

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan

1 Review Summary

Program(s) Reviewed:	Industrial Relations & Human Resources (HBA): Specialist, Major Work and Organizations, Humanities Contexts (HBA): Major Work and Organizations, Sciences Contexts (HBA): Major Work and Organizations, Social Sciences Contexts (HBA): Major Certificate in Human Resource Management (CHRM), Category I Certificate Industrial Relations and Human Resources: MIRHR, PhD
Unit Reviewed:	Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	• Avner Ben-Ner, Professor, Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota • Sarosh Kuruvilla, Andrew J. Nathanson Professor of Industrial Relations and Asian Studies, Cornell University
Date of Review Visit:	February 13-14, 2025
Review Report Received by VPAP:	May 5, 2025
Administrative Response(s) Received by VPAP:	September 12, 2025
Date Reported to AP&P:	October 21, 2025

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: June 4-5, 2018

The reviewers observed the following strengths:

- CIRHR is one of the leading units in the field in Canada and internationally
- Outstanding reputation in the field of employment relations
- CIRHR graduates are in high demand
- MIRHR is a flagship program with a large number of highly successful alumni

The reviewers made the following recommendations:

- Conduct a curriculum review of the undergraduate program, emphasizing the need to differentiate the undergraduate and Master's program, ensuring appropriate coverage, and eliminating overlap
- Conduct a curriculum review of the Master's program, noting the highly variable experience that students can have in the program, blend of IRHR and business coursework, and the mix of professionally-oriented and business-oriented content
- Improve funding and support for PhD students and bolster research opportunities and funding for this group
- Consider the appropriate complement mix, which includes primary and cross-appointed tenure-stream faculty as well as adjuncts connected to the profession, to ensure stability and faculty availability for students
- Determining how the unit, the College, and the Faculty plan to address both long-term space needs and the overall structure for the Centre

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

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

Consultation Process

Dean, Vice-Dean Academic Planning, Associate Dean Student Affairs, Faculty of Arts & Science; Director; Associate Director Undergraduate, Associate Director Graduate; senior leadership; Faculty; sessional lecturers; undergraduate and graduate students; program alumni; administrative staff; library staff; Chairs of relevant cognate units: Sociology, Diaspora & Transnational Studies (A&S); Management (UTSC).

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**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Considerable thought has gone into design of curriculum and specific mix of courses available to Work and Organization (WO) students from their home departments and CIRHR
- Innovation
 - ▶ Introduction of WO major for all undergraduates was viewed positively, with some faculty in cognate departments noting the value it adds to their students' education
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ High levels of satisfaction among new students in Industrial Relations & Human Resources (IRHR) major
 - ▶ IRHR student interviews reflected uniform satisfaction with the major's courses
 - ▶ Staff note that students frequently request to take more courses than required for the IRHR major and specialist degrees; this is permitted with some constraints
 - ▶ WO students with a second major from another discipline welcomed the opportunity to take courses in a more applied discipline like IRHR/WO that they felt would support their success in the job market
 - ▶ Students were uniformly appreciative of the "culture" of the CIRHR and the responsiveness of its professors
 - ▶ WO students are passionate about the program
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
 - ▶ Increased demand from undergraduates for a major with practical implications that serves as a pathway into the labour market; this is reflected in a significant increase in course enrollments from 2020-21 to 2023-24
 - ▶ Combined enrolment in IRHR major and specialist streams has increased approximately 50% from 2022 to 2024
 - ▶ New WO student enrolment has increased by 75% from 2022 to 2024
 - ▶ Combined enrolment in IRHR and WO majors increased 60% from 2022 to 2024
- Quality indicators – faculty
 - ▶ IRHR students expressed satisfaction with delivery of courses and were "exceptionally satisfied" with the quality of the faculty
 - ▶ IRHR students valued the practical insights provided by sessional faculty, most of whom are current IRHR practitioners

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

- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ WO students raised concerns including limited course options in the program, unclear distinctions between WO and IRHR majors, and a lack of clarity around course access
 - ▶ WO students noted a need for better communication about how the major relates to their parent disciplines and how it supports job market preparation
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Students noted that WO major was not well advertised, with many discovering it by chance
 - ▶ Students suggested broader promotion of the WO major across multiple venues and platforms, and expressed interest in contributing to outreach efforts, particularly through social media
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ IRHR students noted a lack of internship opportunities
 - ▶ WO students expressed a desire to access course syllabi in advance, though it was unclear to reviewers whether such information is currently available to students
 - ▶ WO students felt that there was insufficient career advice provided, particularly given the program's practical focus
 - ▶ Undergraduate students seemed largely unaware of the CIRHR library as an available resource
- Quality indicators – faculty
 - ▶ Growth in both IRHR and WO majors has placed pressure on staff and faculty resources

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ Increase advertising of IRHR and WO majors across the university, reflecting undergraduate feedback that highlighted strong satisfaction with the new major alongside a desire for broader visibility
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Introduce a university-wide 100-level course on work, employment, and labour relations to raise the profile of CIRHR, inform undergraduates more broadly about the field, and potentially attract students to enrol in the WO major; course could be team-taught by multiple faculty members, each of whom delivers a portion
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Improve communication to ensure undergraduate students are aware of the CIRHR library as a resource and study space, particularly as undergraduate programs expand, to help enhance cohesion among students
 - ▶ Students highlighted need for more undergraduate research opportunities in both IRHR and WO majors, as well as more information about the nature of IRHR research

2. Graduate Program(s)

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ MIRHR program, the flagship master's offering at CIRHR, has shown steady growth
 - ▶ MIRHR is a core offering at comparator institutions, and has been instrumental in establishing CIRHR's reputation as a leading centre in Canada for the study of industrial relations and human resources
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Faculty and graduate students spoke highly of the helpfulness of library staff, and the library's evolving role reflects broader trends in the transformation of traditional library functions
 - ▶ MIRHR student satisfaction with the program and courses is notably higher than the U of T average, particularly in terms of "intellectual quality of the faculty, the overall quality of graduate teaching, the quality of academic advising, and the helpfulness of staff"
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ MIRHR enrolment has increased 42% from 2022 to 2024
 - ▶ Applications to the MIRHR program have increased steadily in the past 10 years
 - ▶ Yield rates for MIRHR program are significantly higher than University averages
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ CIRHR data shows a strong majority of graduates are employed within six months of completing the program and within their chosen field of study, though many students are already employed while studying part time
 - ▶ Historical data indicate most PhD graduates secure academic positions after graduating
 - ▶ External stakeholders and alumni interviewed regard MIRHR program as the best in the country

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

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ PhD program has a small and sometimes inadequate applicant pool
 - ▶ There is a need to better align applicant interests with full range of faculty research areas
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Reviewers note tension between the narrow focus on industrial relations or human resources and the broader range of faculty expertise in areas such as Organizational Behaviour, Labour or Applied Economics, Labour History, and Economic Sociology
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Some PhD students are admitted without a designated advisor, raising concerns about adequate guidance

