Response
The reviewers observed that the program curriculum is working well; they offered minor suggestions for enhancements, including exploring whether courses other than DTS300H1 could provide students with adequate preparation in quantitative and qualitative reasoning, and considering the development of a capstone course. They also observed the need to develop experiential learning opportunities for students, such as internships, fieldwork, or other forms of community-based learning.	1	"Regarding the fulfillment of DTS300H1, we doubt only one course in the entire program fulfills the required "qualitative and quantitative reasoning" course for the university and suspect other classes likely do so as well. We suggest that the program revisits the syllabus of various class offerings to see the possibility of expanding the options for the fulfillment of DTS300H1."	DTS300H1 was specifically developed to satisfy the mandatory requirement for qualitative and quantitative reasoning because other courses in our program did not. Notably, the reviewers did not point to courses that they thought might satisfy this requirement. In situations where students are unable to take DTS300H1, we do grant program exceptions for courses that meet Breadth Requirement 5 in cognate programs.	Immediate term: The Dean's office including the Vice-Dean Undergraduate, and the Associate Dean Teaching Learning, will work with the Unit to identify courses in other Units that can satisfy this core competency and can support the Unit in exploring relevant curricular changes within existing courses.
	2	"Students do not have the opportunity to apply their skills and knowledge in a capstone course. We suggest the development of a two-track senior capstone, one geared towards community engagement and the other towards research."	<p>We do not fully agree with this assessment. Students can and do use DTS390H1/Y1 - Independent Study as a research-oriented capstone course. In these cases, students develop a research project in collaboration with a faculty member who subsequently directs the students in carrying out the project and preparing a final research report. We have also used it to facilitate community-engaged learning.</p> <p>Similarly some of our 400-level seminars function as capstone courses and faculty are free to structure those courses as capstone</p>	<p>Immediate-medium term: We support the program's structure that allows for multiple interdisciplinary learning experiences that also satisfy the program requirements for a capstone course experience.</p> <p>The A&S ELOS office is available to support the program in developing more experiential learning-based opportunities and options for this capstone experience that incorporate community engagement. The program has already met with that office's Associate Director.</p>

		<p>courses. Many 400-level seminars that were research-oriented capstone courses were ‘derailed’ by COVID which may have produced this impression on the part of the reviewers.</p> <p>There are also disciplinary differences in what constitutes a research course in an interdisciplinary program. While for a joint DTS/English major a capstone research project might involve a close reading of diasporic novels, and DTS/Anthropology major might pursue an ethnographic project researching the engagement of diasporic communities in ‘homeland’ politics. Some of our senior seminars allow those kinds of projects.</p> <p>DTS410H1 - Diasporic Foodways, as an example, includes a project structure in which students work toward final primary-research based project that interrogates the role of food in the social dynamics and reproduction of diasporic communities. The final output has included student analyses of diasporic recipe books; mini-documentary films on the social meaning and significance of particular foods; archival research that explores the role of food in the dynamics of community reproduction across time and space.</p> <p>DTS405H1 – “Human Trafficking and/in Diaspora” adopts an interdisciplinary lens to explore human trafficking cases for labour and sexual exploitation as they relate to diaspora, migration, economics, politics, and security. Apart from examining legal texts, scholarly articles and case studies, the course incorporates a series of guest lectures</p>	
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			<p>featuring subject-matter experts. This year, the experts included representatives from local NGOs, sustainability advisory firms, Toronto Police Service, and Ontario Human Trafficking Prosecution Team. Students then work through the input of these experts to produce weekly critical analyses that assist them in designing their final projects.</p> <p>We do agree with the need for a greater emphasis on Community-engaged/experiential research and address that below under Recommendation 3.</p>	
	3	<p>“The Centre is in need of developing experiential learning opportunities for students, such as internships, fieldwork, or other forms of community-based learning. These are especially important given the intellectual focus of the Centre, and Toronto provides an ideal setting for creating such opportunities.”</p>	<p>We currently have some courses that involve experiential learning components.</p> <p>As an example, “DTS310H1 - Transnational Toronto” is taught as a field course in which specific course modules are taught at specific sites in Toronto and students are taught observational and analytic skills to understand the functioning of transnational processes in the historical development and contemporary socio-economic and cultural configuration of those sites.</p> <p>We do appreciate the need to develop more opportunities for community-engaged and experiential learning. We intend to act on this recommendation as follows:</p> <p>1) Short-term</p> <p>i) We have compiled a list of DTS-relevant community, non-governmental and governmental organizations agencies in Toronto that could serve as opportunities for experiential/community-engaged learning.</p>	<p>Please see above, #2.</p>

