

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan

1 Review Summary

Program(s) Reviewed:	Hons. BA, East Asian Studies, Specialist, Major, Minor East Asian Studies: MA, PhD
Unit Reviewed:	Department of East Asian Studies
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hu Ying, Professor, East Asian Studies, School of Humanities, University of California, Irvine • Tina Lu, Colonel John Trumbull Professor of East Asian Languages and Literatures, Head of Pauli Murray College, Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, Yale University • Christine Marran, Professor of Japanese Literature and Cultural Studies, Department of Asian & Middle Eastern Studies, University of Minnesota
Date of Review Visit:	February 26-27, 2024
Review Report Received by VPAP:	May 29, 2024
Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:	March 6, 2025
Date Reported to AP&P:	April 10, 2025

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: January 25-26, 2016

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- Programs reflect the emerging state of the field of Asian Studies, which positions East Asia in regional and global contexts
- Innovative undergraduate curriculum that accommodates an enormous number of students
- High enrolments with the potential to grow based on demand
- Potential to become a leading program in preparing students for careers

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Rethinking language instruction, which is currently offered in lecture courses and tutorials—out of step with current innovations
- Expanding language requirements and offering more advanced language and text-based courses in East Asian languages
- Enhancing the undergraduate program, including adding an undergraduate thesis option, changing assessment methods, and tracking career outcomes
- Revamping graduate funding and TA-ships
- Addressing the high attrition rate for Ph.D. students
- Reconsidering academic staffing resources to better support programs and courses offered (including Chinese history and Japanese literature), provide advising for students, and create more opportunities for faculty to advance their careers
- Increasing advancement activity at the department and division levels to support the department's mission and programs
- Collaborating more with cognate units to support programs and expanding the scope of its mission

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; Chair; Faculty; Administrative staff;

undergraduate students; graduate students' Chairs and Directors of cognate units [Cinema Studies Institute, Centre for Comparative Literature, Department of Philosophy, Dr. David Chu Program in Contemporary Asian Studies, Women & Gender Studies Institute]

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
 - ▶ Undergraduate program objectives align well with divisional and institutional degree objectives, learning outcomes and core competencies
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Student enrolment is noted as high
 - ▶ EAS programs have open enrolment with no specific admission requirements
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Curricular offerings are excellent and innovative, combining media, ecopolitical, literary and culture courses with language training opportunities
 - ▶ Core curriculum introduces undergraduates to East Asia as a major center of thought, culture and politics
 - ▶ The recent decision to switch some core courses from asynchronous to in-person instruction appears to be responsive to student needs
 - ▶ Unit offers impressive range of society and culture courses at the 200, 300 and 400 levels, giving students an opportunity to explore multi- and interdisciplinary research
- Innovation
 - ▶ Progress has been made in incorporating learning technology into language instruction classrooms, in response to previous review recommendations
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Department plays a crucial role in accomplishing the University's mission to internationalize undergraduate education
 - ▶ The department enrolls the largest proportion of international students of any humanities unit at U of T
 - ▶ Reviewers highly commend the unit's support of its large international student body with a writing program specifically developed for non-native English speakers
- Assessment of learning
 - ▶ Evaluation methods appear standard and appropriate
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ High school GPAs of EAS students have been rising in recent years, and students' GPAs at graduation also appear to be increasing

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ “...currently the department’s curriculum is profoundly constrained by the number of TAs it has, which in turn has everything to do with graduate recruitment”
 - ▶ Some “bottlenecking” noted in a popular series of core courses, due to its strict sequencing
 - ▶ Language requirements for majors and minors appear out of step with comparable North American programs, and may not fulfil certain program learning objectives
 - ▶ The number of non-EAS students and those with undeclared majors enrolled in EAS courses has risen sharply in recent years, with more than 200 students routinely on waitlists for Korean and Japanese language courses
 - ▶ Faculty are working at maximum capacity, which is exacerbated by limited TA support; reviewers note concern that without “an infusion of faculty and graduate resources, and with the new budget model’s higher percentage of funding directly tied to the number of undergraduates taught, we fear that pressures to take on higher enrolments will result in unsustainably larger classes”
- Innovation
 - ▶ Academic coordinators voiced frustration regarding difficulties using the ACORN system to place students in the correct level of language study

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Reviewers supportive of departmental plans to enhance the flexibility of the core course series and make it more accessible for students to enter the major mid-stream
 - ▶ Students and faculty note that course scheduling might benefit from better coordination
 - ▶ Students voiced interest in a capstone course (though reviewers note that such an offering would be contingent on sufficient faculty resources)
 - ▶ Reviewers note, regarding language requirements in the majors, that “[given] the difficulty of mastering Chinese, Japanese and Korean, students of East Asian languages typically require 1-2 years of additional study to reach levels comparable to students of European languages”
 - ▶ Reviewers note that co-teaching appears to be common practice in other departments, and encourage EAS to consider the potential benefits of adopting such an approach
- Innovation
 - ▶ Explore enhancements to the language placement system, and the use of more advanced technologies at all levels of the process (reviewers highlight that the Korean program in particular has piloted innovative placement techniques)
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ Reviewers note that it would be useful to have more reliable data on graduates’ career outcomes

2. Graduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Graduate program remarkably successful, especially in placing graduates in high-ranking jobs worldwide
 - ▶ EAS graduate programs at both the MA and PhD level are thriving
 - ▶ Applications have increased in recent years due to the calibre of the program and faculty
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Admission requirements are comparable to R1 North American universities
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Curricular offerings are excellent and innovative
 - ▶ Program requirements are comparable to R1 North American universities
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Graduate students note great enthusiasm for their faculty mentors and scholarship
 - ▶ Students appear enthusiastic about their work and satisfied with the instruction and career training available to them
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ Time to completion is within the normal range for both the MA and PhD
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ 50% of PhD recipients achieved tenure track positions in the past ten years, which reviewers note is excellent

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Few courses appear to be designed for MA students who are not headed toward a PhD program
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ “Extensive conversations with graduate students indicate that graduate funding is drastically inadequate”
 - ▶ “We were especially disheartened to hear multiple stories of students experiencing food insecurity even during their funded years”
 - ▶ Heavy teaching load for graduate students noted as an area of concern, which likely impedes progress in their own studies
- Student funding
 - ▶ “[We] emphasize that we have never seen such a poorly funded, top-ranked graduate program anywhere in North America.”
 - ▶ Graduate recruitment noted as challenging, “because funding packages are inadequate”
 - ▶ Graduate program noted as particularly vulnerable to surges in Toronto rental prices

- ▶ Only approximately 25% of graduate students receive external funding (though this may be related to international students' lack of eligibility for major funding sources)
- ▶ Reviewers highlight issues and inefficiencies related to how graduate students must repeatedly apply for relatively small amounts of funding; "[we] cannot understand this as an efficient means to support graduate students; instead, the current structure can only distract from academic work and creates a prolonged unhealthy atmosphere of anxiety, which must have a negative impact on student success and time to graduation."

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Students voiced a desire to spend more time together as a cohort with faculty; reviewers suggest exploring the possibility of developing a colloquium or seminar series
- Student funding
 - ▶ Graduate program in particular would benefit from better funding
 - ▶ Reviewers suggest that even with the new FAS budgetary model, leadership may need to invest in the graduate program "by supplementing graduate stipends and providing the Department with a larger graduate program budget"

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ EAS faculty are stellar, and widely recognized for their research excellence both nationally and internationally
 - ▶ Faculty are committed to cutting-edge research and place high priority on innovative teaching
 - ▶ Recent hires in transnational and media studies, as well as an internationally renowned faculty at all levels make the department an excellent destination for prospective graduate students
- Research
 - ▶ EAS participation rates in SSHRC competitions have increased in recent years
- Faculty
 - ▶ The unit has done an excellent recent job of recruiting early career faculty
 - ▶ New faculty report informal but effective mentorship, and some noted benefits from the NCFDD Faculty Development Bootcamp
 - ▶ Reviewers supportive of the recent development of a departmental promotion committee

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

- Faculty
 - ▶ No faculty member has been promoted from associate to full professor in the past decade, which reviewers note is “particularly jarring”, given their impressive record of publications and awards. “Although we are told that there is hardly any institutional incentive to this level of promotion, this seems a poor excuse given the international academic norm.”
 - ▶ A significant lack of scholars working on premodern Japan and Korea weakens the department’s transnational emphasis (and reviewers note that waitlists are currently longest for courses on medieval and early modern China and Japan)
 - ▶ Reviewers assert that “the current [faculty] workload distribution is ultimately unsustainable”
 - ▶ Faculty size appears disproportionately small for the department’s wide array of courses
 - ▶ Language faculty recruitment has presented some challenges, which leads to unmet student need in language instruction

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
 - ▶ Reviewers highlight some room to increase participation in national funding competitions, noting that these represent a potential avenue for graduate funding, and could increase departmental visibility
- Faculty
 - ▶ Some faculty note interest in developing unit strengths in Southeast Asian studies, “a direction that is intellectually well justified”
 - ▶ Engage in consultation and strategic planning to determine appropriate approaches for providing greater support for language instruction

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
 - ▶ Undergraduate and graduate students observed to be enthusiastic members of a learning community
 - ▶ A “climate of friendly collegiality” is noted among faculty
 - ▶ Departmental leadership is committed and capable