- ▶ PhD students' experiences and expectations of the program vary, indicating a need for clearer standards and more consistent practices in advising and training
- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ Certificate in Human Resource Management (CHRM) program applications and enrolments have declined significantly in recent years
 - ▶ Reviewers noted slight difficulty determining the MIRHR's program's selectivity over time with precision
- Student funding
 - ▶ PhD student funding is insufficient in the context of Toronto's high cost of living
 - ▶ Small number of PhD applications may be partly linked to the limited funding available
 - ▶ Recent university-wide increase in PhD funding may not substantially alleviate challenges related to cost of living in Toronto
 - ▶ High living costs contribute to PhD students taking on excessive teaching assignments to supplement their income, which negatively impact their research progress

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Evaluate the continued usefulness of the CHRM program against key criteria, including: the potential for future enrolment growth; administrative costs relative to program benefits; whether CHRM students displace IRHR and WO majors; and the rates at which CHRM graduates advance to the MIRHR or opt for the CHRM instead of pursuing graduate study
 - ▶ Strengthen marketing efforts for the PhD program to increase the number and quality of applicants
 - ▶ Develop a comprehensive PhD program enhancement plan that addresses funding challenges, improves applicant pool, establishes consistent advising protocols, and strengthens alignment between faculty expertise and PhD student recruitment
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ Implement proposed methods training sequence in the PhD program
 - ▶ Establish a formal agreement with the Rotman School of Management to ensure that CIRHR PhD students have the ability to enrol in selected Rotman courses and that Rotman PhD students have access to relevant CIRHR course offerings
 - ▶ PhD program cross-enrolment agreement with Rotman would enhance course access and collaboration
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Admit PhD students only when a faculty member is prepared to take responsibility for their supervision, to ensure students are not left without adequate guidance
 - ▶ Establish clear standards and consistent practices for PhD advising and training to address variation in students' experiences and expectations, recognizing that strong doctoral education requires collective support

- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ Implement a systematized process for collecting employment data from MIRHR graduates, including job-seeking status, campus recruitment outcomes, and independent job placements, in order to support stronger alumni relations
- Student funding
 - ▶ Identify additional sources of funding to supplement existing PhD program support, particularly for conference travel and research expenses

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ CIRHR is a small but excellent unit, recognized as the best in Canada for research reputation
 - ▶ Recently recruited cohort of young faculty is expected to further strengthen its research profile
 - ▶ Scholarly accomplishments of CIRHR's tenured and tenure-stream faculty are impressive
 - ▶ CIRHR faculty are highly productive in research and related activities; the quality, quantity, and citation rates of their research rival those of leading industrial relations and human resource centers globally
- Research
 - ▶ Faculty members produce journal articles and books on a wide range of topics related to employment, labour markets, unions, compensation, gender, inequality, immigration, disability, and more, across various geographic, industry, and historical contexts
 - ▶ Faculty's work contributes to both foundational research and policy development, and is published in highly ranked discipline-based and specialized-field journals
 - ▶ Faculty members have secured numerous grants from a variety of sources, including government, foundations, and other Canadian and international funders
 - ▶ Faculty members regularly present their work at seminars, conferences, and to policymakers
- Faculty
 - ▶ Sessional faculty maintain positive relationships with the CIRHR Director and consistently demonstrate a willingness to step in and cover courses as needed
 - ▶ Assistance provided by the library in linking readings to online sources is useful for instructors
 - ▶ Concerns noted regarding how CIRHR can manage expansion without compromising instructional quality or increasing class sizes; current faculty levels are insufficient to support growth on a sustainable basis

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

- Faculty
 - ▶ Steady enrolment increases place pressure on teaching resources
 - ▶ Heavy reliance on sessional, with some teaching a wide range of courses

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
 - ▶ CIRHR, though a small unit, benefits from collegial faculty relationships
 - ▶ Undergraduate students describe CIRHR as welcoming, faculty are seen as highly responsive, and staff demonstrate exceptional commitment, often going above and beyond to support students; reflecting a culture of shared dedication
 - ▶ CIRHR benefits from a core group of committed alumni who are eager to support the Centre in various capacities
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Students appreciate the CIRHR library as an integral part of their learning experience and research journey.
 - ▶ CIRHR library is an important resource, serving in its physical form, as a venue for CIRHR events as well as a welcoming workspace and “home base” graduate students
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Supportive environment surrounding CIRHR provides “unparalleled opportunities” for sustained growth in the future
 - ▶ With appropriate institutional investments, CIRHR has the potential to double in size within the next five years
 - ▶ Meetings with alumni highlighted significant untapped potential for expanding executive education courses and industry-facing events in industrial relations and human resources
- International comparators
 - ▶ CIRHR is considerably smaller than international comparators, but maintains comparable per capita research productivity
 - ▶ CIRHR is situated in a highly supportive environment, offering exceptional opportunities for growth in comparison with comparators

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

- Relationships
 - ▶ Alumni engagement appears largely ad hoc rather than systematic
 - ▶ Reviewers note concerns regarding staff workload; students commented that staff and coordinators often respond to emails outside regular hours, highlighting a strong culture of commitment but one that may not be sustainable without additional support
 - ▶ Reviewers note some tension in relationships between CIRHR and faculty from cognate departments, seemingly related to graduate teaching and the availability of office space at CIRHR
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Reviewers heard internal governance concerns related to concentration of decision-making power in the role of the Director, with processes such as course release allocation viewed as lacking transparency
 - ▶ Undergraduate enrolment increases have required addition of new course sections, increased reliance on sessional instructors, and a greater need for teaching assistants; growth may generate additional revenue under the new budget model but it brings increased costs that may need to be funded by CIRHR
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Reviewers note significant constraints to capitalizing on growth prospects, including a shortages of faculty, support staff, and space
 - ▶ Managing growth without compromising quality is a major concern, particularly given the risk that a rising student-faculty ratio could affect the effectiveness of teaching in an applied discipline where experiential learning is essential
 - ▶ Continued growth in undergraduate enrolment may lead to space shortages and strain on faculty and staff, posing a risk to the Centre's strong culture
 - ▶ There is a need for succession planning across all positions, with particular attention to the roles of Director and Graduate Coordinator

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Examine staff workloads and compare them with appropriate benchmarks
 - ▶ Addressing workload pressures will be essential to sustaining the strong culture of commitment valued by students and faculty
 - ▶ Explore opportunities to strengthen relationships with cognate departments by regularly identifying faculty who could contribute to graduate teaching in CIRHR
 - ▶ Examine the sources of existing tensions with cognate units, and consider practical incentives to encourage ongoing participation in graduate teaching
 - ▶ Develop a comprehensive alumni relations strategy that includes improved tracking, database management, and regular engagement activities to enhance alumni contributions to teaching, executive development, fundraising, and internship opportunities