		<p>ii) We have held, and will continue to schedule, meetings with cognate units who have established successful community-engaged learning programs to learn and benefit from their experiences. (e.g., The Community Engaged Learning Program at New College). We have also met with Associate Director, Office of Experiential Learning and Outreach Support; and have planned meetings with staff from the University of Toronto Career Centre to explore a career-development approach to community-engaged learning.</p> <p>ii) We will encourage DTS faculty to apply for Experiential Learning Fellowships with the initial goal of developing one Experiential Learning Course in DTS.</p> <p>2) Medium-term</p> <p>i) Develop an outreach strategy to approach organizations and agencies; develop relationships and establish possible learning opportunities, including internships and field-based research projects.</p> <p>ii) We will seek approval to hire a new staff member (Recommendation 10) who has outreach development and management skills. This position would be responsible for managing some aspects of a community-engaged learning program. As a back -up, we will explore opportunities to support training for our Communications and Program Officer to develop outreach development and management skills.</p> <p>iii) Promote and emphasize the opportunity for students to self-identify community</p>	
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			<p>engaged learning opportunities. Simultaneously, develop a process for vetting and approving community-engaged learning opportunities identified by students in the program.</p> <p>iv) Based on faculty interest and hopefully through an Experiential Learning Fellowship, propose a new course through which students can earn credit for participating in community-engaged learning.</p> <p>v) Promote the new course to students and based on demand and enrolment assess the need for a second experiential learning course.</p> <p>3) Long-term</p> <p>i) Monitor the outcome of community-engaged learning efforts through surveys focused on student experience, impact, and relevance to our program learning objectives.</p> <p>ii) Develop a regular process of renewing existing opportunities while developing new partners.</p>	
	4	<p>“Students can benefit from greater one-on-one research opportunities with faculty through RA-ships.”</p>	<p>We agree but one of the problems faced by a unit with cross-appointed faculty at a top-tier research university is that faculty have ‘competing loyalties’; grants are housed with the unit of their primary appointment, as is their graduate responsibility. In this environment it is typical for RA resources to be used to support graduate students. This pressure will only increase in the new graduate funding environment.</p> <p>Understandably some faculty are uncomfortable using ‘voluntary labour’ but</p>	<p>Immediate term: The ASDO supports undergraduate students in research opportunities through its participation in the University’s Work-Study Program, Research Opportunity Program (ROP), Research Excursion Program (REP) and the University of Toronto Excellence Awards, which provides competitively offered support for undergraduate students pursuing research experiences.</p>