- ▶ Staff appear excellent at addressing departmental needs and important to the long-term health of the unit; staff also involve themselves in new initiatives and technologies
- ▶ Department has excellent ties with cognate units, including the Cinema Studies Institute and the Centre for Comparative Literature
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ A new social media staff person would be important for enhancing the department's visibility on campus
 - ▶ The structure of having Associate Chairs in undergraduate and graduate education appears sound
 - ▶ Reviewers impressed with the unit's financial resilience, "even with its lack of endowed funds"
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Reviewers' overall impression of the department "is one of excellence, both in research and teaching"
 - ▶ Unit is one of the largest humanities departments at U of T, and the largest of its kind in Canada
 - ▶ "We observed a thriving department, with a collegial and productive faculty and engaged students at every level and a highly capable staff"
 - ▶ Reviewers observe that East Asian studies in university-level research and teaching is central in connecting contemporary goals of equity, diversity and inclusion; "U of T's student population clearly seeks the international education that EAS provides and considers it an essential part of training to be a global citizen"
 - ▶ Consistently strong demand for EAS classes demonstrates broad recognition of the importance of its humanities-based approach, particularly in a time when East Asia is a centre of global politics, culture and economy
- International comparators
 - ▶ Reviewers note an "unparalleled" level of undergraduate demand and interest at U of T
 - ▶ "The Department's intellectual vision has clearly resulted in excellent faculty hires and retention"

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

- Relationships
 - ▶ Reports noted from several departmental constituencies that the unit does not feel its efforts are appropriately recognized by central administration, and that it feels insufficiently integrated into the broader University
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Reviewers note concerns that the new FAS budget model will make the department's current decision making processes "almost untenable for the Chair", a role that currently has a very high administrative load
 - ▶ Reviewers note concerns about significant apparent discrepancies across groups in understandings of graduate funding (in particular students' take-home pay) in discussions with institutional and divisional leadership and students

- ▶ Reviewers were “disappointed to learn that the Department did not keep meticulous records of [graduate] student income”
- International comparators
 - ▶ Demand for undergraduate offerings presents challenges for appropriate resource allocation

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Opportunities noted to further strengthen the visibility of East Asian studies across the University by enhancing collaborations with additional programs and units, such as Contemporary Asian Studies (Munk), and the Department of History
 - ▶ Noting that the Chair appears to be solely responsible for carrying institutional understanding and memory for the department, the reviewers stress the importance of shared governance and citizenship, and of institutionalizing collective decision-making
 - ▶ Reviewers note the importance of equipping EAS faculty to manage continuity when a chair departs or takes a leave; and stress that decisions around curriculum, scheduling, programing, and other departmental business should be made jointly
 - ▶ The department, with support from the Dean’s office, should prioritize scheduling an annual retreat for faculty to allow for open discussion about issues such as priorities, complement planning, graduate funding and budget; these discussions would ideally be reflected in a long-term departmental plan
 - ▶ Reviewers stress the importance of service on committees for all faculty at all levels, noting that such service can improve departmental culture, and have positive impacts on both faculty career development and leadership succession planning
 - ▶ EAS is urged to collectively and collaboratively consider whether it would like to prioritize investing its available resources into enhancing its institutional visibility
 - ▶ “We also learned that some undergraduate programming and academics takes place within the colleges. We recognize that full participation in those might mean some dilution of efforts within EAS, but we also feel that discussion of what should be invested toward greater visibility is long overdue.”
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Greater financial support of the department’s excellent graduate programs “should be a decanal priority”
 - ▶ Decanal leadership urged to name unit leadership successors as early as possible for training and onboarding purposes
 - ▶ Reviewers suggest considering the establishment of several departmental committees, to create leadership pipelines and to emphasize that all faculty members are citizens of the department; such committees might cover topics such as executive decision-making, timetabling, curriculum, graduate affairs, placement tests, and faculty promotions
 - ▶ Reviewers recommend that the Department keep detailed records of student income that can be shared with decanal leadership to ensure clarity and mutual understanding

- ▶ Reviewers recommend that the department undertake discussions on how to maximize clarity, equity and planning related to graduate student funding
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ “Given the high quality of the Department’s research, the caliber of its graduate and undergraduate programs, and the tremendous number of students it serves, this Department needs more resources to do this excellent work”
 - ▶ Increased graduate funding should be a top priority for the unit, both for the health of its graduate program, and for alleviating departmental enrolment pressures
 - ▶ “By supporting graduate students, the Department will be able to strengthen every part of its educational mission”



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

March 6, 2025

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

RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Department of East Asian Studies