- ▶ Alumni and external relations strategy could include establishing an external advisory body of prominent alumni and practitioners, with subcommittees focused on areas such as fundraising, executive development, events, and classroom participation, fostering systematic and mutually beneficial engagement across the CIRHR community
- ▶ Consider creating a dedicated full-time role focused on alumni relations, distinct from career advising
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Strengthen internal governance by moving toward a more collective decision-making model that ensures broader faculty input on key matters; as CIRHR continues to grow, reducing reliance on a centralized leadership structure will help support transparency and long-term sustainability
 - ▶ Prioritize succession planning for key leadership roles to ensure smooth transitions and institutional continuity
 - ▶ Leverage the incentives of the university's new budget model, which supports growth in undergraduate and master's enrolments, to generate revenue that can be reinvested in essential areas such as staffing, alumni relations, and space to sustain CIRHR's continued expansion
 - ▶ Develop a space utilization and expansion plan that addresses immediate space constraints while planning for long-term growth requirements
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Identifying opportunities for revenue generation will be essential for CIRHR to grow into the largest industrial relations and human resources program in Canada
 - ▶ Offer executive development courses based on industry needs and aligned with faculty expertise; these courses could generate revenue, foster faculty-industry connections, and potentially lead to projects for MIRHR and undergraduate students
 - ▶ Hold facilitative workshops for industry and labour representatives focused on recent developments such as strikes or government policy changes; these workshops would bring together key stakeholders and could potentially generate revenue
 - ▶ Invite industry participants and alumni to attend regular CIRHR talks and events, with a fee-based model; alumni emphasized the importance of these types of events and expressed willingness to help initiate and support these efforts
 - ▶ Pursue long-term revenue growth through increased enrolment at the undergraduate and master's levels
 - ▶ Harness the efforts of loyal and enthusiastic alumni who are eager to support the development of revenue-generating programs in a systematic and organized manner
 - ▶ Address the need for organizational and space infrastructure to support revenue-generating initiatives; consider leveraging Rotman School's business community networks and renting their services and facilities as needed
 - ▶ Undertake a strategic planning exercise to determine an appropriate pace of growth, assess the number of new faculty needed to maintain quality, and identify staffing requirements to adequately support a growing student body



2 Administrative Response & Implementation Plan

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

September 12, 2025

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

RE: UTQAP cyclical review of the Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources (CIRHR)

Dear Prof. Rule,

I write in response to your letter of July 17, 2025, regarding the February 12-13, 2025, UTQAP cyclical review of CIRHR and requesting our Administrative Responses. The following programs were reviewed: Industrial Relations & Human Resources (HBA) Specialist, Major; Work and Organizations, Humanities Contexts (HBA) Major; Work and Organizations, Sciences Contexts (HBA) Major; Work and Organizations, Social Sciences Contexts (HBA) Major; Category 1 Certificate in Human Resource Management; Industrial Relations and Human Resources MIRHR, PhD.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers, Professor Avner Ben-Ner, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities, and Professor Sarosh Kuruvilla, Cornell University, for their very comprehensive review of the CIRHR. We would also like to thank and acknowledge the director, program coordinators, 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 5, 2025, after which the director shared it widely with stakeholders in the Centre. We are extremely pleased with the reviewers' positive assessment of the overall strength of CIRHR and its outstanding, productive faculty. The reviewers praised the Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources as a welcoming and supportive environment, emphasizing students' appreciation for the Centre's culture and the responsiveness of its faculty and staff. They commended the thoughtful design of the curriculum, which offers practical, applied learning opportunities that connect directly to the labour market, and acknowledged the significant recent growth in undergraduate enrolments. They described the MIRHR program as CIRHR's flagship master's offering, citing its steady growth and central role in establishing the Centre's reputation as a leading institution in Canada. The reviewers applauded the scholarly accomplishments of CIRHR faculty, observing that the quality, quantity, and citation rates of their research rival those of top international peer institutions. They recognized faculty research for its breadth and impact, contributing to both foundational knowledge and policy development across multiple domains. The reviewers underscored CIRHR's strong internal culture and committed alumni network, whose enthusiasm and willingness to support the Centre are a major asset. Finally, they commended the Centre's strong and collegial leadership, which has fostered a culture of shared dedication and excellence. The review report also raised several issues and challenges and identified areas for enhancement, as outlined in the accompanying Review Recommendations Table.

Each of these recommendations has been addressed in the attached Review Recommendations Table, which 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

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

was developed in consultation with the CIRHR director 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 the CIRHR will take place no later than the 2032-33 review cycle. My office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with the director, 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 2024-2025 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2032-33 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 the future priorities of the CIRHR and its undergraduate and graduate programs.

Sincerely,



Stephen Wright
Acting Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Professor, Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology

cc.

Rafael Gomez, Director, CIRHR, Faculty of Arts & Science
Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science
Ebba Kurz, Interim Associate Dean, Unit-Level Reviews, 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

2024-25 UTQAP Review of FAS Centre for Industrial Relations & Human Resources - 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 noted undergraduate student concerns regarding program delivery and support, including limited course options for Work and Organizations students, limited access to courses across CIRHR programs, and a lack of research and career development opportunities. They also highlighted the need to clarify the differences between the programs in Work and Organizations and in Industrial Relations and Human Resources.	1.	“[I]t is not clear to [students] why WO students cannot take IRHR courses whereas IRHR students can take WO courses. The WO students feel that there is a lack of choices in the WO program, and the need for more faculty.”	Explanation: One of the reasons CIRHR originally gained unanimous support from cognate units for the creation of the WO major in 2022 was by promising that we would not allow students to be double majors in IRHR <u>and</u> WO. The reason is that many units were/are experiencing declines in their UG student enrollments. We wanted a program like WO to appeal to students who may want to major in a humanities or science program, but who are worried about job prospects following their degrees. A WO major paired with a humanities or science major would be ideal in this regard as it would fulfill the needs of students, while also maintaining enrollments in traditional majors in sciences and humanities. Short Term: Opportunities for WO majors to take IRHR courses can be increased, so long as we still honour our original commitments to other cognate units that we will not have students complete a double major in both WO and IRHR. This will involve looking at pre-requisites and ensuring we are not	Immediate term: The Arts & Science Dean’s Office (ASDO) supports the program’s commitment to the original program proposal, and to exploring other feasible course options for WO majors.

			disadvantaging any students in either IRHR or WO major programs.	
	2.	"[S]tudents highlight the need for more undergraduate research opportunities (both IR/HR majors and WO majors) but also more information on what IR/HR research looks like."	Explanation: We have a research-active faculty that also has successfully raised research funds which would be available for students to use as research assistants. However, two things (currently) prevent this research activity from flowing down into the undergraduate student body. First, our tenure-research stream faculty complement is relatively small (8 FTE) compared to our UG population which is now approaching 500+ students. Second, to the extent that research assistant opportunities do exist, they are usually given to master's students. Our master's program is fairly large (over 100+ MIRHR students), and these students tend to have the research skills that faculty require for their work. Short Term: In terms of "information on what IR/HR research looks like," the CIRHR library is meeting with the undergraduate program staff and director to plan library outreach and programming for undergraduate students, and hope to continue our growing inclusion in undergraduate classes through in-class library-led instruction, as well as librarian and library staff participation in IRHSA events. Short-to-Medium Term: There are three existing course designations that allow undergraduates to explore research as part of their undergraduate experience. • IRE395H1 - Independent Study: Independent study under the direction of a faculty member.	Immediate- medium term: The ASDO supports the unit's plans for broadening available research opportunities for undergraduate students. The ASDO encourages the Director to connect with the ELOS team and with the Vice-Dean Undergraduate to explore curricular opportunities in this area.

