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TO: Digvir Jayas
President and Vice Chancellor

DATE: April 17, 2024

FROM: Alan Siaroff
Chair, Academic Quality Assurance Committee

RE: Master of Arts Program Academic Quality Assurance Review

In accordance with the U of L *Academic Quality Assurance Policy and Process*, the Academic Quality Assurance Committee approved the review of the Master of Arts Program at its February 28, 2024, meeting.

The Self Study Committee for this review was comprised of: Lars Hallstrom (Program Review Coordinator), Alain Takam, and Duane Rockerbie.

The review produced 4 documents:

1. Self Study Report. Written by the Self Study Committee. Received February 23, 2023.
2. External Review Report. Written by Dr. Loleen Berdahl (University of Saskatchewan) and Dr. Mirella Stroink (Lakehead University) based on a site visit October 2 to 18, 2023. Received November 20, 2023.
3. Program Response. Written by the Self Study Committee. Received December 4, 2023.
4. Deans' Response. Written by Jackie Rice, Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Matthew Letts, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science. Received February 12, 2024.

Self Study Report

The Self Study Report asked for External Reviewer feedback on several areas:

- Are there potential benefits or economies of scale that could be expanded by greater use of the Western Deans' Agreement?
- Is growth a reasonable expectation at this particular time in Alberta?
- What are the primary levers for improving the quality of the: (1) faculty experience as supervisors; and (2) student experience?
- Are there models/examples/opportunities that the University should explore (e.g. Collaboration with similar departments or institutions as per (1) but beyond that Agreement?)
- Are there clear recommendations for initiatives/trajectories that should continue?
- Are there clear recommendations for initiatives/trajectories that should cease or receive significant reform?
- Are there specific recommendations for:
 - The Dean of Arts and Science
 - The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies
 - Departmental Chairs and/or committees
 - Faculty
 - The Executive (President, Provost etc.) of the University of Lethbridge?

The body of the report noted several strengths of the Master of Arts program:

- Stable enrolment within the MA program.
- Consistent MA enrolment in some majors.
- Program design that emphasizes individual students and "customized" degree content.
- Individualized curricula and supervision by dedicated faculty members committed to the success of their students and the program.
- Continuing potential and interest in interdisciplinary offerings.
- Incremental shifts toward course-based degrees (in fields such as Economics, Kinesiology, and Cultural, Social and Political Thought).

The following weaknesses and challenges were mentioned in the body of the report:

- Relatively low (and in some areas decreasing) numbers of engaged faculty members willing to supervise graduate students – no singular trend of growth or development.
- Enrollment and related growth in the MA program have been slow and uneven.
- MA students comprise a small proportion of total graduate students at just 11% in 2021.
- Although applications have increased significantly, the number of registrations has not kept pace, resulting in a declining registration rate.
- Graduate teaching and supervision are typically viewed as above faculty workload norms for those faculty who take on MA students. Previous attempts toward integration into workload have not been maintained.
- Graduate programming and developing a culture of graduate education for both faculty and students is difficult when graduate education is a low institutional priority.
- Graduate programming and developing a culture of graduate education is challenging within a provincial context of austerity, a decade of significant funding reductions, faculty attrition, and uncertainty.
- The lack of a consistent or homogenous model for the MA is also a challenge. Coupled with workload considerations, the individualized nature of most majors, and the lack of resources, the burden falls to the individual supervisor. With the lack of standard coursework in most programs, graduate students must locate a supervisor with strongly shared research interests.
- Significant asymmetries in applications, funding offers and enrollment, coupled with a lack of cohorts in many majors that do not feature structured programs.
- Ongoing declines in both appetite and capacity of faculty to supervise/engage with MA students.
- Services on campus have been designed primarily for undergraduates.
- Absence of formal academic advising for MA. students.

Recommendations from the body of the report:

- Drawing upon extant strengths, interdisciplinary programming, and a strong research culture among many faculty may facilitate recruitment.
- Increase visibility of research profiles of MA. program faculty members to facilitate recruitment.
- There is potential for developing course-based MA programs in some departments that have proven popular at other institutions. Many students find these programs appealing and they reduce supervising duties for departments.
- Possibility of a continuum of delivery (from course-based, to individually supervised, to niche/boutique and interdisciplinary offerings that build upon strengths and faculty complement).