Dear Professor Rule,

I write in response to your letter of November 7, 2024, regarding the February 26-27, 2024 UTQAP cycle review of the Department of East Asian Studies and its programs and requesting our Administrative response. The programs reviewed were: Honours BA, East Asian Studies (Specialist, Major, Minor); Master of Arts in East Asian Studies; PhD in East Asian Studies.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers: Professor Hu Ying of the University of California, Irvine, Professor Tina Lu of Yale University, and Christine Marran of the University of Minnesota, for their thoughtful and comprehensive review of the Department. We would also like to thank the Department's leadership, faculty, administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of the self-study, as well as thank the faculty, staff, and students who met with the external reviewers and provided 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 22, 2024, and was shared with faculty and staff in the department. We are extremely pleased with the reviewer's positive assessment of the overall strength of the Department of East Asian Studies and its outstanding faculty teaching and research. The reviewers noted that programs attracted high calibre undergraduate and graduate students, offering excellent and wide-ranging courses that enjoy high enrolment and benefit from the faculty's keen dedication to cutting-edge research and innovative teaching in the discipline. The review further praised the Department for the environment within the department, noting the enthusiasm and collegiality that faculty, staff, and students all expressed. The reviewers did make a series of recommendations that would further strengthen the department and its programs. These recommendations primarily concerned the undergraduate course scheduling and undergraduate language courses but also included recommendations to look into more ways to fund graduate research as well as to better support faculty promotions and to better leverage the department's space within the University and promote visibility of the department across the broader institution.

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

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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 Acting Chair and with the 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 Department of East Asian Studies 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 and through the unit's five-year unit-level academic planning process, which will begin at the conclusion of the cyclical review. 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 Department of East Asian Studies and its programs.

Sincerely,



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

cc.

Linda Feng, Acting Chair, Department of East Asian 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

Gianna Leggio, Academic Planning & Review Officer, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts
and Science

2023-24 UTQAP Review of the FAS Department of East Asian 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 highlighted the impressive range of inter- and multi-disciplinary courses available to undergraduate students, and voiced support for the unit’s plans to introduce greater flexibility into the undergraduate curriculum. They broadly observed that the scheduling of courses could benefit from enhanced coordination to ensure greater student access and noted student interest in a capstone course (though emphasized that such an offering would be contingent on the availability of sufficient faculty resources).	1	“The Department offers an impressive range of EAS society-culture courses at the 200, 300 and 400-levels, which gives students opportunities to explore multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research. Our conversations with faculty and students indicate that the scheduling of these courses could use better coordination, so that more students may access this rich array of classes.”	The onboarding of a new Undergrad/Grad Administrator in February 2025 will give us a new opportunity to implement better coordination between the Office of Faculty Registrar and our unit, and to streamline the process of scheduling our class offerings. We have also increased faculty consultation in course planning with a standing Undergraduate Committee to coordinate course planning and curriculum development.	Immediate to medium term. The Dean’s Office applauds the unit’s response to the recommendation and supports their plan to continue to review their course planning via consultation with a faculty committee and work with offered divisional supports in the Office of the Faculty Registrar.
	2	“Students also voiced interest in a capstone course (common in many of the best programs on R1 campuses), but that will be clearly contingent on additional faculty resources.”	The department has discussed this recommendation in the past, when it was raised by previous external reviewers. Given our high number of POSTs and small number of faculty, we concluded that it would be difficult to act upon without additional faculty resources. Currently, interested students take Independent Studies with individual faculty, for which we are unable to offer teaching credit.	Medium to long term. Recognizing resourcing limits, the department’s response is sufficient, but The Dean’s Office encourages the department to look into ways to acknowledge faculty who do take on undergraduate independent studies students via PTR if not via workload reduction. The department is also encouraged to reach out to A&S Teaching &

				Learning for consultation to discuss the curriculum/capstone courses.
The reviewers observed that language requirements in the undergraduate Majors and Minors do not appear aligned with those of comparable North American programs and may not fulfil certain program learning outcomes. Highlighting the difficulty for many learners of mastering Chinese, Japanese and Korean, they encouraged the unit to examine relevant requirements at peer institutions, and consider adjustments as appropriate.	3	“We note that language requirements for Majors (2 years) and Minors (none) are out of step with comparable programs in North America, and may not fulfill PLO 7 and PLO 10. While an attenuated minor has the advantage of introducing students to the study of Asia with a low threshold, majors with only two years of language study cannot be said to have acquired communicative competency, nor to be well prepared for more advanced study. Given the difficulty of mastering Chinese, Japanese and Korean, students of East Asian languages typically require 1-2 years of additional study to reach levels comparable to students of European languages.”	The language requirement for our Specialist program is third-year proficiency, which is in line with US major programs. Students also commonly participate in Study Abroad, which increases their language proficiency. We are committed to retaining a Minor program without language requirements. We will investigate further the potential impact of increasing the requirement for the Major program on our already over-stretched language programs.	Medium to long term. The Office of the Dean supports the unit’s response as appropriate given our division’s expectations for different levels of Subject POSTs and support their commitment to look into ways to increase the language acquisition of students in their Major programs. A&S Teaching & Learning is available for curriculum consultations and development.
The reviewers repeatedly noted significant concerns regarding available funding for graduate students, and stressed the critical importance of exploring a range of approaches to ensure that this group is adequately supported. They also observed significant discrepancies in the understanding of graduate funding across divisional and departmental constituencies, and urged the unit to explore approaches to maximize clarity, equity and planning in this area, in order to increase transparency and stability for students (in developing your response, you are encouraged to consult with the School of Graduate Studies).	4	“We suspect that the graduate program’s success is particularly vulnerable to the surge in rental prices in Toronto, and that even with the new budgetary model in place the Deans will need to invest in this program by supplementing graduate stipends and providing the Department with a larger graduate program budget.”	We agree wholeheartedly with this recommendation. Within our current departmental budget, we have maximized stipends through top-up awards and extra TA hours (this year our lowest package was \$35,000). We do not yet understand how the new budget will impact these efforts, but we will not be able to reach the new \$40,000 package without additional support from the Dean’s office, particularly because we will not be able to include the TA hours we are currently offering in the package.	<p>Immediate term. The University of Toronto has committed to raising the minimum funding package per graduate student in the funded cohort to \$40,000 per year, a move that Arts & Science applauds. All graduate funding packages in A&S will meet the University’s commitment to offer each graduate student in the funded cohort a minimum of \$40,000 annually starting in 2025-2026.</p> <p>The Dean’s Office is meeting with every unit within Arts & Science in early Winter 2025 to review the specifics of their unit’s budget in the New Budget Model, which will</p>