			• IRE396H1 - Research Participation: Credit course for supervised participation in a faculty research project. • IRE399H1 - Research Opportunity Program: Credit course for supervised participation in a faculty research project. Because each of these three options are offered only when a faculty member is willing and available to supervise, we will begin in Fall 2025 to inform faculty of these opportunities and to help spread the word to their undergraduates. Likewise, we intend to inform undergraduates that these courses offering research experience exist, and encourage them to be proactive and initiate contact with Professors in our program.	
	3.	"[Students] felt that for a practical major, there was not enough career advice."	Explanation: Historically we have had (and still have) a strong career development component in our Professional Masters program. This is because our Graduate administrator also had a career and alumni relations function and because we could use a portion of professional program fees to structure external career development support. Our undergraduate program has only recently been added since 2023-24 academic year, at which time we hired a full-time Career Development officer for the entire suite of Centre programs. Short Term: We're committing to establishing more formalised/systematized alumni relations/interactions with our professional Master's graduates, which will also support the delivery of more student organization-led and department-sponsored	Immediate- long term: The ASDO applauds this initiative, which both strengthens alumni relations and positions graduate students as mentors to undergraduate students, all of which strengthens the Centre's professionalization activities. The unit may also wish to consider participating in A&S initiatives, such as backpack 2 Briefcase. Also see #6, below.

			professional development opportunities. Our alumni are a huge asset and will be called upon to do more mentoring, coaching and job posting for our undergraduate population. Our Career Development Officer will lead this initiative.	
	4.	“[Students] highlight the need for clarity (which we share) regarding the difference between the WO major and the IRHR major.”	Explanation: The key difference is that the Work and Organizations (WO) major focuses on understanding work as a social and economic activity, the operation and coordination of organizations, and broader community and economic development. In contrast, the Industrial Relations and Human Resources (IRHR) major centers on employment relations, human resource management, and labour relations, with a particular emphasis on employment in larger, often unionized, organizations. • Additional context: • While both are interdisciplinary and cover some overlapping content (e.g., people management), the IRHR major is more specialized in employment relations and human resources, whereas WO offers broader perspectives on the nature and management of work and organizations. • As mentioned above, students cannot enroll in both majors simultaneously, underscoring their distinct curriculum pathways.	Immediate- long term: The ASDO supports the Centre’s extremely comprehensive plans and methods outlined here for addressing and articulating undergraduate program distinctions.

			• These distinctions should be clearly communicated in program materials and advising, allowing students to understand the unique focus and career trajectory offered by each major [Some ideas are listed below]. Short-to-Medium Term: 1. Revise and Align Program Descriptions • Update official calendar and website language to clearly articulate the distinct focus and learning outcomes of each major. • Use parallel structure to make comparisons easy to understand. 2. Develop a One-Page Comparison Sheet • Include side-by-side charts of: • Program focus • Core topics • Example courses • Career pathways • Distribute during orientation, advising, and through departmental social media. 3. Embed Differentiation in Academic Advising	
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			- Consistently highlight distinctions in individual advising sessions. 4. Host an Annual “Program Pathways” Info Session - Associate Director, Undergraduate to host session explaining focus areas, answer student questions, and share alumni experiences. - Record and post the session online for ongoing access. 5. Integrate Clarity into First-Year Gateway Courses - Possibly add a short orientation module in introductory courses that explains how WO and IRHR differ. 6. Leverage Alumni Testimonials - As WO graduates (who entered in 2022-23) begin to exit/graduate our program, we can feature short written or video stories from graduates of each program describing how their major aligned with their goals and led to specific career paths.	
The reviewers noted student comments emphasizing the need for broader	5.	“[S]tudents highlighted that the WO major was not well advertised... They highlighted	Explanation: Part of the issue with our WO major is that because it is so new, we have	Immediate- long term: The ASDO can connect the Director, if interested, to A&S

communication about the Work & Organizations program, its links to parent disciplines, and its value for career preparation. They recommended developing a broadly available first-year course to introduce students to the discipline, raise the Centre’s profile, and attract students to enrol in its programs.		the need to advertise the degree more, and in multiple outlets, and through multiple media.”	still not been able to leverage experiential testimonials and word-of-mouth advertising from successful graduates of the program. As of 2025-26, the first full cohort of WO majors will begin graduating from our program. Some of the ideas below draw from this growing pool of graduates. Short-Term: To address the concern that the WO major is not well advertised and students seek more multi-channel promotion, the following is something that we propose to look into: • Expand Program Visibility Across Platforms • Enhance the WO major’s presence on the FAS/central and department websites through feature stories, program highlights, and student profiles. • Actively utilize social media for targeted informational “blasts”. • Post on campus digital screens and host pop-up info desks where students congregate. • Leverage Experiential Engagement • Organize program-specific events (panels, workshops, meet-and-greets) and coordinate with student clubs to promote the WO	Communications to facilitate promotion of the Centre’s activities and students, as well as to the Office of the Faculty Registrar to facilitate the Department’s participation in the many events it offers that communicate program choice information to students, such as the following: 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 available to Arts & Science students and learn about experiential learning including research, internships and international opportunities. 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. Program student unions also participate in “Clubs Fair” held at the beginning of each academic year. The ASDO also suggests that unit leadership explore the most common program pairings with WO, and initiate discussions with those units to amplify the visibility and relevance of CIRHR programs. The ASDO can assist the Chair in navigating data resources to identify these pairings.
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			major directly to undergraduates. • Include WO faculty in campus-wide recruitment events and even (where possible) senior high school outreach. • Empower Student Ambassadors and Alumni • Recruit current WO majors and recent graduates as ambassadors; have them share authentic experiences across various outlets. • Annual Advertising Calendar • Plan periodic advertising pushes (start of semester, before program selection deadlines, etc.) and ensure materials are updated regularly. Medium Term: See below, re Item 7: the development of a university-wide introductory course which will help increase awareness of the undergraduate programs and advertise our majors to more potential students, in addition to providing students with an in-depth overview of the field of study. Medium Term: The IRHR library is also undertaking a major reclassification of the IRHR Library collection	
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			in order to become a circulating campus library. This reclassification will increase the library’s (and thus the Centre’s) visibility to the broader community of U of T researchers and students engaged in interdisciplinary research related to industrial relations, labour history, public policy, business, sociology, human resources, and work.	
	6.	“[Students] talked about the need for better communication----how the major links with their parent disciplines and how this major helps in preparation for the job market. These were seen as important to reach more students.”	Explanation: Partially this critique is a function of the interdisciplinary nature of our major degree programs. Below are some solutions to address these concerns, that we feel stem from the diversity of our course offerings (we integrate law, economics, management etc., into one “field of study”). <i>Goal: Better Communication on Interdisciplinary Links and Job Preparation:</i> Short-to-Medium Term: 1. Explicitly articulate interdisciplinary relationships in all program materials • Program websites, calendars, brochures, and advising sheets should clearly name the related disciplines and how their major builds on that disciplinary foundation. • Use examples of how key concepts from History, Psychology, English, or other fields apply within WO or IRHR contexts.	Immediate- medium term: The ASDO supports the Centre’s detailed communication plans outlined here. Career support for current undergraduate students is housed (a) in Colleges; and (b) centrally through Student Life. The ASDO can facilitate connections with the relevant organizations to ensure that Unit leadership has up-to-date information on career outcomes and preparation for students in this major.

