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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Senate
FROM Jon Driver, Vice-President, Academic and
Provost, and Chair, SCUP
RE: External Review of the School for the Contemporary Arts (SCUP 12-18)

DATE June 18, 2012

PAGES 1/1

At its June 6, 2012 meeting SCUP reviewed and approved the Action Plan for the School for the Contemporary Arts that resulted from its External Review.

Motion:

That Senate approve the Action Plan for the School for the Contemporary Arts that resulted from its External Review.

encl.

c: O. Underhill
C. Geisler



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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Jon Driver, Chair, SCUP
FROM Bill Krane, Associate Vice-President,
Academic and Associate Provost
RE: External Review of the School for the Contemporary Arts

DATE May 30, 2012
PAGES 1/1

Attached are the External Review Report on the School for the Contemporary Arts and the Action Plan endorsed by the School and the Dean.

Motion:

That SCUP approve and recommend to Senate the Action Plan for the School for the Contemporary Arts that resulted from its External Review.

Following the site visit, the Report of the External Review Team* for the School for the Contemporary Arts was submitted in March 2012.

After the Report was received, a meeting was held with the Dean, Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology, the Director of the School for the Contemporary Arts, and the Director of Academic Planning and Budgeting (VPA) to consider the recommendations. The School then prepared an Action Plan based on the Report and these discussions. The Action plan was then submitted to the Dean who endorsed this Action Plan.

The Reviewers made 12 recommendations covering the agreed Terms of Reference.

SCUP recommends to Senate that the School for the Contemporary Arts be advised to pursue the Action Plan.

Attachments:

1. External Review Report – March, 2012
2. School for the Contemporary Arts - Action Plan

*** External Review Team:**

Dr. Barbara Sellers-Young (Chair), York University
Dr. Mark Corwin, Concordia University
Dr. Lisa Naugle, University of California, Irvine
Dr. Alison Beale (Internal), Simon Fraser University

CC Cheryl Geisler, Dean, Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology
Owen Underhill, Director, School for the Contemporary Arts

March 22, 2012

Memo to: Bill Krane, Associate VP Academic, Chair
 Glynn Nicholls, Director Academic Planning
 Norbert Haunerland, Associate VP Research
 Wade Parkhouse, Dean, Graduate Studies
 Cheryl Geisler, Dean, FCAT

From: Review Committee:
 Barbara Sellers-Young, York University, Chair
 Lisa Naugle, University of California, Irvine
 Mark Corwin, Concordia University
 Alison Beale, Simon Fraser University

Subject: Review of School for the Contemporary Arts, Simon Fraser University

The review committee was asked to focus on the following questions with related attention to programs, faculty, administration, connection with community—locally, nationally and internationally:

- a) Assess the national and international distinctiveness of the School's progressive approach to music, dance, theatre, film, visual art, and art and cultural studies.
- b) Suggest new and emerging areas of teaching and research that could be pursued by the School locally, nationally and globally.
- c) Evaluate the management and deployment of resources within the School considering the current financial constraints with respect to staffing levels (faculty and administrators) TA and sessional lecturer positions, and other support positions
- d) Could efficiencies be achieved by combining some programs or by introducing a common core program? Are there opportunities to offer courses appropriate for students in Communication or SIAT? Are there other opportunities for cross-disciplinary interaction?
- e) Do the School's undergraduate and MFA curricula differentiate it from peer programs regionally and nationally? What programmatic innovations and learning experiences could be considered to enhance the student experience and reputation of the School?
- f) Evaluate the graduate program in terms of quality, achievements of its graduates, financial services to support students, and growth potential.
- g) Evaluate the School's planning processes and plans. Comment on the degree of cohesiveness and the integration of these processes and plans.

The Review Team in answering these questions has divided this document into two sections:

- 1) History, Context and General Observations
- 2) Specific responses to Questions

I. History, Context and General Observations

Founded in 1976 as a credit program, the School for the Contemporary Arts (SCA) has as its Mission Statement:

We are an innovative program in a new state-of-the-art facility within a comprehensive university. We specialize in creating a dynamic learning environment for contemporary art. Our studio classes in dance, film, music, theatre, and visual art are taught by practicing artists; our scholars engage students with the historical, philosophical and political contexts of the arts. We encourage collaboration with colleagues in adjacent disciplines and within our many communities. Our goal is to equip students with the skills, the discipline, the flexibility, the creativity, the understanding and the acumen to excel in the arts in Canada and around the world.