				go into effect in May 2025.
	5	“We recommend that the Department keep detailed on-going records of student income that can be shared with the Dean. Those records should be broken down so that they can be compared easily with the Dean’s records and should distinguish between tuition dollars and income dollars per student.”	We do already have these records in our graduate funding letter archive and our graduate funding plans, which record income from the University. We clearly distinguish between tuition and stipend (our reviewers struggled to understand the Canadian custom of including tuition within the package).	Immediate term. The Dean’s Office applauds the department’s record keeping.
	6	“We also recommend that the Department begin discussions about how to maximize clarity, equity and planning (so that students can have some stability) when it comes to graduate student funding.”	We have recognized this as an ongoing issue over the past decade, when it first became clear that many students do not fully comprehend their funding package as detailed (individually and explicitly) in their Graduate Funding Letter. We also explain funding at our annual Graduate Orientation for new students, and our Business Officer also offers individual advice. With our new Undergraduate and Graduate Administrator, we will explore additional ways to explain the complicated terrain of graduate funding.	Medium term. The Office of the Dean supports the unit’s response as appropriate, and notes that our offices provide regular support in terms of staff support and documentation resources to units with respect to graduate funding
The reviewers expressed surprise and concern that no EAS faculty member has been promoted to the rank of Professor in the past decade. They urged that steps be taken to address this issue, noting the recent establishment of a departmental promotions committee as a positive development (in developing your response, you are encouraged to consult with the Office of the Vice-Provost, Faculty and Academic Life).	7	“Given the impressive record of faculty publications and awards, it is particularly jarring that there has been no promotion from associate to full for the past ten years. Although we are told that there is hardly any institutional incentive to this level of promotion, this seems a poor excuse given the international academic norm. That the Department has formed a promotion committee this year is a welcome change.”	A standing Promotions Committee was established in 2023. As of AY 2024-25 (the year the review took place), two faculty members were promoted to full professors. In AY 2025-26, we expect at least one more associate professor to apply for promotion.	Medium to long term. The Dean’s Office applauds the department’s response to this recommendation, and notes that there are Faculty Development and Academic HR resources offered in the Faculty of Arts & Science should the department seek support or consultations.
The reviewers encouraged the department to engage in strategic faculty complement planning,	8	“We also observe that faculty size is clearly disproportionately small for its wide range of courses. There are gaping holes in premodern	We fully support this recommendation. This year, we will again be submitting a FAC request for a position in premodern East Asia, as currently there	Medium to long term. All requests for new positions across the Faculty are submitted to the