			2. Create integrative communications that link academic experience to career readiness • Develop narrative examples or videos with alumni in our field showing how students use their disciplinary training combined with WO or IRHR to succeed in job markets. • Highlight typical career paths and skillsets developed, e.g., policy analysis (linked to political science), organizational analysis (linked to sociology), or employee wellbeing (linked to psychology). 3. Use ‘parent discipline’ streams in WO as a communication tool • Directly promote the Humanities, Social Science, and Science streams as tailored pathways that connect core disciplinary knowledge with work and organization studies. • In advising, stress the complementarity of WO with the student’s main major in all Arts and Science disciplines. 4. Engage faculty and student ambassadors from diverse disciplines	
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			• Feature faculty with cross-disciplinary expertise discussing how their disciplines inform the majors. • Use student/alumni testimonials illustrating the interdisciplinary and career connections. 5. Integrate interdisciplinary and career focus modules in gateway courses • Include short orientation modules that any instructor can use, explaining the parent discipline links and career pathways associated with the majors. 6. Provide advising tools that map majors to parent disciplines and career outcomes • Develop advising handouts that explicitly connect degree paths to disciplinary combinations and employment outcomes for easier student understanding. These steps -- which will involve Career Development Officer working with Undergraduate staff/faculty -- we hope will enhance student awareness that the IRHR and WO majors are deeply interdisciplinary, connected to their parent disciplines, and distinctly prepare students for the evolving job market.	
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	7.	“The faculty should consider the introduction of a university wide ‘introduction to work, employment and labor relations’ course that is offered at the 100 level... Such a course can raise the profile of CIRHR and also serve to inform undergraduates more broadly regarding the study of work.”	Short Term: We are exploring the creation of an introductory 101 course and, in summer 2025, the CIRHR Executive Committee will meet and create a course proposal for presentation to the Arts & Science Vice-Dean, Undergraduate. We believe the development of a university-wide introductory course will also help increase awareness of the undergraduate programs and advertise our majors to more potential students, in addition to providing students with an in-depth overview of the field of study. Such a course would likely require reconsidering the existence/content of IRW240H1 “Introduction to Work and Organizations.” Similar to how we recently retired IRE240 “Introduction to Employment Relations” due to having too many intro courses, a 100-level course may make some of IRW240 redundant. Medium Term: The Associate Director, Undergraduate will advance the new course proposal through the A&S governance process, and the program administrator will advertise the new course with college registrars.	Short- medium term: The ASDO thanks the reviewers for this suggestion, which the Centre is keen on exploring with our office. New courses proposed by an A&S Unit must be approved through an A&S governance pathway. Students from other divisions (e.g., UTM, UTSC) are welcome to take A&S undergraduate courses, subject to enrolment controls and availability, just as A&S students can access courses offered by other divisions, for which they are qualified. The Director is invited to discuss this idea with the Vice-Dean Undergraduate, who can offer guidance on a proposal for this initiative, and the scope of consultation required.
The reviewers raised several concerns regarding the PhD program, including recruitment challenges, limited student funding relative to the cost of living in Toronto, inconsistent advising practices, and difficulty aligning entering students with areas of faculty expertise; they recommended developing a comprehensive plan to address these issues. The reviewers also encouraged formalizing cross-enrolment opportunities with cognate units, to broaden course offerings for PhD students.	8.	“Develop a comprehensive PhD program enhancement plan that addresses funding challenges, improves the applicant pool, establishes consistent advising protocols, and creates clearer links between faculty expertise and Ph.D. student recruitment.”	Short Term: In the short term, the Centre will mandate that admitted PhD students be matched with an appropriate supervisor; potential doctoral students who cannot be matched to a supervisor should not be admitted. We will also actively solicit applications to the PhD program, particularly in fields that are underrepresented among the graduate cohort. Ad hoc efforts to contact colleagues at other institutions and encourage	Immediate term: The new graduate funding commitment effective September 2025 of \$40K will go some way in addressing the reviewers’ observation that the graduate funding model in place at the time of the review was inadequate. Further, the New Budget Model allows units greater autonomy in managing its budget, including financial support for graduate students. Immediate- medium term: The ASDO is available for consultation on modifying