			<p>lack the funds to compensate undergraduate research assistants.</p> <p>That said there are opportunities such as the Work-Study Program, Research Opportunity Program (ROP), and Research Excursion Program (REP) courses.</p> <p>1) Short-term</p> <p>i) We will encourage faculty to support undergraduate work on their research projects through the use of work-study opportunities (and encourage DTS students to apply for those opportunities) though it has just been announced that Work-Study funding will be constrained in the future.</p> <p>ii) As a unit, CDTS will apply to hire two Work-Study students to work as Research Assistants on faculty research projects specifically related to CDTS activities.</p> <p>iii) We will encourage faculty to participate in the Research Opportunity Program and Research Excursion Program; and explore the possibility of converting existing courses, where they are directly related to faculty research, to ROP courses.</p>	
<p>The reviewers observed that faculty hiring has, to date, resulted in some gaps in the Centre's range of disciplinary coverage and a lack of diversity among senior faculty; they recommended undertaking a strategic complement planning process to explore ways to address these areas.</p>	5	<p>"One important limitation in terms of research emphasis is the lack of concentration in Middle East/ North African Diaspora, Asia, and Indigenous Studies. We encourage the Centre to prioritize these in future hires."</p>	<p>The reviewers seem to have misunderstood our position in developing faculty complement as an EDU-B. While we have tried to expand our faculty complement, that has come through synergies with cognate units. Where those units identify a need to cover a disciplinary interest that aligns with an expertise relevant to DTS, we can work to create a joint position. But we are rarely, if ever, in the position of setting those departmental hiring priorities.</p>	<p>Immediate-medium- term: The ASDO encourages CDTS to continue exploring mutually beneficial partnerships within A&S. Gaps in disciplinary coverage can be met through course collaborations with cognate Units. Alternatively, should the program identify promising partnerships with cognate units for future hires, we encourage those units to develop a proposal to the Faculty Appointments Committee.</p>

			<p>Additionally, we are not an Area Studies department. In fact, DTS was originally structured to challenge the conventional area studies paradigm, still dominant in some U.S. institutions, that this recommendation seems to promote (both reviewers were from American institutions steeped in that tradition). Where students desire an area studies emphasis, they have access to courses in South Asian Studies, African Studies and other area studies programs as well as Indigenous Studies that count toward our program requirements.</p> <p>Rather than an area studies focus, our emphasis on hiring has been on faculty expertise in some dimension of diaspora or transnationalism – e.g., labour, religion, violence, transnational ideologies, etc. The areal focus has typically been secondary (unlike U.S. area studies paradigm, where the areal focus often takes precedence).</p> <p>That said, we are confused by this recommendation, given that we have this disciplinary coverage, with faculty working in the Middle East, North and West Africa, and South Asia</p> <p>While we do not have an Indigenous faculty member, faculty in the program currently integrate Indigenous content into their courses, which results in a broad coverage of indigenous content across our course offerings. As examples:</p> <p>DTS200Y1 - Introduction to Diaspora and Transnational Studies has a module on</p>	<p>All requests for new positions across the Faculty are submitted to the Faculty Appointments Committee (FAC), which includes representation across its sectors (Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences) and from the Colleges. All FAC requests must include discussion of EDI. The FAC reviews all requests for new positions and makes recommendations to the Dean regarding which requests should be granted. In any given year, there are many more requests than available positions.</p>
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			<p>Indigeneity and Diaspora.</p> <p>DTS300H1 - Quantitative and Qualitative Reasoning includes modules on Indigenous communities in Mexico, intellectual property rights and the impact of NAFTA; and the application of ‘western’ forms of knowledge in the land claims settlement process.</p> <p>DTS305H1 - Anthropology of Free Trade includes a module that explores the impact of free trade on indigenous communities in Latin America, particularly dispossession and reconfiguration of property regimes.</p> <p>DTS310H1 - Transnational Toronto has a module on Indigenous Toronto and transnational Indigenous relations.</p> <p>DTS316H1 - Filth: Transnational Perspectives on Dirt, Garbage, and Impurity includes modules on smudging/Indigenous healing; and colonial representations of filth in African indigenous contexts</p> <p>DTS401H1 - Diaspora and Liberation incorporates two modules: “Unsettling Canada”; and the indigenous history of the University of Toronto campus.</p> <p>DTS402H1 - Borders and Border Cities incorporates modules on cross-border indigenous communities and mobilities, and the inherent contradictions of law in settler states.</p> <p>DTS405H1 - Human Trafficking in/and Diaspora integrates material related to missing and murdered Indigenous women throughout the course.</p>	
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			<p>DTS410H1 - Diasporic Foodways integrates content on the reproduction of Indigenous foodways.</p> <p>That said, we would gladly partner in a search for a faculty member who specializes in transnational Indigeneity or urban indigenous diasporas.</p> <p>1) Short-term</p> <p>i) We will initiate discussions with cognate units (primarily the Centre for Indigenous Studies, Anthropology, Geography, Sociology, and Political Science) to identify possible partners in developing a proposal for a joint position in transnational Indigeneity or urban Indigenous diasporas.</p>	
	6	<p>“We also note the minimal representation of literary and cultural studies faculty and someone working on Indigenous issues, both of which would be important additions to the Centre faculty.”</p>	<p>Initially, CDTS had three primary faculty with cross-appointments in English, Geography, and Sociology. As the program grew, that list expanded to include faculty cross-appointed to Jewish Studies, the Centre for the Study of Religion, Anthropology, History and Political Science. As some faculty have left the University, we have not received commensurate replacement positions and, given our status as an EDU-B, have had little control over the development of subsequent hires.</p> <p>The current faculty roster includes cross-appointments with Geography; Anthropology; Centre for Criminology and Sociolegal Studies; Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources; Centre for the Study of Religion; Italian; Women and Gender Studies Institute. Those cross-</p>	<p>Immediate-medium term: The ASDO supports the program’s initiative to identify any additional fruitful partnerships with cognate units to augment the learning experience for students currently enjoy in the areas of literary and cultural studies, and exposure to Indigenous content and subject matter.</p>