This mission statement is fulfilled by 28.5 faculty who are committed to exploring the role and function of the arts to bring to attention a consideration of social issues through an integration of critical analysis with an aesthetic framework; and, therefore ongoing research between the arts and the social/political/cultural life of the local, national and international community. This is a conversation that is enhanced by being an arts faculty within a comprehensive university. Their teaching and research takes place through a collaborative environment within the SCA both in the undergraduate and graduate program and further extends to the East Hastings neighborhood, in the city of Vancouver, Canada and global community. This approach to collaboration and integration of arts practices succeeds through a complex interplay between faculty and students that is central to the curriculum, both within the courses and in the events associated with courses such as performances, exhibits, installations, etc. The phrase used in the self-study is a "School in continuous production situated in the new cultural hub of the city which works to generate excellence in artistic, intellectual, cultural and community events and programming." This approach also becomes central to the community engagement that has been part of the SCA since its inception, but has taken on increased significance with the possibilities presented by the move from Burnaby to its new location in downtown Vancouver in 2010. Thus, the history and the mission of the SCA matches the goals of Simon Fraser in being a student-centered community engaged in a definitive research agenda.

As noted in the 2003 Review, the "Faculty enjoy a healthy collegiality, and collaboration among members frequently extends beyond the School into independent artistic and

research projects. The undergraduate students are enormously articulate and mature, with powerful self-definition as independent artists working toward professional excellence, but open to innovation.” This environment continues 9 years later and there is a very real sense of faculty and students (graduate and undergraduate) working together to consider the ongoing transformations in the arts as well as issues related to moving from the Burnaby campus to the Woodward’s building.

Despite the success of the faculty, students and alumni of the SCA, its public profile both nationally and internationally is primarily by word of mouth as there is very little publicity about the program. The primary reason seems to be that there is insufficient support to coordinate and support the publicity of events, the development of recruitment materials, consistent updating of the web, etc. Thus, the review team would recommend that there be an organizational structure put in place to support the creation and dissemination of information about the SCA.

Recommendation 1: Put in place either through coordination in the Dean’s office or through the administrative staff in the SCA the necessary support for the creation and dissemination of information regarding the SCA.

II. Specific Responses to Questions

A. Assess the national and international distinctiveness of the School’s progressive approach to music, dance, theatre, film, visual art, and art and cultural studies.

The depth of commitment to collaboration and interdisciplinary experimentation of the SCA’s curricular organization is unique to arts schools both in North America and globally. The majority of schools have a strong emphasis in a disciplinary area with a ‘nod’ towards collaboration but without integrating it throughout all years of the curriculum; in fact, many cross-disciplinary collaborations take place primarily on an informal basis. SCA has incorporated a pedagogical approach that is closer to the interactive nature of today’s arts practices both from the commercial standpoint as in playwrights, actors, and directors working across stage, television and film or the integration of the arts through new modes of interactivity such as gaming; or, from a standpoint of galleries and museums in which performing arts become part of exhibits; or in the development of community projects in which the gallery or stage space becomes the space for social/cultural collaboration and dialogue. Graduates from the undergraduate and graduate program are therefore prepared from their training to provide a leadership for the direction that the arts will take in the future. The latter creates a distinctive profile for the SCA that, as noted previously, is unique.

One of the reasons for the success of this program is the professional profiles of the faculty that include extensive publications, performances and exhibits both in Canada and globally. In conversations with graduate students, they noted the opportunity to work with faculty whose work they had read or seen on the screen, stage or gallery was the reason for application to the school. This included students from France, Iran and the United States. Within this, there is a real commitment to maintaining a research agenda even with the teaching and service demands of a small program. This research has extensive arts council support approximately one million dollars per annum and currently two NSERC/SSHRC grants of \$208,506. By comparison, the 122 faculty of the Faculty of Fine Arts at York University receive one million per annum in arts council grants (a similar amount to SCA) but approximately two million a year in SSHRC grants, which is the highest in Canada among Fine Arts programs. Thus, the total amount of grants received by the SCA with only 28 faculty indicates a high rate of success.

There is a proposal to extend SCA interdisciplinary research framework to a campus-wide collaboration to create an Arts Research Centre (ARC), which would encompass researchers from the arts, humanities, sciences, and new technology. Thus far, the Arts Research Centre has found support in SFU-based grants and has been part of CFI-based proposals. There are also models for projects in the interdisciplinary research projects of Martin Gotfrit, Arne Eigenfeldt, Henry Daniel, Laura Marks, and others. The outline of the proposal indicates this is an opportunity to intersect the new technologies with the research coming out of cultural and performance studies with the knowledge in collaborative and interdisciplinary formats that are rooted in the cultural life of the SCA. As such, ARC would provide an opportunity to integrate SFU's goals to increase research intensity and community engagement by providing opportunities for interdisciplinary research in the social/political/cultural life of the community via an integration of the arts, humanities and sciences.