		applications – which the Centre has already begun to do – are a good start and should continue. We will also make research-methods training a permanent part of the doctoral program. The incoming interim PhD coordinator and the library will be implementing in-class librarian instruction on library research methods, as well as launching a pilot program to have each PhD student meet with the library to establish baseline skills related to advanced use of library resources in order to effectively conduct literature reviews, locate relevant data, and navigate research publication issues. Medium Term: In the medium term, we will create a formal plan of action to improve the quality of applications to the doctoral program. This might involve a survey of how peer institutions recruit doctoral students; outreach efforts within the University; and changes to the PhD program website. We will also discuss options for building support for PhD students into large grants. The grant cycle and the application cycle are different, but faculty might be encouraged to consider building support for doctoral training into large grants. Additionally, we might consider the creation of pre-doctoral fellowships as valuable recruiting/screening tools which would allow external students to work with a faculty member for a few months on a research project before applying for doctoral studies. Students would receive a realistic preview of a research career before a PhD, and provide	program requirements to include a methods course, and for assistance in developing the proposal to do so. Medium term: The ASDO supports the unit’s plans outlined here for improving its applicant pool to graduate programs.
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			us richer, first-hand information on the students before evaluating their PhD applications. We intend to identify applications in the next application cycle from students working in fields represented by the Centre faculty but unrepresented within the doctoral cohort. We'll encourage the doctoral admissions committee to consider interviewing these students for admission if they meet the benchmarks for the program. We will also consider offering course releases or other benefits to faculty who take on doctoral supervision, particularly but not exclusively to faculty on the tenure track. The Centre (along with other smaller University of Toronto departments) is an outlier in that pre-tenure faculty supervise doctoral students directly. The unit is, at present, too small to mandate against this practice, but faculty who do take on doctoral supervision before tenure should receive material consideration from the Centre. We intend to develop clear advising expectations and align incentives such that advising isn't seen as unduly burdensome, especially by more junior faculty. Long Term: In the long term, we will consider, as the consequences of the new budget model on doctoral applications and admissions become clear, how to find new sources of financial support for doctoral study, so that the Centre can, eventually, offer a package that will make the Centre roughly competitive with its peer institutions.	
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	9.	“We were informed that CIRHR doctoral students take some courses (e.g., OB) in the Rotman School, if there is space. It would be beneficial to forge an agreement that ensures that CIRHR Ph.D. students can enrol in certain Rotman courses. It would be also beneficial if Rotman Ph.D. students were steered to courses provided to CIRHR doctoral students.”	Short-Term: • Our members of faculty do at times encourage Rotman students to take courses at the CIRHR – the qual methods course, for example, has seen several Rotman students enrolled in the past two years. We can be more systematic about this. • Coordinated Course Planning and Enrollment: CIRHR Director will establish a joint advisory committee or liaison group with faculty and graduate program coordinators from CIRHR and Rotman to review and coordinate course offerings, enrollment limits, and waitlist priorities for doctoral students. • Shared Academic and Research Seminars: Promote joint seminars, workshops, and research events to integrate students across the two doctoral programs, fostering intellectual exchange and interdisciplinary collaboration. [We already do some of this, but again, we can be more systematic about it going forward].	Immediate- long term: The ASDO supports the unit’s response to this suggestion for more coordination with students and faculty at the Rotman School of Management. The ASDO leadership team is available for guidance and support for this curricular enhancement, should that be necessary. The Vice-Dean Academic Operations, in particular, will be involved in discussions between the Centre and Rotman to ensure smooth coordination with other enrolment arrangements across the Faculty’s units.
Noting declining enrolment in the Certificate in Human Resource Management, the reviewers recommended that the Centre consider the usefulness and viability of the offering in relation to future enrolment expectations, the cost of administering it, and		“In recent years, the number of applicants to and the number of students in the Certificate program have declined... In our view, the Centre should evaluate the usefulness of the program relative to several criteria:	Explanation: The certificate program has significant potential to generate financial revenue while also bridging the gap between undergraduate studies and the MIRHR program.	Immediate term: The ASDO supports the unit’s consideration of the reviewers’ observations.

the effects it may have on enrolment in the Centre’s undergraduate and graduate programs.			Based on the inquiries we’ve received for the MIRHR program, the certificate program could appeal to two key groups of students: individuals interested in a career in HR or IR who cannot commit to completing a master’s degree due to financial or time constraints; and those who fall below the admission threshold for the master’s program and need additional HR coursework to strengthen their credentials.	
	10.	“Is there reason to expect a future increase in enrollments?”	Short-Term: Yes, but to grow the program and increase enrollment, opening applications to international students would be an obvious and effective strategy. This could not only broaden our applicant pool but also enhance the program’s visibility and diversity.	Immediate term: The ASDO leadership team can advise the unit on the feasibility of growing enrolment in the Certificate program.
	11.	“Does the cost of administering the program (marketing, handling students records, and more) exceed the financial and other benefits of enrolling a few students?”	Response: The tuition is an issue. Currently students pay domestic tuition for this post-baccalaureate certificate. We agree, it is important to carefully consider the increased administrative workload associated with processing international applications and providing support for international students. Additionally, with a potential rise in enrollment, we must address how to accommodate larger class sizes given the already high demand for undergraduate courses.	Immediate term: The ASDO is available to consult with the unit on this matter.
	12.	“Do CHRM students displace IRHR and Work and Organizations undergraduate majors in light of the strong demand for these majors?”	Response: No, this is not an issue as CIRHR administers who gets into the Certificate in HR program.	Immediate term: The ASDO supports the Centre’s assessment of this issue.
	13.	“Do graduates of the certificate program go on to the Centre’s Master’s program, a desirable outcome?”	Response: Yes. This is a well-acknowledged pathway to successful entry and completion of the MIRHR degree.	Immediate term: The ASDO supports the Centre’s assessment of this issue.
	14.	“Do students in the certificate program opt for the CHRM instead of enrolling in the Master’s program, a less desirable outcome?”	Response: No. Based on many years of personal recruitment/letter reference writing etc., most students entering the Certificate	Immediate term: The ASDO supports the Centre’s assessment of this issue.

			are doing so as a stepping stone to the MIRHR.	
The reviewers highlighted the potential for executive education programming to help form productive connections with industry partners and alumni, support learning opportunities for students, and generate additional revenue. They recommended that CIRHR develop an executive education strategy encompassing program offerings, resource requirements, and revenue targets, leveraging faculty expertise, alumni networks, and external partnerships.	15.	“Create an executive education strategy with specific program offerings, required resources, and revenue targets, leveraging alumni expertise and industry connections.”	Response: We agree that there is demand and large potential in this space. Given our current staff complement, however, launching such programs may be difficult. That said, working with partners such as Woodsworth College or partnering with Departments such as Economics or Sociology, CIRHR could overcome the constraints (i.e., in faculty time, staff capacity, and physical infrastructure etc.) that currently limit our ability to forcefully move into the HR and IR executive education space. Short Term: • While our immediate focus is on stabilizing the professional masters program -- especially given the growing demand of the undergraduate program and the need for faculty and staff succession planning – we will form a faculty working group/committee to start planning for CIRHR executive learning. • We would also need, in the short term, a staff role at the Centre (such as an EA role attached to the Directors office) that could help move such a project along. Medium-to-Long Term: Executive education is seriously being considered as an opportunity to engage alumni, but also to use their talents as potential educational leaders	Immediate- medium term: The ASDO directs the Centre, first, to the Office of Professional & Lifelong Learning, which has been established to help A&S units interested in offering executive education (and other not-for-credit) offerings. The ASDO has also struck a new Professional Program Working Group that will be bringing forth recommendations on the formation of new professional programs.