External Review Report

The External Review Report contained 14 (fourteen) recommendations for improving the Master of Arts program:

Recommendations from the body of the report:

- The university should discontinue most of the many MA programs currently being advertised.
- Disciplinary MAs should be limited to departments with a minimum faculty complement size of six full-time tenure-stream faculty. Departments below this size should be provided with resources to develop interdisciplinary MA options supported by a minimum faculty complement size of six fulltime tenure-stream faculty.
- University leadership should identify a solution to the notable disconnection between leadership and faculty on how graduate training is accounted for in faculty workloads.
- Leadership – including the Dean of Arts and Science and department chairs – should bring faculty together to reimagine the MA program, and should champion inter-departmental and interdisciplinary partnerships in the MA program.
- Leadership – including the Dean of Arts and Science and department chairs – should model, reward, and reinforce interdisciplinary collaboration across the social sciences and humanities.
- The current ad hoc MA model should be replaced with thoughtful and deliberately designed MA programs.
- The Faculty of Arts and Science should establish a faculty graduate chair in departments or clusters with sufficient enrolment to support a standalone program.
- The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) should establish a support staff position with responsibility for the MA program.
- Each MA program should offer at least one common required course.
- Admissions procedures to the MA program should be changed so that supervisor match is not required before applying to the program.
- The university should offer only one start semester (fall) in all MA programs.
- Procedures for awarding GTA funding should be reviewed with an eye toward establishing clear and consistent expectations and transparent processes.
- SGS should provide Arts-specific professional development training opportunities for graduate supervisors.
- The Thrive program should continue to be supported by SGS with expanded promotion and outreach to ensure that students, especially those in smaller programs, receive foundational guidance and skills. Alternatively, it is recommended that the sustainable MA programs that

continue to be offered be supported with online resources and tools to ensure that they provide this support to their students.

Challenges discussed in the report:

- Offering three program intakes was presumably meant to respond to student demand and increase overall enrollment. However, the data indicate that the September start is still the most viable, and feedback indicates that other start times undermine the sense of student cohort while putting students on different timelines, making it difficult to group enough students to offer viable courses.
- While students interviewed through this process reported satisfaction with their supervisors and research, concerns were expressed about the lack of graduate courses (apart from independent studies and cross-listed courses), a lack of consistent structure and clear administrative support, no options for supervisory change in the event of student supervisor relationship breakdown, and a lack of a sense of community or graduate culture.
- We were troubled by the heavy usage of self-study courses and cross-listed courses and by the lack of student cohort. The graduate student isolation and lack of community are of significant concern in light of growing national and international attention to graduate student mental health.
- Admission procedures present some challenges. Feedback from faculty and students indicates that the current process in all disciplinary majors except Economics is that students must have identified a thesis supervisor before applying to the program. The effect of this is that while the programs are listed and advertised, there are very few if any actual available spaces in programs where there are no faculty available to supervise.
- An additional challenge stemming from existing admissions procedures is the current pattern of multiple intakes. Based on the data provided in the self-study, applications to the MA program are predominantly in the fall semester. A very small number of students start their programs in the spring or summer. While this option might be appealing to a small number of students, the effect is to further undermine a sense of cohort or graduate community and make it difficult to bring together enough students to offer graduate courses for core topics instead of independent reading courses.
- There were several issues reported by faculty and students in the review process relating to the procedures and expectations relating to the Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTA) for graduate students. Several students spoke about what they saw to be inconsistent and inequitable expectations relating to the work involved in a GTA, as well as unclear and non-transparent procedures for the awarding of GTA funding that lead to loss of trust. In addition, some students spoke to a clawback occurring, whereby those students who are successful with external funding awards (e.g., SSHRC) have their GTA funding revoked. The effect of this is to disincentivize applying for external funding, an important part of academic training.

Opportunities discussed in the report:

- Course-based MA programs are attractive to students in some areas and could be an opportunity in some fields. Economics should be supported to continue to develop this possibility.
- The self-study identified an online information system and the implementation of PDF-based forms among the delivery priorities, with only the latter having been achieved. Program delivery could also be enhanced with some streamlining and increased clarity of course requirements. We consistently heard that supervisors and students were not clear on procedures and forms. An online information system could partially address this issue, and this review also recommends the establishment of a single graduate staff coordinator to support the programs across the Faculty of Arts and Science (see recommendation 7) and the establishment of a faculty graduate chair in departments or clusters with sufficient enrolment to support a standalone program (see recommendation 8).
- [T]his review recommends that the university discontinue most of the many MA programs currently being advertised (see recommendation 1), and instead reorganize to offer only those MA programs that make sense as products of particular units or clusters of units where there is sufficient instructional and supervisory capacity to take in a minimum annual cohort of students (see recommendation 2). This reorganization should be driven from the “bottom-up” to ensure that the resulting program(s) are well aligned not only with the 5 priorities of the institution but also with the realities of the capacity and resources within the institution and the needs of the students regionally and beyond.
- There were some bright spots at UofL that stood out as exceptions: we heard from an Economics student who reported a cohort and sense of community in that program, and we heard from students in other programs who, while not being CSPT students, took CSPT courses and developed a sense of graduate student community in that context. These examples can point the way to reimagining the overall MA program structure to ensure that programs are student-focused to meet student needs, including the need for community, connection, and peer-based learning.