		<p>appointments do not necessarily reflect faculty backgrounds or research interests.</p> <p>It is, for example, a misnomer to say we have minimal representation of cultural and literary studies faculty.</p> <p>As a collective, our faculty have graduate education in the fields of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anthropology• Divinity• Law• Sociology and Equity Studies• Religious Studies• Geography• Religion and Culture• Gender Studies• History• Comparative Literature <p>As an interdisciplinary program in an interdisciplinary field, we feel this represents a diverse, and range of faculty scholarly and research expertise. This is reflected in the strength of student feedback on our courses. In a recent review of student course evaluations, CDTS was ranked fourth highest in the Faculty of Arts and Science.</p> <p>That said we are not averse to securing additional faculty complement and building on our strengths. Accordingly, we will contact English and Comparative literature to explore interest in developing joint positions in Literary and/or Cultural Studies.</p> <p>1) Short-term</p>	
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			i) We will contact English and Comparative literature to explore interest in developing joint positions for faculty specializing in Diasporic/Transnational literatures and/or who work at the intersection of Cultural Studies and Diaspora and Transnational Studies.	
	7	“The program should also address the lack of diversity among its tenured faculty.”	<p>Notably, the reviewers don’t address what dimension of diversity to which they refer - racial, ethnic, social, linguistic, economic?</p> <p>Currently tenured CDTS faculty represent racial diversity, religious diversity, sexual diversity, first-generation university students, and first-generation immigrants.</p> <p>So far as we are aware the reviewers did not conduct a diversity assessment, so we presume they are referring to racial diversity.</p> <p>1) Short-term</p> <p>i) Where we are able to identify possible joint hires with cognate units (Recommendations 5 & 6) we will simultaneously explore the potential of doing this at a senior level or as an opportunity hire to build on the current diversity of tenured faculty.</p>	Immediate-long term: The ASDO new mentorship program overseen by the Vice-Dean Faculty & Academic Life is working on faculty inclusion and retention, in coordination with ASDO Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. They, in coordination with the Director of Academic HR, will be reaching out to unit leadership in 2025-26 to discuss unit-level demographic data and approaches for diversifying their faculty complements.
	8	“The faculty should have a retreat or strategic planning meeting and address various “holes” in its faculty research areas including the minimal number of literary, cultural studies and other non-social scientists such as philosophers among its faculty and the absence of Asia and indigenous studies in the curriculum.”	See Recommendation 12	Immediate-long term: The ASDO is pleased to offer financial support should the program wish to engage in a faculty retreat to explore its curricular offerings and can also refer the program to resources within the A&S Dean’s office in the areas of teaching and learning.
The reviewers observed that faculty members with their home appointments outside of DTS “can sometimes feel	9	“...faculty can sometimes feel overburdened trying to meet the expectations of their home departments as well as DTS. The leadership	We agree with this recommendation. An ongoing issue with cross-appointed faculty is the additional burden of multiple meetings	Immediate-long term: The ASDO is available to support the program’s plan in this area, and the Vice-Dean, Faculty & Academic Life,