			in professional learning programs. This, we feel, can be achieved through partnerships with long-time partners such as Woodsworth College (who could provide us with high-end space) and/or external providers (i.e., Lancaster House). This will require additional resources, strategic staffing, and external funding up-front to implement meaningfully. We must also consider potential overlap with Rotman’s exec-education program, and how best to avoid directly competing with one another.	
The reviewers expressed concern that, despite their exceptional dedication, CIRHR staff are working beyond capacity; they recommended assessing staff workloads and benchmarking against comparable units.	16.	“The staff are extremely committed but overworked... there is need to examine staff workloads and look at benchmarks.”	Response: We are in the midst of working with our HR partners at FAS to review staffing at CIRHR. There is an upcoming retirement (already announced) in one staff position which will be incorporated into planning considerations.	Immediate- medium term: The ASDO Administrative HR team will work with the unit to assess the program’s staffing needs.
The reviewers recommended that the Centre engage in strategic space planning to explore the feasibility of addressing immediate space constraints while planning for long-term growth requirements.	17.	“Develop a space utilization and expansion plan that addresses immediate space constraints while planning for long-term growth requirements.”	Explanation: CIRHR is housed in a historic heritage home (121 St. George Street) with limited physical space. The Centre includes administrative offices, faculty offices, a graduate student PhD office with carrels, an IRHR Library with study spaces, and computer workstations. The Centre has space constraints due to the building structure and shared use. There have been previous or ongoing intermittent closures due to construction, and recurring basement floodings. Short Term: 1. Comprehensive Space Audit and Needs Assessment • In Fall 2025 we will conduct a thorough audit of current space usage including offices,	Immediate- medium term: The ASDO supports the unit’s plans for space allocation upon completion of Woodworth and is also encouraged to liaise with our Vice-Dean, Research & Infrastructure, to discuss future space needs. The ASDO also acknowledges the unit’s plans for great efficiency in scheduling meeting rooms and enhancing the space for students.

			study areas, student communal spaces, faculty research facilities, and tech infrastructure. • At our start-of-year meetings with faculty, staff, and students we will open up discussion to identify key space needs and priorities. • Forecast future growth of doctoral, graduate, and undergraduate students and faculty to quantify long-term space requirements. Short-Medium Term • Implement scheduling and booking systems for shared spaces such as meeting rooms, study carrels, and computer workstations to maximize utilization. • Explore modest reconfigurations or furniture solutions that increase usable space without major renovations. • Investigate temporary off-site or satellite locations for overflow study or office space if feasible. Long-Term Expansion Planning • CIRHR has been allocated new offices in the	
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			forthcoming Woodsworth expansion. - Engage university facilities planners and architects to explore options such as building additions, renovation/expansion of adjacent spaces. Stakeholder Engagement and Advocacy - Form a space planning committee including faculty, students, staff, and university facilities representatives. - Create a space plan that might excite potential donors for a space expansion drive that could include the empty driveway to the north of our building (currently between 121 and 123 St. George). Monitor and Review - Establish regular review mechanisms to track space utilization and adjust plans as programs grow or change. - Incorporate feedback from the CIRHR community on effectiveness of space solutions. - The library will be involved in the space audit and needs assessment to ensure that the library space continues to	
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			maintain and improve research, reference and consultation to undergraduate and graduate students. This approach balances immediate needs with strategic foresight to ensure that CIRHR’s space supports its academic mission and anticipated growth effectively.	
The reviewers observed inconsistent relationships with cognate units across the tri-campus system; they recommended that CIRHR continue efforts to engage faculty in units who could contribute to graduate teaching, and explore strategies to address existing tensions and strengthen interdepartmental collaboration.	18.	“It does seem worthwhile for CIRHR to consistently scan the cognate units for professors who might be able to teach for them, given the shortage of faculty.”	Short-Term: We are in the process of adding two U of T faculty from other units as non-budgetary cross appointments. Currently one of these faculty has already begun teaching for us – one is an Associate Professor, Teaching Stream in Organizational Behaviour & HR Management at University of Toronto Mississauga; and one other, an Assistant Professor from the iSchool, has participated in many research-related events and programs at the Centre. Our plan is to involve them more in Centre activities and invite them to teach.	Immediate term: The ASDO supports fruitful relationships between the Centre and cognate units and is happy to assist in identifying additional synergies between their faculty and CIRHR for potential teaching partnerships that would enrich the learning environment of students.
	19.	“Examination and analysis of the roots of the tension, but also how these “cognate faculty’ could be enticed to teach graduate courses regularly in CIRHR would be important.”	Explanation: We currently have two faculty members that have non-budgetary graduate cross-appointments at CIRHR from U of T Scarborough campus, who have access at the moment to individual (non-shared) offices at the Centre. Their main offices are at U of T Scarborough. A third non-budgetary cross-appointment from U of T Scarborough currently holds her graduate appointment (and office space on St. George campus) at OISE. Given that we are hiring new faculty which are 100 percent appointed at CIRHR and St. George campus, and given that we will be hiring new staff positions, priority for office space will be given to our staff/faculty. As a	Immediate term: The ASDO agrees with this assessment of shared space for faculty from other divisions.

			result, a return to shared office spaces for non-budgetary cross-appointments will have to occur. This is perhaps one of the sources of the “tension” observed by the external reviewers.	
The reviewers recommended that CIRHR develop an alumni and external relations strategy to better leverage alumni and practitioner support. Suggestions included establishing an external advisory body, taking a more structured approach to alumni outreach and engagement, and creating opportunities for alumni involvement in teaching, workshops, events, fundraising, and student career development activities.	20.	“CIRHR should develop a strategy with regard to alumni and external relations. Elements of this strategy could include the creation of an external advisory body of prominent alumni and leading practitioners to advise the faculty and Director of CIRHR. The advisory body could also create separate sub committees to deal with different issues such as fund raising, executive development programs, talks and events, participating in classroom teaching and so forth. The purpose would be to involve alumni and others in the life of CIRHR in a systematic way such that there are mutual gains for alumni, business leaders, labor organizations as well as to CIRHR faculty, undergraduates and graduates, and Ph.D. students.”	Response: We agree that CIRHR stands to benefit significantly from more structured alumni engagement. Our alumni are deeply committed and have expressed enthusiasm to contribute in a variety of ways, including mentoring, advising, networking, and event participation. We appreciate this goodwill and intend to develop a stronger framework for long-term alumni relations. Short-to-Medium Term: • We also agree that the CIRHR has tremendous potential to benefit from a more structured alumni engagement strategy. We recognize the importance of this recommendation and plan to begin with foundational improvement, including: a) tracking of MIRHR employment outcomes post-graduation; b) strengthening ties with existing alumni through targeted surveys and small-scale engagement initiatives; and c) identifying a small group of alumni champions to advise on outreach and help initiate a long-term strategy. While we support the idea of an advisory board and alumni subcommittees, these structures must follow once foundational tracking and data system are in place.	Immediate- medium term: The ASDO supports the unit’s detailed plans to further utilize its relationships and partnerships with alumni. The ASDO recognizes the value that the Centre’s alumni offer to its students and supports the unit’s initiatives to strengthen these relationships. Advancement alumni relations would be happy to work with the unit to support an alumni development plan.