Program Response

In their Program Response, the Self Study Committee addressed the recommendations from the External Review Report:

1. <i>The university should discontinue most of the many MA programs currently being advertised.</i>	Agreed – but with caveats. This proposal needs to account for departmental variation (both in favour and against). This also needs to be considered in light of implications for teaching/supervisory loads, interdisciplinary opportunities, and potential ULFA issues. This should be done in consultation with the departments that have been identified as unable or unwilling to maintain an MA program, perhaps based on past enrolments.
2. <i>Disciplinary MAs should be limited to departments with a minimum faculty complement size of six full-time tenure-stream faculty. Departments below this size should be provided with resources to develop interdisciplinary MA options supported by a minimum faculty complement size of six fulltime tenure-stream faculty.</i>	Agreed – allows larger programs/departments to continue. However, there are significant cultural and bureaucratic barriers to interdisciplinary MA's that could make the proposal problematic. This may also be seen as a fiscal, rather than pedagogical, intervention and should be positioned as a teaching-based

	strategy, not just a way to save money. NOTE: Disciplines and departments may not be synonymous (Some departments may contain multiple disciplines).
3. <i>University leadership should identify a solution to the notable disconnection between leadership and faculty on how graduate training is accounted for in faculty workloads.</i>	Agreed. This has been raised in previous AQAs and in Faculty Councils. Modest attempts were made in the past but not institutionalized. The failure to do so has further expanded this disconnect. Formal courses that are listed in the university calendar that are required for the MA program do count as faculty workload. Independent Studies do not count towards workload and should not as they are "independent", meaning that the impetus is on the student to complete the work, not the supervisor. (NOTE: This does not, however, mean that they should not be considered within performance assessment). The workload issue of supervising duties must be addressed, particularly for faculty members supervising a number of students concurrently versus those who do not supervise any students, of which there are many. Recognition by the Dean of A&S in bi-annual PARs can be vague and inconsistent on the issue of MA supervision.
4. <i>Leadership – including the Dean of Arts and Science and department chairs – should bring faculty together to reimagine the MA program, and should champion inter-departmental and interdisciplinary partnerships in the MA program.</i>	Agreed. Should be led by disciplines/departments and chairs. Also need consistent standards for the MA re: quality assurance. The CSPT program was an attempt to establish an interdisciplinary MA that has not reached optimal engagement with both faculty and students (low to zero enrolments). SGS could consider how to establish different categories of MA programs, and to set their minimum requirements and expectations.
5. <i>Leadership – including the Dean of Arts and Science and department chairs – should model, reward, and reinforce interdisciplinary collaboration across the social sciences and humanities.</i>	Agreed. NOTE: This is not a common nor successful practice at the University of Lethbridge historically. Discussions have taken place in the past in the context of cost savings, but without much structure and agreement.
6. <i>The current ad hoc MA model should be replaced with thoughtful and deliberately designed MA programs.</i>	Agreed. These new programs need to be designed using a bottom-up approach with some serious discussions with, and within, departments as to whether designing formal MA programs with minimum standards for broad knowledge acquired by the student is desirable. Students noted in their survey responses that the content and quality of some programs is questionable.
7. <i>The Faculty of Arts and Science should establish a faculty graduate chair in departments or clusters with sufficient enrolment to support a standalone program.</i>	This may be premature and should perhaps be conditional on other changes suggested in this document.
8. <i>The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) should establish a support staff position with responsibility for the MA program.</i>	Agreed. Assuming it is dedicated or prioritized for the MA.
9. <i>Each MA program should offer at least one common required course.</i>	Agreed pedagogically. Implementation hinges on the successful adoption of other recommendations. This will also hinge on increased enrollments in those courses/programs that currently have only 1-2 students for courses such as Economics where larger enrollments already exist, agreed. Agreement on content/focus may be a challenge, but precedents do exist at other institutions.
10. <i>Admissions procedures to the MA program should be changed so that supervisor match is not required before applying to the program.</i>	Agreed but with careful attention to the admissions process and requirements. Requires some tailoring to specific/different types of MAs. Identifying a supervisor should not necessarily be required for a course-based MA program but can be optional for research-based MA programs depending upon departmental resources and individual faculty capacity.
11. <i>The university should offer only one start semester (fall) in all MA programs.</i>	Agreed. This allows for students to have consistent course offerings and to engage in their education as part of a cohort.