overburdened trying to meet the expectations of their home departments as well as DTS.” They recommended exploring additional supports, particularly for pre-tenure faculty, to help with navigating these demands on their time, including improved communication and “a clearer articulation of the Centre’s expectations regarding involvement in Centre activities.”		of DTS is aware of these challenges, but more could be done to support faculty, particularly pre-tenure faculty, in navigating these dual (and sometimes competing) demands on their time. One key component of this would be improving communication within the group as well as a clearer articulation of the Centre’s expectations regarding involvement in Centre activities.”	and events in which their participation is expected. This feeling of being ‘overburdened’ can be even more significant when the faculty member is appointed to three divisions and their cross-appointment is between St. George and UTSC/UTM. Notably this contradicts Recommendation 13 which suggests holding more faculty meetings among CDTS faculty. 1) Short-term i) We will remind pre-faculty of the Workload Policy agreement between UTFA and the Administration which articulates a faculty member’s right under the policy to have annual meetings with their respective Chairs and Directors to discuss responsibilities and commitments to their respective units. This should enhance the clarity of expectations and highlight the issue with cross-appointed faculty, given that the Director of CDTS will always be a cross-appointed faculty who shares the experience of split responsibilities.	can support the program director with these concerns as well as advise about support and mentoring that is available to pre-tenure faculty. The new Faculty of Arts & Science mentorship initiatives support the flourishing of faculty in their early academic careers, encourage faculty to develop personally meaningful mentorship networks, enhance new colleagues’ understanding of institutional policies, procedures, and unit-level practices, promote engagement, and foster a sense of community and belonging. The new mentorship document is available to all faculty and in the spring of 2025 will also include a list of crucial resources. The New Faculty Program (a two-year program for all new faculty) will consider including a session on cross-appointments and navigating multiple obligations in its programming.
The reviewers observed that “the Centre does not currently have the human resources necessary for the smooth running of its program” and recommended exploring ways to address workload issues affecting both the Centre’s leadership and administrative staff.	10	“Despite a historically positive financial structure, the Centre does not currently have the human resources necessary for the smooth running of its programs.... We recommend hiring an additional full-time staff person to assist the Associate Director and take over much of the day-to-day administrative duties of the Centre, freeing the current administrative staff to do their jobs and have more bandwidth for creativity and innovation.”	1) Short-term i) We will develop and submit a request for a new staff person to assist the Associate Director. ii) We will combine this recommendation with Recommendation 3 and attempt to identify candidates with outreach development and management experience and dedicate 50% of the position to managing the logistics of a Community-engaged/Experiential learning program.	Immediate term: The Dean’s office will facilitate the program director meeting with the Director of Administrative HR to explore the feasibility of this potential new role and develop the specifications for a new role.
The reviewers observed that space and infrastructure constraints are an obstacle for the Centre’s future growth; they	11	“DTS cannot grow in its current spatial and infrastructural configuration...	Some faculty who are cross-appointed have shared offices in their disciplinary homes and use DTS space as their primary office.	Immediate term: The ASDO is pleased that space issues observed at the time of the site visit have been resolved, as noted in the