Recommendation 2: As the arts provide the narrative and related images that become the expressive context for a community, they are distinct from other knowledge areas of a university that have specific communities, as in biologists who speak primarily to other scientists or engineers who speak primarily to other engineers. For this reason, the arts interact more broadly with a social/political/cultural life of a community. A centre such as the one proposed would therefore act as a means to integrate knowledge developed across SFU with projects that would relate directly to Vancouver and therefore expand the community engagement of the campus. For this reason, the review team recommends that the Simon Fraser move forward with the Arts Research Centre and its potential for fulfilling the advanced research and community engagement goals of the University.

B. Suggest new and emerging areas of teaching and research that could be pursued by the School locally, nationally and globally.

The 2003 Review suggested that SCA in terms of teaching consider the differences amongst: “(1) requiring a student to learn intellectually about another discipline; (2) requiring a student to learn, usually at an introductory level, how to begin doing work in another discipline; (3) providing formal opportunities for collaborations amongst people from different disciplines; (4) providing informal opportunities for collaboration amongst people from different disciplines; (5) working in hybrid art forms (installation, performance or new media, for example) which incorporate aspects of at least two disciplines.” From conversations with faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, it appears that the faculty has addressed these concerns. In fact, the academic profiles of the SCA faculty and the curricular strategies of the degree programs engage the primary theoretical frameworks that have influenced research in the arts, humanities and the social sciences. Two areas which were not mentioned, or which the review panel did not discover, were the methodological considerations of ‘performance’ and/or ‘practice as research’ and any reference to sustainability, in particular when it comes to issues of design for performance. It is possible that the collaborative and interdisciplinary nature of the program has embedded ‘performance’ and/or ‘practice as research’ within the ethos of the SCA and therefore not considered an emerging area. If this is the case, the SCA within its outreach to the academic arts community has an opportunity through conferences and other venues to share how they incorporate this mode of research into the project orientation of their curriculum.

In terms of sustainability, the current design curriculum and/or the creation of productions do not seem to be taking into consideration new areas of design that incorporate LED lighting and sustainable methods of set and costume design. As set and costume design are not limited to dance, theatre, and film, but methods engaged by all areas, and with the increased incorporation of issues of sustainability in the city of Vancouver and elsewhere, an attention to sustainability and the arts in general but with specific reference to design is important.

Recommendation 3: Share with external groups the specific curricular organizations which can further develop the current methodology regarding ‘performance’ and/or ‘practice as research’.

Recommendation 4: Develop curricular offerings in the areas of sustainability either as separate courses or integrated into current courses specifically in the areas of design.

C. Evaluate the management and deployment of resources within the School considering the current financial constraints with respect to staffing levels (faculty and administrators) TA and sessional lecturer positions, and other support positions.

The opening of any new building requires new infrastructure strategies and adjustment to those strategies as the programs reveal themselves. This is particularly the case in the issues regarding the use of space. The issues which exist regarding the use of the Goldcorp Centre for the Arts building seem to be related to the current organization of the infrastructure and competing programs that are the result of the history of the project. These programs are the School for the Contemporary Arts, the Woodward's Cultural Unit (WCU), the Simon Fraser Community Presentation Society (SFCPS) and Meeting, Events and Conference Services (MECS). Currently, the planning is for each of these programs to operate as distinct entities which through conversation arrange for the use of the building. (The complexity of the schedule is demonstrated in its daily calendar, which includes 100 events for the SCA.) Beyond issues related to use of space, there do not seem to be clear processes in place that make a distinction between the responsibilities of the staff in the SCA and those in the Cultural Unit/Program. (As we only had meetings on this topic with the SCA staff, we do not know what the concerns would be from the standpoint of the Woodward's Cultural Unit.) Some of the issues raised by the SCA staff were: financial management (being asked to oversee bills created by Cultural Unit), technology oversight and the role of the Cultural Unit/Program staff in supporting SCA performances, publicity (under the organization of Cultural Unit/Program with potential but no direct support for SCA which has 100 plus performances a year). Consequently, there is a staff that desires to remain positive and is very committed, but feeling overwhelmed and not necessarily working at their most efficient. From an external viewpoint, there does not seem to be a clear joint mission/vision regarding the relationship between the increasing community engagement initiatives of the SCA and the Cultural Unit/Program. Thus, an opportunity is being lost for SCA and SFU to become a model of the possibility of community engagement via the cultural life of Vancouver.