<p>prioritizing enhanced coverage in premodern Japan and Korea when opportunities permit, addressing challenges related to the recruitment of language faculty, and further considering the possibility of developing unit strengths in Southeast Asian studies.</p>		<p>Japanese and Korean positions. Several faculty voiced interest in developing in the direction of southeast Asian studies (Vietnam, for example), a direction that is intellectually well justified.”</p>	<p>is only one faculty member on the entire tri-campus who focuses on any area of pre-20th century East Asia outside of China. In the short term, we want to fill this glaring gap which prevents us from competing with top EAS programs for recruitment and training. In the long term, we are interested in exploring the possibility of developing Southeast Asian studies to complement the considerable strengths in the social sciences at UofT on that area.</p>	<p>Faculty Appointments Committee (FAC), which includes representation across its sectors (Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences) and from the Colleges. The FAC reviews all requests for new positions and makes recommendations to the Dean regarding which requests should be granted. In a given year, there are many more requests than available positions.</p>
	9	<p>“Language instruction also needs greater support. We understand that language faculty recruitment has presented numerous problems—and that in turn leads to unmet student needs in language instruction. On these matters, the Department should engage in discussions both as a body and with the Deans in considering remedies, whether by improving the terms by which CLTA faculty are hired or by increasing the number of permanent positions.”</p>	<p>The Chair will follow up on informal discussions with the Dean’s Office to explore the possibility (and consequences) of requesting teaching stream positions. Our recruitment of three CLTA faculty over the past three years has greatly enhanced our language programs, but we now face the problem of being unable to retain highly functioning faculty and of struggling to find equally strong candidates in the job applicant pools.</p>	<p>Medium to long term. A&S Dean’s Office supports our faculty teaching in a number of ways, including through A&S Teaching & Learning who can provide resources and training that may help troubleshoot the identified concerns with respect to language instruction requiring greater support within the available resources on hand.</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. The FAC reviews all requests for new positions and makes recommendations to the Dean regarding which requests should be granted. In a given year, there</p>

				are many more requests than available positions.
Noting the anticipated arrival of a new divisional budget model at FAS and potential impacts on EAS operations, the reviewers urged the department and Faculty to engage in strategic EAS leadership succession planning, and explore approaches to fostering a spirit of shared governance and citizenship among EAS faculty, with the goal of enhancing continuity and resilience in the department.	10	“We believe that the new budgetary model will make the department’s current model of decision making almost untenable for the Chair. Because so much of the administrative work falls to the Chair currently, we are urging the Deans to name successors and replacements as early as possible so that the substitute/new Chair can shadow the current Chair. That said, we also recommend institutionalizing collective decision-making. Currently, the Chair seems to carry institutional understanding and memory. It is essential that the faculty have broader understanding of the system for greater continuity when chairs either step down or take leaves. More importantly, decisions around curriculum, scheduling, programming and other tasks should be made jointly.”	<p>We recognize that there is currently excessive reliance on the chair for making department-wide decisions. We have been exploring ways to create a culture of shared governance, starting with enhancing the activities of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee in monitoring curriculum, scheduling, etc.</p> <p>We support the reviewers’ recommendation for the Dean to name successors to the chair earlier, to allow an incoming chair sufficient time to have an on-the-ground onboarding process.</p> <p>Regarding the suggestion for a departmental retreat, we ask the Dean’s Office to support such a retreat with resources as well as ideas for creating shared governance.</p>	<p>Medium to long term. The Dean’s Office supports the unit’s commitment to looking into securing succession proactively and developing more committees to support the academic administration of the unit, and note that the recently introduced standing Promotions Committee is an example of the unit’s commitment to respond to this recommendation.</p> <p>Arts & Science offers up to \$5,000 of matching funds for faculty retreats per unit every 3 years.</p>
	11	“All faculty, no matter how early in their career, should serve on some committee of importance. Such work not only improves departmental culture, but is itself an important part of mentorship, which should not be understood as limited to early career faculty only. Ultimately this form of work can also serve as a leadership pipeline for the department.”	We agree this is a good solution for bringing early career faculty into administrative roles, while still allowing them to focus on their research. Our early career faculty members have been serving on PTR committees, Grad Admissions committees, as well as organizing lecture series and representing our unit at the Governing Council Meeting.	Medium to long term. The Dean’s Office supports the unit’s commitment to responding to this recommendation.
Highlighting the unit’s limited resources relative to the “tremendous” number of students that it currently serves, the reviewers noted concerns that the new FAS budget model may put pressure on EAS to take on even higher enrolments, which could result in unsustainably large class sizes. They recommended careful, strategic	12	“Given the high quality of the Department’s research, the caliber of its graduate and undergraduate programs, and the tremendous number of students it serves, this Department needs more resources to do this excellent work. In particular, the graduate program would benefit from better funding.”	We fully support this recommendation. We believe that three priorities that will enable our department to thrive include: 1) increasing graduate minimum funding package beyond \$40,000 by increasing graduate recruitment funds, top-ups and restricted awards, 2) increasing our faculty complement in critical areas such as pre-modern East Asia	Immediate to medium term. The University of Toronto has committed to raising the minimum funding package per graduate student in the funded cohort to \$40,000 per year , a move that Arts & Science applauds and is working to ensure all