<p>recommended exploring ways to distribute existing office space more effectively to serve the Centre’s needs including staff workspace and student gathering space.</p>		<p>Faculty who have more than one office should share space in the Centre so the remaining space can be used for the current Communications and Program Officer and student lounge space.”</p>	<p>The job description for the Communications and Program Officer lists the position as a primary point of contact. This is why they are situated in the reception area of the Centre. Prior to having this position guests to the Centre were consistently confused by the lack of a central welcome space. Similar to the structure of other units in JHB, our Communications and Program Officer is public-facing and we anticipate will remain in the present space.</p> <p>Currently, we do not have a shortage of office space for Faculty. In 2025, we will reclaim office space which will allow us to provide office space in the Centre for appointed faculty who do not currently have CDTS office space in which to work and meet with students.</p> <p>Regarding student common space, we have developed an implementation plan as follows:</p> <p>1) Short Term</p> <p>i) We have solicited a design to reconfigure JHB235. This design converts the room from a conventional boardroom, with static furnishings, to a multi-functional space with modular furnishings that can be reconfigured for different uses.</p> <p>The primary use of the room will be as a student common space, but it will also be available for booking for faculty meetings, small research workshops, small seminars, etc.</p>	<p>unit’s response. The Vice-Dean Research & Infrastructure is also available to discuss the additional space requirements for the program’s students as outlined by in the unit’s response.</p>
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The reviewers recommended holding a faculty retreat or strategic planning exercise to discuss objectives such as faculty complement planning for disciplinary coverage and diversity, and defining and consolidating a clear identity for the Centre.	12	<p>“We believe that DTS has the potential for being recognized as one of the best in Canada/North America due to the stellar academic record of its faculty and can solidify its reputation by... revisiting and redefining its identity and mission...</p> <p>Hold a faculty retreat with the following objectives: a. Define and consolidate a clear identity for the Centre”</p>	<p>1) Short-Term</p> <p>i) We intend to convene a faculty retreat during the 2025-26 academic year. Four faculty members are currently on leave, but we expect to have a full complement present in 2025-26.</p> <p>ii) Schedule and book a location for a full-day faculty retreat that allows time and space for diverse forms of social engagement and reflection among faculty. We anticipate booking space at the Evergreen Brickwork’s Centre for Green Cities</p> <p>ii) Survey the faculty on the need for and, if desired, identify a qualified facilitator to lead</p>	Please see above, #8.

			<p>retreat discussions.</p> <p>iii) Develop an agenda for the faculty retreat that initially includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define a clear identity for the Centre • Address tension and conflict in a referred to by the reviewers and seek reconciliation processes defined by faculty members. • Identify strengths, weaknesses of CDTs; identify opportunities to improve CDTs profile and activities; identify potential obstacles to the continued success of CDTs and how to best address them. • Discuss thematic gaps in the faculty complement and identify hiring priorities • Develop the frame for a strategic 5-year plan based on the above analysis and map out curriculum review/planning/revision; faculty complement and potential joint hiring opportunities; and outreach opportunities to enhance the profile and awareness of CDTs locally and internationally. 	
<p>The reviewers expressed urgent concern over tension and conflict that has arisen between the Centre’s faculty members related to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East; they noted as well that the opposing groups are “generationally distinct,” which has resulted in more junior members feeling “especially vulnerable to senior scholars who are on the other side of the disagreement.” They made several recommendations to help the Centre begin to repair these relationships, including: holding a faculty retreat with a facilitator</p>	13	<p>“It is essential that the Centre repair this division among the faculty as soon as possible. Leaving the situation as it is risks the future of the Centre. There are a number of pathways for accomplishing this, and we offer the following recommendations as a starting point: 1. A faculty retreat with a trained facilitator who can lead trauma-informed discussions. It is critical that the facilitator be trained in trauma-informed work. 2. Hold regular faculty meetings, at least monthly 3. Create an internal</p>	<p>This is a complex issue, not easily addressed in some of the ways suggested by the reviewers.</p> <p>Faculty meetings are not an effective social forum for addressing deep-seated differences. Increasing the number of faculty meetings also contradicts the reviewers’ Recommendation 9 (faculty feel over-burdened by multiple commitments). Some have commitments to three units which effectively triples the time spent in unit-</p>	<p>Immediate-medium term: The ASDO notes the urgent concern expressed by the reviewers regarding division among the faculty.</p> <p>Academic HR and team can support the unit in discussions about internal division and faculty morale. The ASDO Vice-Dean Faculty & Academic Life is also available to support the program’s initiatives here. Together with the Faculty Development and the unit's teams, she can support the design and</p>