Right now, much of the coordination of the building's use and interpersonal problems are resolved due to the fact that Owen Underhill is both the Director of the SCA and of the WCU. His long experience with Simon Fraser University, including serving as interim Dean of FCAT, means he has the necessary knowledge to resolve the majority of the day-to-day issues that arise with this current organizational structure. However, he is planning to return to his teaching and research at the end of this term as Director and it will be necessary by that time to have a succession plan and related organizational structure in place.

Recommendation 5: Initiate a process of consultation which brings representatives from all four groups together to create a vision/mission that intersects the goals of each. The new vision/mission statement would be the basis for a review of current staff descriptions to determine whether or not it would be better to create a joint staff or two separate staff but with clearly delineated job descriptions and lines of responsibility and reporting. The latter includes whether it is better to continue current practice of one person heading both areas or if it is better to have two separate people responsible. Beyond this, consider focusing events associated with MECS on those organizations specifically related to the arts in order to enhance the positioning of the Woodward's building as a centre for community arts engagement.

The new building in downtown Vancouver and its laboratory spaces for music, dance, theatre and film has provided a framework for a unique cultural and community engagement that builds on the collaborative environment the SCA had previously developed on the Burnaby Campus. The new space is complemented by the Alexander Centre downtown, which houses the Visual Art program and provides specific lab space for undergraduate and graduate students in Visual Art. Each space contains sophisticated technical equipment which allows for disciplinary training in new technologies related to the arts and opportunities for projects that intersect between disciplines.

The challenge of technology is the speed at which it changes and thus the necessity for ongoing renewal of technology and the related support and training. (These issues were also noted in the 2003 review.) Currently, there is one person in the Woodward's building who has the sufficient skill to provide classroom and project support. The latter creates issues both for courses and projects as the current individual is often asked to be in two places at the same time. The assumption appears to be that IT based in Harbourfront Building will provide the additional support. However, this has not been successful as IT's location seems to preclude them being readily available or reliably responsive. There is also a need for integration between technical support for performances in SCA and the SFU Woodward's Cultural program.

Recommendation 6: One solution would be to relocate members of the IT team to Woodward's building. Another solution would be to hire a half-time person to supplement support for Woodward's. Another solution would be to hire a technical director who over sees all the technical needs for the facility and directs the support necessary for all areas. Yet another recommendation would be to hold summer intensive and train graduate students (and interested faculty and staff) in how to use the equipment needed for classroom and related projects.

The secondary challenge of technology is the necessity to develop a budget and/or other means of staying abreast with the changes in technology. Other institutions have combined university-based funding, with those from external grants, industrial relationships/partnerships, and endowments. This might be a potential opportunity to jointly leverage the strength of their individual profiles for some shared initiatives with the School of Interactive Arts and Technology (SIAT) on the Surrey Campus that would provide support that would not necessarily come to individual schools.

Recommendation 7: Create a formal Faculty-wide approach between SIAT and SCA to develop and maintain technology of their individual laboratories; and the potential collaboration on specific research projects and/or industry partnerships.

The current faculty complement of 28.5 with 475 undergraduate majors and 22 MFA students. Total 497. (This does not include minors.) This is then a ratio of 17.4 students per faculty. This does not include the students incorporated into service classes. This student/faculty ratio is comparable to institutions that average 17 student/faculty ratios. The goal for the SCA is some combination of undergraduate and graduate majors that would mean a total of 545 students. With this number the student/faculty ratio would be 19.1, a figure that is slightly higher than other institutions. The 28.5 faculty include a joint appointment on reduced contract who only teaches one course every two years for SCA, two laboratory instructors who do not have full responsibility for courses, and some additional administrative releases which reduce the full teaching loads of that faculty (e.g. Patricia Gruben for Praxis). With the latter taken into consideration, the faculty/student ratio is bordering on 20.

A secondary issue for the SCA is to develop an enrolment plan for the next five years that increases students at a time when one-half of the faculty will be arriving at retirement age. This is further complicated by the fact that there is no mandatory retirement and thus no specific time frame in which faculty will actually retire. Another complication is limited funds for new hires until the enrolment is increased. This is an intractable problem that has no easy answer.