<p>12. <i>Procedures for awarding GTA funding should be reviewed with an eye toward establishing clear and consistent expectations and transparent processes.</i></p>	<p>Agreed. MSc departments were provided with annual budgets to allocate to graduate students based on the recommendations of the department Graduate Education Committees. This was never offered to MA departments and has been discontinued to MSc departments. At the least, funding should be distinguished between different types of MA programs with some programs that offer little in the way of MA participation or interest receiving less consideration. The current model of GPA and reference letters is fraught with inequities and inaccuracies.</p>
<p>13. <i>SGS should provide Arts-specific professional development training opportunities for graduate supervisors.</i></p>	<p>Agreed. Some training is available currently, but it is very targeted to the MSc program.</p>
<p>14. <i>The Thrive program should continue to be supported by SGS with expanded promotion and outreach to ensure that students, especially those in smaller programs, receive foundational guidance and skills. Alternatively, it is recommended that the sustainable MA programs that continue to be offered be supported with online resources and tools to ensure that they provide this support to their students.</i></p>	<p>Agreed.</p>

Deans' Response

The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science responded to the 14 (fourteen) recommendations from the External Review Report:

<p>1. <i>The university should discontinue most of the many MA programs currently being advertised.</i></p>	<p>The Government of Alberta has designated the University of Lethbridge as a Comprehensive Academic and Research University (CARU), one of only four in the province. Comprehensive universities are partly defined by the offering of graduate studies across a wide range of disciplines. Supervision of graduate students and other HQP and involvement in graduate supervisory committees are part of teaching duties and new faculty are universally interested in such activity. Faculty Members could decide to restructure our M.A. programs or even amalgamate Departmental structures so that there are fewer of them, but there needs to be opportunity for new and existing hires to participate in graduate supervision to train the next generation to produce research and creative outputs for society.</p> <p>One challenge to maintaining our MA program integrity in the face of budget cuts is having the critical mass of faculty members to provide the necessary depth to the disciplinary expertise required for effective supervisory committees without looking externally or well across traditional disciplinary boundaries. The availability of fundamental courses even when supersizing senior undergraduate offerings is also limiting, for example with respect to ancient languages. With the adoption of technology in the classroom, we could look to other institutions, perhaps building on the model offered by the Western Dean's agreement¹. If we do not grow and maintain the capacity for our new and existing faculty members to participate in graduate supervision, not only will students and faculty members lose on opportunity at the</p>
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¹ The Western Dean's of Graduate Studies agreement allows graduate students at any western Canadian institution to take courses at any other western Canadian institution free of tuition. The paperwork and process to facilitate this is a bit complex and many groups are looking at ways to simplify it, but the process is in place and has been widely used in many other disciplines.