trained in trauma-informed work, holding regular faculty meetings, and providing more opportunities for faculty to interact socially and collaboratively.		<p>colloquium option so people can learn about each other’s work 4. Provide increased opportunities for social interaction among the faculty 5. Have faculty from either side of the split collaborate on joint projects in which they can both be invested.”</p>	<p>meetings if they were to attend them all.</p> <p>Similarly, mandating that faculty engage in joint projects seems counter-productive and potentially a breach of academic freedom. It is one thing to encourage joint projects among faculty, but it is another entirely to “have faculty” do this.</p> <p>Conversely, there are settings in which productive relations among faculty can be stimulated. And we will implement a plan to do so, including:</p> <p>1) Short-term:</p> <p>i) We have re-initiated our Methods Café series in which faculty speak to the origins and methodological focus of their research projects. The series was first developed, in part, to provide faculty in CDTS to learn more about each other’s research programs and the motivation for that work.</p> <p>ii) Incorporate graduate students into the Methods Café as speakers. We can’t make attendance mandatory for faculty and given competing demands on faculty time, attendance is not guaranteed, but we feel that focusing on graduate student research might encourage faculty attendance.</p> <p>iii) Encourage the development of a culture of attendance and participation in CDTS events. We feel that creating a culture of graduate student attendance and participation in CDTS will prompt faculty to attend.</p> <p>iv) In pursuit of that ‘culture’, we will plan to</p>	<p>implementation of the restorative measures to repair the community's relationships.</p> <p>The ASDO also supports the unit’s plans and initiatives to foster internal cohesion and mutually beneficial intellectual projects, social events, and greater intersection with graduate work.</p>
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			<p>hold a social gathering after each of our Speakers Series events combining graduate students and faculty. Attendance may vary based on family commitments but as these events are typically monthly, we will broadcast a schedule far in advance allowing people to plan to attend the social event.</p> <p>v) We will convene a faculty lunch once per semester with no agenda other than to dine together in a pleasant setting. We suspect that ‘breaking bread’ together may well be a more effective means of creating conviviality than a faculty meeting.</p> <p>2) Medium-term</p> <p>i) after 4 years, we will plan to assess the effectiveness of our efforts at developing a culture of participation at CDTS. While developing an organizational culture takes effort, it also takes time to come to fruition. Four years is a good period to assess the effectiveness of our efforts.</p>	
Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response	14	“Develop new and more effective advertisement strategies for prospective majors and minors.”	<p>While this is not prioritized in the request for a response, faculty view recruitment as important under the new budget model.</p> <p>1) Short-term</p> <p>i) We will devote our last faculty meeting of the current semester to questions of recruitment and how best to ensure we thrive under the new budget model in which the primary source of DTS revenue will be student course enrolments.</p>	<p>Immediate term: The Dean’s office will connect the Director and College to the Office of the Faculty Registrar to facilitate the unit’s participation in the many events it offers to communicate program choice information to students, such as the following:</p> <p>Through the Sidney Smith Commons, the Faculty of Arts & Science offers a series of in-person and online events, workshops and resources through Program Exploration Days to support students as they prepare to make their program selection. The Program Exploration Fair offers two full days for students to explore over 300 programs</p>