consideration of these issues, and taking steps to ensure that the unit is appropriately supported.			and environmental humanities, among others, and 3) stabilizing the complement in the language programs and providing resources to offer much-needed graduate-level language instructions.	graduate units in the division will meet starting in 2025-2026. The New Budget Model will provide more flexibility to units that will benefit the graduate program and funding graduate students.
Observing a perception among unit members that the Department is insufficiently integrated into the University as a whole, the reviewers highlighted opportunities to enhance EAS's visibility on campus and strengthen ties with the broader University community (in particular, with Contemporary Asian Studies at the Munk School, and the Department of History). They stressed that the Department should understand these efforts as an investment of resources, and consult with its constituents about potential goals and approaches.	13	"The Department has excellent ties with cognate units such as Cinema Studies Institute and the Centre for Comparative Literature. There is still room to make the study of East Asia more visible on the U of T campus by enhancing programmatic collaboration with other units such as Contemporary Asian Studies and History. Our meeting with cognate chairs indicates significant potential in this direction."	We are interested in exploring ways in which we might collaborate with CAS and History, beyond our existing ties of shared faculty (in the case of CAS), shared undergrad and grad students, research collaborations, and serving on each other's job search committees. EAS teaches half of the courses that may be counted as electives by CAS students. Despite these strong ties, we have not had discussion on how we might better coordinate our programs. The Chair will meet with the new director of CAS to explore possibilities.	Immediate to medium term. The Dean's Office will support the conversations between the unit and the Contemporary Asian Studies program offered through the Munk School.
	14	"[We] also heard repeatedly from many parties a sense that the Department does not feel that its efforts are fully recognized by central administration and that it feels insufficiently integrated into the University as a whole. Therefore, we urge that the Department understand visibility as an investment of resources that would otherwise be channeled elsewhere; as such, the time and effort that should be dedicated towards increasing visibility should be the subject of Department-wide discussions, perhaps at the retreat. We are unequipped to make specific recommendations, but we hope that the following points might start relevant conversations.	We support investing in higher visibility of our department. We now have a full-time Communications and Events Coordinator who is in charge of the departmental website, newsletter and social media accounts. We welcome more resources for enhanced publicity.	Medium to long term. A&S views the Department of East Asian Studies as an important part of our transdisciplinary division and will meet with departmental leadership to discuss ways to ensure efforts of the department are better recognized. The Dean's Office supports the unit's commitment to responding to this recommendation. A&S Communications is available for consultations should the department be interested in further enhancements to their publicity.

	15	i.	All of the cognate chairs want more collaboration with EAS. Perhaps these chairs should be invited to an occasional departmental meeting to share in planning. The Chair of Contemporary Asian Studies seemed particularly enthusiastic about building stronger connections with CEAS, whether these take the form of programming and speaker series, or more long-lasting institutional connections;	We will reach out to the incoming David Chu Chair of CAS to discuss future collaborative goals.	Immediate to medium term. The Dean's Office will support the conversations between the unit and the Contemporary Asian Studies program offered through the Munk School.
	16	ii.	We heard from the Deans and cognate chairs that the university incentivizes faculty application for national grants. We encourage faculty to take advantage of this opportunity both to fund their own research and to provide student support. An incidental benefit would be to increase departmental visibility.	Over the past 5 years we have taken advantage of the Dean's Bridge Funding program. We have actively encouraged new faculty to apply for SSHRC grants and pointed them to resources such as the JHI to improve their applications—all with great success. Currently multiple tenure stream faculty hold SSHRC grants and more faculty are applying new applications in coming year. Our faculty have also been highly successful in JHI fellowship competitions.	Medium to long term. The Office of the Dean applauds the department's efforts. A&S funds the salary of the JHI Research Officer, who is also the front-line dedicated team member in the A&S Research Services Office who supports the Department of East Asian Studies. Her role is to support research application development for all faculty members in the unit. The Officer is also available to visit Department meetings to share information with the unit about key funding opportunities, strategies and best practices. If the unit would like a customized session focused on grants and budgeting/including students in grants, the Officer can tailor her presentation to include this important consideration. The Research Awards Writer and Coordinator is another important resource for supporting awards and honours nomination

				development in the unit.
17	iii.	We heard from chairs of other units that co-teaching is a common practice among other departments. Even with the recognition that participation might temporarily divert teaching from core courses, it seems such participation might be a good use of departmental resources;	Co-teaching may be attractive to faculty, though it is perhaps not as common of a practice as the reviewers suggest. However, as we already struggle to satisfy our student demand with our current faculty complement, we will explore ways to enable co-teaching without sacrificing the robustness of our programs. We would be interested in hearing more about how other departments enable co-teaching within the current and new budget model.	<p>Medium to long term. The Office of the Dean supports the department's response and encourages them to discuss different teaching models with cognate units and may also wish to reach out to A&S Teaching & Learning for consultation.</p> <p>Under the new budget model (NBM), Unit budgets will be determined primarily by their activity - the net revenue from their graduate enrolments, undergraduate teaching activity, and research overhead revenues. Unit budgets will be stable in transition – they will receive the same budget they would have received under the old methodology (and this will persist), so that their budgets will change under the NBM incrementally. Going forward, Units will have both the changes in revenues and responsibility for changes in costs. They will have greater budgetary clarity and agency as they will be well informed and able to pursue their own academic priorities and goals.</p>
18	iv.	We also learned that some undergraduate programming and academics takes place	A few EAS faculty members are already involved in college programs, particularly the Vic One program.	Medium to long term. Inter-program faculty involvement is