			However, we also recognize the importance of setting clear professional boundaries in these relationships. • We will build a system to track employment and contact data, forming the basis of a centralized alumni database. To support appropriate and productive engagement, we will also develop a code of conduct or engagement guidelines for alumni volunteers, to ensure professionalism and appropriate boundaries, piloting small-scale initiatives (e.g., alumni panels or informal networking events) with staff supervision before scaling up. If needed, we will consult with advancement and legal counsel to ensure our approach is compliant with university policies and best practices. We believe that with proper structure and oversight, alumni can play an enriching and supportive role in CIRHR’s mission, while safeguarding the professional environment we offer our students.	
The reviewers noted that, although CIRHR currently benefits from collegial internal relationships and effective leadership, its highly centralized governance model may not be sustainable as the Centre grows. They recommended considering ways to distribute decision-making authority more broadly among faculty and developing a succession planning process for key leadership positions.	21.	“Establish formal shared governance mechanisms to distribute decision-making authority more broadly among faculty and implement a succession planning process for key leadership positions.”	Response: With our current Director concluding his term in 2026, this is the ideal time to review the role of the Director and its many functions. Short Term: We will begin considerations around: a) the sharing of the Director’s responsibility and mandate with existing Associate Directors; potentially formalising our current	Immediate- medium term: The ASDO will undertake the recruitment of a new Director in accordance with Policy and the Faculty’s practice. As set out in Policy, the process for selection involved collegial consultation with faculty, staff, and students in the unit.

			Graduate Coordinator role into an Associate Director of Research and PhD program b) succession planning to recruit and best prepare the incoming director for success. We plan to initiate these discussions in the Fall 2025 academic term, starting with the CIRHR Executive Committee and later to a faculty-staff meeting agenda item.	
The reviewers recommended that CIRHR undertake a strategic planning process that considers the pace of expansion across programs, faculty and staff resources required to maintain instructional quality and student support, and other issues such as class sizes, faculty workload, and space constraints.	22.	“CIRHR should undertake a strategic planning exercise with a view to identifying the pace of growth, the number of new faculty required to grow without deleterious effects on quality, and the number of staff members required to provide an increased student body with the appropriate support and attention that is required.”	Response: We acknowledge the importance of undertaking a comprehensive strategic planning exercise to guide CIRHR’s sustainable growth—encompassing the pace of growth, faculty hiring needs, and staffing requirements to maintain high quality and student support. Short-Term • Initiate a Strategic Planning Exercise: Establish a one-day planning retreat that includes leadership, faculty, staff, and student representatives to lead the strategic planning process specific to growth and resource needs. Medium-Term • Develop a Detailed Strategic Plan: Use insights from the planning retreat to finalize a comprehensive plan outlining: • Desired pace of program growth (undergraduate and graduate) with enrollment targets	Medium-long term: The unit will be requested to undertake a 5-year unit-level academic planning exercise upon completion of this review, which will enable the unit to engage in strategic planning and discuss its plan with the Dean and senior leadership. Many of the topics suggested by the Centre are included in the A&S template for five-year unit-level academic plans. This planning exercise could take place as early as the 2026-27 academic year.

			• Faculty recruitment plan specifying the number and timing of new hires necessary to maintain program quality, including areas or specialties to target • Staffing needs analysis for administrative, academic advising, and student support roles to accommodate increased student numbers effectively Long-Term • Plan for long-term enhancements to physical space, technology, and administrative systems necessary for a larger academic community. This phased approach ensures deliberate, evidence-based decision-making that balances growth ambitions with the imperative of sustaining program quality and student support.	
	23.	“A strategic planning exercise to the size and sustainability of the [MIRHR] program, the relative mix of foreign versus domestic students... and the capacity of the faculty to teach cutting edge topics to maintain quality, is probably necessary in view of the growth in the undergraduate program, and the changing university budget model.”	Response: We fully agree with the need for a strategic planning exercise to determine an appropriate and sustainable pace of growth of our program. The MIRHR program has seen a 42% increase in enrollment from 2022 to 2024, and while we celebrate this growth, it has significantly strained our staff resources – the urgency of this matter cannot be overstated. Short-to-Medium Term: This approach will help maintain the high standard of service that graduate student	See above, #22. Also, see above, #16.

			currently enjoy, preserve institutional knowledge, and safeguard the operational stability of the MIRHR program during a time of transition and potential growth.	
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3 Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

The spokesperson for the reading group reported that the review summary accurately described the full review and that overall, they had found the review to be positive. The Dean's administrative response adequately addressed all identified concerns and included a comprehensive, forward-looking plan. The group had no additional questions or comments.

Stephen Wright, Interim Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science thanked the reading group for their careful evaluation and was highly supportive of the review and its conclusions, as well as the recommendations.

No follow-up report was requested.

4 Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers praised the Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources as a welcoming and supportive environment, emphasizing students' appreciation for the Centre's culture and the responsiveness of its faculty and staff. They commended the thoughtful design of the curriculum, which offers practical, applied learning opportunities that connect directly to the labour market, and acknowledged the significant recent growth in undergraduate enrolments. They described the MIRHR program as CIRHR's flagship master's offering, citing its steady growth and central role in establishing the Centre's reputation as a leading institution in Canada. The reviewers applauded the scholarly accomplishments of CIRHR faculty, observing that the quality, quantity, and citation rates of their research rival those of top international peer institutions. They recognized faculty research for its breadth and impact, contributing to both foundational knowledge and policy development across multiple domains. The reviewers underscored CIRHR's strong internal culture and committed alumni network, whose enthusiasm and willingness to support the Centre are a major asset. Finally, they commended the Centre's strong and collegial leadership, which has fostered a culture of shared dedication and excellence.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: addressing undergraduate student concerns regarding program delivery and support, including limited course options for Work and Organizations students, limited access to courses across CIRHR programs, and a lack of research and career development opportunities; clarifying the differences between the programs in Work and Organizations and in Industrial Relations and Human Resources; developing a broadly available first-year course to introduce students to the discipline, raise the Centre's profile, and attract students to enrol in its programs; developing a comprehensive plan to address PhD program concerns, including recruitment challenges, limited student funding relative to the cost of living in Toronto, inconsistent advising practices, and difficulty aligning entering students with areas of faculty expertise; formalizing cross-enrolment opportunities with cognate units, to broaden course offerings for PhD students; considering the usefulness and viability of the Certificate in Human Resource Management in relation to future enrolment

expectations, the cost of administering it, and the effects it may have on enrolment in the Centre's undergraduate and graduate programs; developing an executive education strategy encompassing program offerings, resource requirements, and revenue targets, leveraging faculty expertise, alumni networks, and external partnerships; assessing CIRHR staff workloads and benchmarking against comparable units; engaging in strategic space planning to explore the feasibility of addressing immediate space constraints while planning for long-term growth requirements; continuing efforts to engage faculty in units who could contribute to CIRHR's graduate teaching; exploring strategies to address existing tensions and strengthen interdepartmental collaboration; developing an alumni and external relations strategy to better leverage alumni and practitioner support; considering ways to distribute decision-making authority more broadly among faculty and developing a succession planning process for key leadership positions in the Centre; and undertaking a strategic planning process that considers the pace of expansion across programs, faculty and staff resources required to maintain instructional quality and student support, and other issues such as class sizes, faculty workload, and space constraints.

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 February 2025 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2032-33 on the status of the implementation plans.

The next review will be commissioned no later than the 2032-33 review cycle.

6 Distribution

On August 15th 2026, 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 & 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.