				<p>available to Arts & Science students and learn about experiential learning including research, internships and international opportunities.</p> <p>The weekly AMA (Ask Me Anything) event in February features upper year students talking about their experiences and offering tips for navigating program selection and learning about program options and experiential learning opportunities. Program Planning Days also offer students insight into how to choose a program of study and understand program requirements.</p> <p>Program student unions also participate in “Clubs Fair” held at the beginning of each academic year.</p> <p>U of T participates in the Universities Fair each year, and the College is encouraged to participate directly in that event.</p> <p>The Dean’s office also suggests the Director explore the most common program pairings with DTS, and initiate discussions with those units to amplify the visibility of DTS programs.</p>
	15	<p>“Students benefit from the robust relations that the program maintains with its alumni. Alumni events include career panels and alumni lectures. Alumni relations can be further solidified with the creation of a database to secure institutional memory.”</p>	<p>We agree that alumni-student interaction is extremely important. While we participate in the FAS Alumni Office’s regular events (e.g., Backpack to Briefcase), our students regularly ask for greater contact with our alumni and each year we strive to organize an alumni panel.</p> <p>Unfortunately, we have had difficulty acquiring up-to-date lists of our alumni from the FAS Alumni Office and have been instructed to notify them in case we contact</p>	<p>Immediate-long term: The Faculty of Arts & Science encourages units to develop strong alumni relationships. Alumni Relations can work with units to support and advise on strategic engagement with their alumni, in collaboration with the alumni relations team. Due to privacy legislation, access to University of Toronto alumni data is regulated; it is not accessible to non-advancement staff. Advancement is legally responsible for alumni contact information.</p>

			<p>our alumni so that the relevant information can be entered in their database.</p> <p>1) Short-term</p> <p>i) We will reach out to the FAS Alumni Office to investigate more effective ways of developing within CDTS a more secure institutional memory of alumni achievements.</p>	
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3 Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

The spokesperson for the reading group reported that the review summary had accurately reflected the full review, and that the administrative response fully addressed the issues identified and included a comprehensive, forward-looking plan. The group had no additional questions or comments.

No follow-up report was requested.

4 Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers praised the Diaspora & Transnational Studies program as “a unique and exceptionally valuable program, especially in today’s world,” noting that it is one of the longest running programs of its kind. They commended the program’s broad conception of its mission, which includes “providing students with diverse disciplinary approaches and exposing them to different research approaches, geographies, theories and historical eras to engage questions of diaspora and transnationalism outside of Eurocentric worldviews.” They applauded faculty members as “highly accomplished and intellectually diverse,” representing a range of disciplines and employing a “highly intellectual approach to teaching.” They highlighted the unique structure of the Centre for Diaspora & Transnational Studies, which operates as both an academic unit and a research centre—successfully offering an in-demand program and providing a space for faculty research exchange in the form of colloquia and seminars. Finally, they praised the Centre as “a good university citizen,” offering numerous talks and events open to the wider university community and fostering strong relationships with units and scholars at the University of Toronto and beyond.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: exploring whether a wider range of courses could provide students with adequate preparation in quantitative and qualitative reasoning, considering the development of a capstone course, and developing experiential learning opportunities for students; undertaking a strategic complement planning process to explore ways to address gaps in the Centre’s range of disciplinary coverage and a lack of diversity among senior faculty; exploring supports for pre-tenure faculty members with their home appointments outside of DTS, including improved communication and a clearer articulation of the Centre’s expectations regarding their involvement in Centre activities; exploring ways to address workload issues affecting both the Centre’s leadership and administrative staff; exploring ways to distribute existing office space more effectively to serve the Centre’s needs including staff workspace and student gathering space; holding a faculty retreat or strategic planning exercise to discuss objectives such as faculty complement planning for disciplinary coverage and diversity, and defining and consolidating a clear identity for the Centre; exploring ways to address urgent concerns over tension and conflict between the Centre’s faculty members related to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, including: holding a faculty retreat with a facilitator trained in trauma-informed work, holding regular faculty meetings, and providing more opportunities for faculty to interact socially and collaboratively.

The Dean's Administrative Response describes the unit's responses to the reviewers' recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5 Monitoring and Date of Next Review

The Arts & Science Dean's office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with chairs and directors and through regular governance and curricular oversight.

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than midway between the March 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2031-32 to report on the status of the implementation plans.

The next review will be commissioned no later than the **2031-32** review cycle.

6 Distribution

On August 15th 2025, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to unit/program leadership.