		<p>within the colleges. We recognize that full participation in those might mean some dilution of efforts within EAS, but we also feel that discussion of what should be invested toward greater visibility is long overdue.”</p>	<p>In the future, a department-wide discussion on our relationship with the colleges may be a good idea.</p>	<p>encouraged in a division as trans-disciplinary as Arts & Science. In addition to faculty involvement in College programs where possible, the Office of the Dean encourages the department to reach out to College Registrar’s offices to address areas of confusion about the programs that may help support the registrars in their academic advising of students enrolled, or interested in enrolling in, programs offered by the Department. Enhanced communication between the College Registrars and the department may help promote the visibility of their programs as well as bring broader understanding to the department’s language course enrolment practices.</p>
Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response	19	<p>“At the same time, academic Coordinators voiced frustration with the ACORN system whose unwieldiness results in many days of intense labor on the part of the instructors in placing students into the right level of language study. We recommend improving the placement system with better technologies at all levels of the placement process and would like to praise the Korean program in particular for piloting innovative placement techniques.”</p>	<p>Language placement is time-consuming yet necessary to maintain the quality of our language programs. We have begun and will continue exploring how new technologies might reduce some of the workload involved.</p>	<p>Medium to long term. The Office of the Dean encourages the Department to consult with colleagues in the Office of the Faculty Registrar and A&S Teaching & Learning to explore creative ways to address language placement bottlenecks.</p>

3 Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

The reading group found the summary to accurately reflect the full review. While the administrative response covered most of the pertinent issues, the group requested further explanation of a statement in the report that: “[We] emphasize that we have never seen such a poorly funded, top-ranked graduate program anywhere in North America”, and to identify any potential vulnerabilities regarding the comment: “The department enrolls the largest proportion of international students of any humanities unit at U of T” given the uncertain and rapidly changing international context.

Dean Melanie Woodin responded that the University had significantly increased the minimum funding packages for graduate students to \$40,000 per year across the University, an increase from \$28,000. Dean Woodin noted that PhD students in the department experienced higher than average times to completion, highlighting connections between time to completion and student funding. There were continued efforts to support the department’s learning objectives and student success within the funded cohort.

Regarding the large proportion of international students, Dean Woodin reported that quantitative data were not available, but that the proportion of international students in the unit was known to be high. The vulnerabilities identified also existed across the entire Faculty, and across the tri-campus structure. She noted that the department itself would have difficulties mitigating this vulnerability on its own, and that the University was focused on addressing these challenges.

No follow-up report was requested.

4 Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers praised the department’s excellence in both teaching and research, highlighting the high quality of its undergraduate and graduate programs. Curricular offerings are excellent, wide-ranging and innovative, highlighting ecopolitical, literary, and cultural offerings combined with language-training opportunities. Student enrolment is high; EAS is one of the largest humanities departments at U of T, and enrolls the largest proportion of international students of any humanities unit. The reviewers commended the graduate program as remarkably successful, particularly in placing alumni in high-ranking positions worldwide; and students appear enthusiastic about their training and mentorship. They observed that EAS faculty are committed to cutting-edge research and prioritize innovative teaching, and that the department has done an excellent job of recruiting early-career faculty with emerging strengths in transnational and media studies. Students at all levels appear to be enthusiastic members of a learning community; a climate of “friendly collegiality” is noted among faculty; and departmental leadership is committed and capable. The department enjoys excellent ties with cognate units; and staff appear highly competent, and actively involve themselves in new initiatives and technologies. Finally, the reviewers highlighted the central importance of East

Asian Studies in university-level teaching and research to contemporary institutional goals related to equity, diversity and inclusion.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: introducing greater flexibility into the undergraduate curriculum, and enhancing coordination of course scheduling to ensure greater student access; examining language requirements at peer institutions and considering adjustments to the unit's own requirements as appropriate; exploring a range of approaches to ensure that graduate students are adequately supported, and developing methods to maximize clarity, equity and planning related to graduate student funding; addressing concerns that no EAS faculty member has been promoted to the rank of Professor in the past decade; engaging in strategic faculty complement planning; engaging in strategic EAS leadership succession planning, and exploring approaches to fostering a spirit of shared governance and citizenship among EAS faculty; strategically engaging with concerns that the new FAS budget model may put pressure on EAS to take on even higher enrolments; and pursuing opportunities to enhance EAS's visibility on campus and strengthen ties with the broader University community.

The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty and 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 February 2024 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2031-32 on the status of the implementation plans.

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

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 leadership.