	University of Lethbridge, but we will lose some of our differentiated advantage over undergraduate institutions.
<p>2. <i>Disciplinary MAs should be limited to departments with a minimum faculty complement size of six full-time tenure-stream faculty. Departments below this size should be provided with resources to develop interdisciplinary MA options supported by a minimum faculty complement size of six fulltime tenure-stream faculty.</i></p>	<p>Two interdisciplinary MA options already exist: the MA in CSPT and the Individualized Multidisciplinary MA (IMMA). If units would be interested the SGS would be happy to further discuss either option to hear specifically what is working and what barriers exist and work to address them.</p> <p>It should be noted that the School of Graduate Studies does not place limits on any programs; rather acts as a facilitator for developing and shaping programs of interest to the offering Faculties and Schools and ensures the quality as a whole of our graduate programs.</p> <p>The Faculty of Fine Arts is currently in the process of developing a course-based M.A. in addition to developing 4 graduate level courses (there is currently only one graduate level course in Fine Arts: FA5020) which would form the foundation of the course-based M.A. in areas related to fine arts, and as well offer courses as part of the MFA and possibly the MMus programs. They have indicated that it would be useful for the SGS to create guidelines for course-based M.A. programs to ensure that credit hours, workload and processes are aligned, and as well ensure that differences between graduate certificates and graduate degrees are clear.</p>
<p>3. <i>University leadership should identify a solution to the notable disconnection between leadership and faculty on how graduate training is accounted for in faculty workloads.</i></p>	<p>In the Faculty of A&S, formal courses listed in the calendar as required for various M.A. programs (e.g. CSPT, Economics) count towards workload if they attract at least five students.</p> <p>M.A. programs with explicit course requirements include CSPT, ECON, KNES and Cultural Resource Management. All other programs require a minimum of two courses at the graduate level, which are not specified. Many are using independent studies to satisfy those program requirements, but that is not the only option. Further collaboration across faculties might be worth exploring as this is a concern in Education and Fine Arts as well. We might also seek agreements with other institutions to share offerings if our programs are at stake.</p> <p>It is Dean of SGS' understanding that the reduction of teaching load in or around 2002 from 5 to 4 courses for most departments in the Faculty of A&S was intended to encourage and account for the added expectation of graduate supervision.</p> <p>With respect to teaching credit for graduate supervision itself, the Dean of the Faculty of A&S is open to the concept of shifting back to a 5-course load with credit for involvement in graduate supervision as well as supervision of Independent and Applied Studies without any net increase in the mean number of undergraduate courses taught per Faculty Member, but the potential for fewer taught by those involved in more graduate supervision and more for those who do not get involved. In such a model, graduate supervision opportunity would need to be universal for fairness to Faculty Members. Resource limitations do not presently allow the Faculty of A&S to reduce teaching loads overall, unless there is a decision to further streamline and / or eliminate some undergraduate or graduate programs.</p>
<p>4. <i>Leadership – including the Dean of Arts and Science and department chairs – should bring faculty together to</i></p>	<p>As indicated in the program response, this should be led by disciplines/departments and chairs. With that being said, the</p>

<p><i>reimagine the MA program, and should champion inter-departmental and interdisciplinary partnerships in the MA program.</i></p>	<p>Deans would be delighted to be involved in such conversations and to report this outcome to Faculty Members. The SGS has already begun to facilitate conversations about the creation of different categories of MA programs (e.g. course-based, thesis-based) and are open to supporting other ideas.</p>
<p>5. <i>Leadership – including the Dean of Arts and Science and department chairs – should model, reward, and reinforce interdisciplinary collaboration across the social sciences and humanities.</i></p>	<p>Interdisciplinary collaboration across the Social Sciences and Humanities is a hallmark of the University of Lethbridge approach and is encouraged and celebrated. This is also valued deeply in performance evaluation. A&S staffing plan requests regularly reflect these values, as do A&S requests for communications and marketing focus.</p> <p>However, for such collaboration to be successful, this also needs to come from the ground up as we wish to defer to the autonomy of disciplinary experts to define directions. Possible opportunities may come from the joint graduate symposium being offered for CSPT and Fine Arts graduate students.</p>
<p>6. <i>The current ad hoc MA model should be replaced with thoughtful and deliberately designed MA programs.</i></p>	<p>As noted in the response, again this needs to come from the disciplinary experts to be successful.</p> <p>The model being proposed in Fine Arts might be one direction that could be used as a template, or at least as an opportunity to see what can be done differently.</p>
<p>7. <i>The Faculty of Arts and Science should establish a faculty graduate chair in departments or clusters with sufficient enrolment to support a standalone program.</i></p>	<p>This would require additional central resources or restructuring to achieve this without increasing workload. Department Chairs take on these duties, along with Chairs of Department Graduate Education Committees and the Coordinators of the larger graduate programs. Because of limiting resources, we have difficulty even populating these roles. Associate Deans are busy with many portfolios, but a significant fraction of the duties of one of the Associate Deans in the Faculty of Arts & Science is the Graduate Studies and Research portfolio. We can shift some of the Advising portfolio duties of that Associate Dean to the Director of Curriculum to allow more focus on SGS and Research-related activity.</p> <p>It should be noted that there is currently inconsistency with the model for graduate leadership across the institution. In Faculties such as Education and Dhillon School of Business the Associate or Assistant Dean overseeing Graduate programming takes on a significantly higher proportion of the advising and student support work than in the Faculty of A&S, where the number of students is much greater. As a result, the majority of student advising for graduate students in A&S programs is currently supported within the SGS. While there must be the recognition that current resourcing does not allow for any unit to take on more work, it is also important to point out that this is a source of confusion for graduate students.</p>
<p>8. <i>The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) should establish a support staff position with responsibility for the MA program.</i></p>	<p>Currently, the MA program does not have the numbers to justify a dedicated support staff position. The Program Specialist in the SGS supports all graduate students in A&S programs, and while they are undeniably busy, it is mostly with PhD and MSc students. From the perspective of the Dean of SGS, a different model of shared responsibility and support for small programs across the institution would make more sense. This would apply to the MSc Mgt, Fine Arts, and some Health Science programs – none justify a dedicated full-time support, but all could benefit from more consistent support and a centralized model.</p>

