



March 30, 2017

To: David L. Eaton  
Vice Provost and Dean  
The Graduate School

Rebecca Aanerud  
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Planning  
The Graduate School

From: Mia Tuan  
Dean and Professor  
College of Education

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mia Tuan", written over the printed name.

RE: 2016-2017 Museology Graduate Program Review

As proxy Dean for the Interdisciplinary Museology Graduate Program review, I outline the Graduate School's recommendations on the review. Detailed information on the review is located in the documents that were part of the following formal review proceedings:

- Charge meeting between review committee and administrators (June 4, 2016)
- Self-Study (September 27, 2016)
- Site visit (October 27-28, 2016)
- Review committee report (November 18, 2016)
- Museology response to the report (December 16, 2016)
- Graduate School Council consideration of review (March 2, 2017)

The review committee consisted of the following faculty.

Paula Nurius, Professor, School of Social Work, UW Seattle (Committee Chair)

Linda Watts, Professor, School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, UW Bothell

Kevin Crowley, Professor, School of Education; Director, Center for learning in

Out-of-School Environments (CLOSE), University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA

Dave Ucko, President, Museums+More LLC, Washington, DC

Members of the Graduate School Council presented findings and recommendations of the review to the full Council at its meeting on March 2, 2017. I concur with the Council's comments and recommendations noted in the attached summary which was prepared by the Graduate School Council members.

Attachment

**University of Washington | Graduate School Council**

**Summary of the Review of the Interdisciplinary Museology Graduate Program**

**Eliot Brenowitz, Professor, Department of Psychology**  
**Elizabeth Van Volkenburgh, Professor, Department of Biology**  
**March 2, 2017**

**Academic unit name: Interdisciplinary Museology Graduate Program**

Degrees offered: Master of Arts (MA), Graduate Certificate in Museology for students in other units.

**Key points:**

- The Museology Program is strong now, but cannot maintain its strength if it continues with its current traditional approach.
- The program needs to become less insular, have better integration with disciplinary colleagues on and off campus, and with other relevant local institutions such as the Burke Museum and Pacific Science Center.
- The Students are happy, but not well connected to other relevant faculty and programs.

**Strengths:**

- It is an excellent fee-based program with a national recognition. The new director, Jessica Luke, is a productive, dynamic, visionary leader and is vulnerable to recruitment away from the UW.
- The Program hired an external evaluation firm to provide feedback on the program, which according to the review committee, demonstrated an “openness to re-examination and constructive change.”
- The Museology Interdisciplinary Faculty Group (MIFG), comprised of faculty from various UW units, is an advisory group that oversees academics and administration.
- Since the last review, the Program made considerable progress with growth in the number of faculty and staff. The Program is now in a single location at the UW Tower. It has a robust curriculum and advising system developed.
- The number of students has increased from 43-70, and the graduation rate has also increased. Students feel supported by faculty and staff in dealing with the program and in their research. They respect the faculty and program leaders.
- The Program has a strong culture of inclusion and validation, esprit de corps, and there is a clear sense of being part of a team.

**Challenges:**

- The core faculty consists of the Director, Associate Director, and two lecturers, with three staff. There is a potential risk of burnout. The burden on faculty has increased with an increase in the number of students, but only one new faculty member. Each faculty member is expected to supervise up to 15 student theses. It has impact on the quality of their work and mentoring, and constrains program growth. The review committee noted that the “The number of faculty is not adequate to service the current program and enrollment; enrollment could be decreased or number of faculty increased to address this issue.”

- The faculty FTEs reside in home academic departments. There is a need to clarify the faculty code regarding the consideration of Program faculty contributions for reappointment, tenure, and promotion.
- A characterization of the Program is that it is “orphaned” because it is both fee-based and interdisciplinary. Students face unfair difficulties in meeting program requirements. They must take courses in other academic units but are the last allowed to register. Classes are often filled so they must “go begging” for permission. Thus, they feel like second-class graduate students. Further, the Program lacks dedicated space for students to gather which hampers the building of community between students and faculty.
- The field is changing rapidly, which has implications for future jobs for students, with the evolving roles of museums. The Program should strive to keep up with roles of technology and media in public education, and develop stronger partnerships with community groups and institutions such as libraries and schools.
- The Program cannot join the campus-wide capital campaign due to its fee-based status. Further, it does not have a development plan for pursuing foundation grants. The review committee noted that the program should evaluate its fee-based funding model with the UW Continuum College.
- There does not seem to be explicit inclusion of interdisciplinary pedagogy or structures, as opposed to cross-task preparation. They could engage in deeper collaborative training with other academic units on campus.
- Students need to partner with active researchers and other programs on and off campus. It is easy to work only with program faculty and not branch out to other units: “insular, echo chamber.” Students should have experience working outside museum settings and learn how skills transfer to other settings like foundations. The current thesis format is valued within program. The approach is not the best to teaching skills for interacting with active researchers. Learning based on field of research has exploded and the current thesis approach is not keeping up with it. Students do not develop an understanding of interdisciplinary approaches beyond the various methods within Museology. A capstone project may be better.
- The committee noted, “Educational research, in contrast to curatorial research, is not sufficiently supported for a program whose stated ‘signature’ is research.” Only two faculty are actively engaged in education research, both are lecturers, which limits research opportunities for students.
- According to the committee, evaluation training and practice does not place enough emphasis on rigorous, quantitative methods.
- It is not clear that the current Program structure and size is sustainable. A move from the Graduate School to another academic unit would serve to address a number of structural issues. A move would facilitate student access to existing courses, improve program’s status, allow it to use shared departmental infrastructure, support faculty research and thereby improve future faculty recruitment. Potential downsides of a move is that it could compromise the Program’s autonomy and identity.
- The Program does not have a diversity plan or committee. The lack of diversity in the Program is a concern, but there is a sense of limited ways to address it.

**Areas of concurrence:**

- The Program and Review Committee were in broad general agreement about program strengths and challenges. There were no areas of disagreement.

- The Program noted an incorrect statement in the Committee's final report (Page 4) which indicated "... two of the core faculty maybe approaching retirement or part time status." The Director indicated that no faculty had expressed an intent to retire or reduce their appointment to part-time.

**Graduate School Council Recommendations:**

The Council concurred with the Review Committee's recommendation that the next full review of the Interdisciplinary Museology Graduate Program occur in ten years, specifically in the 2026-2027 academic year.

The Council differed with the Review Committee's recommendation for an administrative "check-in" in 5 years. The Council recommended that a 3-year check-in occur to evaluate the Museology Graduate Program's progress toward making changes recommended by the Review Committee.

cc: Jessica Luke, Senior Lecturer and Director, Interdisciplinary Museology Graduate Program  
David Canfield-Budde, Director, Interdisciplinary Programs, The Graduate School  
Museology Graduate Program Review Committee  
Graduate School Council  
Augustine McCaffery, Senior Academic Program Specialist,