



University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP) Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan

Programs Reviewed:	Celtic Studies, B.A., Hons. (Specialist, Major, Minor)
Division/Unit offering programs:	Faculty of Arts and Science, offered in association with University of St. Michael's College
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Professor Brian Ó Conchubhair, Department of Irish Language and Literature, University of Notre Dame2. Professor Gearóid ÓhAllmhuráin, School of Canadian Irish Studies, Concordia University
Date of review visit:	October 12, 2017
Date reported to AP&P:	April 3, 2018

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

1 Outcome

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) concluded that there were no issues to be drawn to the attention of the Agenda Committee but requested a follow up report in one year on progress towards the articulation of a clear vision for the program as well as faculty renewal. The follow-up report will be considered by AP&P at the Cycle 5 meeting in 2018-19.

2 Significant Program Strengths

- A strong international reputation
- Pedagogical innovation
- Students who spoke highly of the faculty, their engagement, and the quality of instruction
- The high overall morale and enthusiasm within the program

3 Opportunities for Program Enhancement

The reviewers recommended that the following be considered:

- Cultivating partnerships with cognate departments
- Addressing program language requirements and the supports available to offer these
- Developing summer abroad opportunities for students and increasing the visibility of Celtic Studies programs and events
- Addressing the impact of recent faculty departures, as well as the gender imbalance among remaining faculty
- Enhancing communication regarding departmental events, and scheduling regular faculty meetings



4 Administrative Response & Implementation Plan

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

David Cameron, FRSC
Dean

March 14, 2018

Professor Sioban Nelson
Vice-Provost Academic Programs
University of Toronto

Re: Review of Celtic Studies

Dear Sioban,

Along with the faculty, staff and students of Celtic Studies, I am pleased with the external reviewers' assessment of Celtic Studies and its programs: Specialist, Major, Minor. The reviewers complimented Celtic Studies and its undergraduate programs and courses, noting that, "its reputation is acknowledged across the globe and its pedagogical innovation is the envy of universities and institutes of higher learning on both sides of the Atlantic."

The quality of this program notwithstanding, as per your letter dated February 12, 2018, the review report raises a number of issues and challenges. I am writing to address the areas of the review report that you identify as key. The response to these items is separated into immediate (six months), medium (one to two years), and longer (three to five years) term action items for Celtic Studies, where appropriate. Celtic Studies has discussed the reviewers' comments through consultation with various groups and has begun to implement changes where appropriate and that are consistent with Celtic Studies' mission.

Curriculum

The reviewers recommended cultivating partnerships with cognate departments.

The program agrees that cultivating partnerships with cognate departments is a very good idea.

Implementation Plan

Immediate-term [six months]:

The program will pursue partnerships with cognate units, including the Department of English. The program will engage in a review of course offerings to assess whether there are courses in cognate units that could be cross-listed for Celtic Studies students.

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Medium-term [1-2 years]:

When possible and as appropriate, St. Michael's College will provide funding for teaching in the program from faculty members in these cognate departments.

The reviewers raised concern regarding program language requirements, and the supports to offer the requirements.

The program intends to continue with its Welsh language courses at current faculty complement and will seek strategic cross-listings of upper-year and graduate-level Welsh language instruction.

Implementation Plan

Immediate-term [six months]:

With respect to Irish language courses, which represent the major component of language instruction in the program, the program will continue its longstanding partnership with ICUF (The Irish Canadian University Foundation), an external organization that provides the program with annual funding for a dedicated Irish language instructor.

Medium-term 1-2 years]:

The unit will on draw on pre-existing funds, provided through historic donations to St. Michael's College, to support Scots/Gaelic courses in alternating years (as possible).

Longer-term [3-5 years]:

The Principal of St. Michael's College has set as a top priority the creation of a continuing teaching-stream position in Celtic Studies with a significant focus on Irish language instruction. The Faculty of Arts and Science will engage in discussions with the College to determine the best approach for the hiring of College faculty who teach in Arts and Science programs.

Strategic Planning

The reviewers suggested exploring ways to develop summer abroad opportunities for students and to increase the visibility of Celtic Studies programs and events, including fundraising and additional outreach to local and international partners.

Immediate-term [six months]:

The unit actively supports student travel to various Celtic Studies conferences for students during the academic year, such as the Annual Celtic Students' Conference in Edinburgh, and also by supporting individual faculty who identify research-related international travel opportunities for students, often in the summer and predominantly in Ireland.

Medium-term [1-2 years]:

In the coming year, the new SMC One Seminar, the Boyle Seminar in Scripts and Stories, will offer its students an out-of-course international learning experience in Dublin. The program regards this SMC One course as a recruitment opportunity for Celtic Studies.

Also, as mentioned above, the unit highlights its long-stranding and important relationship with ICUF, an organization that is based in Ireland and supported by governments and related agencies in Canada and Ireland.

Faculty Resources

The reviewers suggested the need for faculty planning to address the impact to the programs due to recent faculty departures, as well as the gender imbalance among remaining faculty.

The program acknowledges the current gender imbalance, but notes that this is anomalous for the program, and has arisen as a result of two relatively recent retirements. Given the very small faculty complement associated with this small program, the departure of even a single faculty member can significantly alter the gender balance. Nevertheless, the program is aware of the University's statement on Equity, Diversity, and Excellence (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppdec142006.pdf>) and mindful of this statement with respect to undergraduate teaching in Celtic Studies.

Implementation Plan

Longer-term [3-5 years]:

The program will pursue a continuing teaching stream appointment in Celtic Studies with a significant focus on Irish language instruction, funded by the College.

Administration

The reviewers suggested some improvements in communicating Departmental events such as visiting speakers, and the need for regularly scheduled faculty meetings.

The program acknowledges the need for consistent, clear, and contemporary means of communicating with its many communities. This past year, the Principal created a fund dedicated to supporting student-focused and student-initiated activities in the program, which complements the pre-existing funds the unit has historically dedicated to supporting Celtic Studies activities.

Implementation Plan

Immediate-term [six months]:

The program will seek to collaborate more intensively with the student union, which is making creative and ambitious use of social media to communicate its activities and those of the program.

To conclude, we appreciate that the external reviewers identified Celtic Studies' strengths and noted a few areas for development. Celtic Studies has already begun to move forward with plans to address the recommendations as presented by the reviewers.

Sincerely,



David Cameron,
Dean and Professor of Political Science

cc. Randy Boyagoda, Principal, St. Michael's College, Director, Celtic Studies
Poppy Lockwood, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning and Strategic Initiatives

5 Executive Summary

The reviewers identified the programs' strengths as its strong international reputation; pedagogical innovation; students who spoke highly of the faculty, their engagement, and the quality of instruction; and the high overall morale and enthusiasm within the program. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: cultivating partnerships with cognate departments; addressing program language requirements and the supports available to offer these; developing summer abroad opportunities for students and increasing the visibility of Celtic Studies programs and events; addressing the impact of recent faculty departures, as well as the gender imbalance among remaining faculty; and enhancing communication regarding departmental events, and scheduling regular faculty meetings. The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty, unit and programs' responses to the reviewers' recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result. The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) concluded that there were no issues to be drawn to the attention of the Agenda Committee but requested a follow up report in one year on progress towards the articulation of a clear vision for the program as well as faculty renewal. The follow-up report will be considered by AP&P at the Cycle 5 meeting in 2018-19.