9. <i>Each MA program should offer at least one common required course.</i>	This should be up to the various units with faculty involved in MA supervision. If there are disciplinary groups that want to pilot this then the Deans' offices would be happy to facilitate. However, adding additional courses to a unit's teaching responsibilities may require that they find a reduction in another program to facilitate.
10. <i>Admissions procedures to the MA program should be changed so that supervisor match is not required before applying to the program.</i>	This has been modeled by the M.A. Economics program (and other programs) and is do-able if other departments/programs wish to pilot it. In the Faculty of Arts & Science, most Department Chairs and Program Coordinators have been opposed to this change.
11. <i>The university should offer only one start semester (fall) in all MA programs.</i>	This is already under discussion.
12. <i>Procedures for awarding GTA funding should be reviewed with an eye toward establishing clear and consistent expectations and transparent processes.</i>	Responsibility for GA allocations was moved to A&S departments in 2022. The program response indicates a lack of understanding of our current process. Better communication from SGS on this appears to be needed.
13. <i>SGS should provide Arts-specific professional development training opportunities for graduate supervisors.</i>	The current offerings around Graduate Professional Development focus on career development generally, rather than on specific disciplinary skills. The pilot of a Peer Mentorship program has been carefully designed to ensure broad disciplinary representation. Again, some of these misconceptions indicate that communications need to be carefully planned and revisited to ensure that faculty, staff, and students are aware of such changes.
14. <i>The Thrive program should continue to be supported by SGS with expanded promotion and outreach to ensure that students, especially those in smaller programs, receive foundational guidance and skills. Alternatively, it is recommended that the sustainable MA programs that continue to be offered be supported with online resources and tools to ensure that they provide this support to their students.</i>	Thrive no longer exists and has been replaced with the SGS Professional Development program. The suggested outreach is taking place in coordination with the advising coffee meetings being held by the SGS Program Specialist. Online tools and resources are in place and have been for several years.

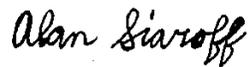
While the External Reviewers' Report contained 14 (fourteen) recommendations for improving and/or maintaining the Master of Arts program, the area, the Deans, and the Academic Quality Assurance Committee each felt that the recommendations were too narrow in focus and were better presented as broad goals to be met before the next review. The committee modified and consolidated most of the 14 (fourteen) recommendations into the following 3 (three):

1. The Deans of the School of Graduate Studies and the Faculty of Arts and Science will strike a task force whose discussion and report will include but not be limited to;
 - o researching alternative models for program delivery, which could include:
 - course-based Master's programs that do not require obtaining a supervisor in advance.
 - interdisciplinary programs supported by a minimum faculty complement.
 - o offering at least one common required course in each degree to build opportunities for graduate students to collaborate and connect.
 - o considering a cohort intake model limited to the Fall term.
2. The Deans of the School of Graduate Studies and the Faculty of Arts and Science will look at ways of improving communication, including:
 - o developing training for faculty members around graduate supervision.
 - o clarifying to faculty how graduate supervision is accounted for in workloads.
 - o ensuring that the various responsibilities in graduate studies are clear to students and faculty.

- o communicating the organizational structure of the School of Graduate Studies to students and faculty.
- 3. The School of Graduate Studies Professional Development program should continue to be supported with expanded promotion and outreach to ensure that students, especially those in smaller programs, receive foundational guidance and skills.

The Academic Quality Assurance Committee is satisfied that the Master of Arts academic quality assurance review has followed the U of L's academic quality assurance process appropriately, and acknowledges the successful completion of the review.

Sincerely,



Dr. Alan Siaroff
Chair, Academic Quality Assurance Committee
Professor, Department of Political Science

cc Michelle Helstein, PhD.
Provost & Vice-President (Academic)