Recommendation 8: The SCA creates a graduated enrolment plan for the next five years that would incorporate additional students and combine it with an outline of which programs are likely to have retirements. These plans would be tied to the strategic directions of the SCA. With the successful development of this planning, the request to the Dean would be for a full replacement of funds at an assistant professor level be made available to the SCA instead of the 2/3rds normally returned to the school.

D. Could efficiencies be achieved by combining some programs or by introducing a common core program? Are there opportunities to offer courses appropriate for students in Communication or SIAT? Are there other opportunities for cross-disciplinary interaction?

This set of questions considers the internal dynamics of the current curriculum in specific relationship to the School of Interactive Arts and Technology and potentially other units within Simon Fraser. After an extensive consultation process, the SCA has devised a new undergraduate curriculum that has streamlined the schedule of classes, created new foundational core classes for the BFA/BA, developed two BA programs—Visual and Performance Studies (a revision of previous degree in Art and Cultural Studies) and Cinema Studies as well as creating new internships in community engagement. Each of these revisions suggests changes in the program that in some cases create efficiencies through opening up time for faculty to teach in expanded graduate program and provide more opportunities for interaction with SIAT and other SFU units in courses offered through the expanded BA programs. The latter also implies an ability to add additional students to the SCA in BA programs. Explicitly, the development of the two BA courses that consider the primary theoretical frameworks used throughout the arts and humanities—visual culture, cultural and performance studies—provide an opportunity for students from SIAT. The other primary opportunity is the development of the Arts Research Centre discussed in section A.

The only major concern expressed by students was the ability to get classes as needed and in some case the impact on this of faculty sabbaticals. This was also an issue in the 2003 review. This seems to have been addressed in the current revision but in order to make certain students can complete their degree in four years; the review committee is recommending the following.

Recommendation 9: Review each of the courses within the SCA to determine the appropriate number of students for the course's content. For example, a technique class in dance can accommodate 20 to 25 students, but a dance composition class can only accommodate 12. In the enrolment planning exercise consider the intake of students in relationship to individual class size and schedule classes accordingly. The other suggestion is to create an integrated curricular/sabbatical plan in which the courses are organized so that courses can be rotated or taught by a sessional. A related suggestion is that they incorporate in grant planning a method for covering their courses.

E. Do the School's undergraduate and MFA curricula differentiate it from peer programs regionally and nationally? What programmatic innovations and

learning experiences could be considered to enhance the student experience and reputation of the School?

The MFA degree in the SCA differentiates itself from other arts graduate programs in North America and elsewhere by bringing students from various disciplinary areas together in a two year process that is dominated by an interactive, collaborative curriculum in which students are encouraged to expand their understanding of the arts via seminars and projects. Consequently, students with a strong disciplinary focus in one art form have by graduation from the program developed an intellectual/expressive framework that is informed by sharing the theory and practice of distinct disciplines. The major change within the program has been the increase in number of students which the students and faculty believe has enhanced the program as there is now a critical mass that impacts discussion and exploration.

The 2003 review committee noted “the graduates are quickly integrated into the local vital arts community as well as into collateral fields in which their background and training is welcome. It is not farfetched to suggest, given this range of accomplishment, that graduates of the School are amongst the best and most thoughtfully trained students in North America.” The continued success of the MFA program is in the recent SCA alumni who have gone on to doctoral programs, to teach in universities throughout North America, win such international awards as the SOCAN for young composers or a Genie for film, act as curator for such institutions as the Smithsonian American Art Museum, exhibit in galleries and museums in North America and Europe, work as technicians for companies such as Cirque du Soleil.

F. Evaluate the graduate program in terms of quality, achievements of its graduates, financial services to support students, and growth potential.

The MFA program is currently planning to take between 12 to 14 students each year. This would mean a total of 24 to 28 students in total. In terms of funding, space and faculty supervision we believe this is as many students the program can accommodate. The support for these students outside of TAs, potential SSHRC grants is limited to \$44,000 dollars a year. Thus, packages to students are relatively small and this combines with other issues, noted above, limits number of MFA students.

The area of potential growth within the graduate program is the proposed MA in Comparative Media Arts. This program is conceived as appealing to students interested in a transitional degree between BA and PhD programs and bridge for students from MFA to PhD programs. In the current draft the degree is five terms and includes content from visual culture, cinema studies, new media studies, performance and documentary studies within the SCA; and course work outside of the SCA in Communication Studies

English, and the Humanities. In its inclusion of courses both within and without the SCA, it continues the dialogue suggested in the Arts Research Centre proposal and in the interdisciplinary perspective of the SCA. There are however two issues related to the proposal: 1) the financial support for graduate students, 2) the number of MFA students who having finished a two year MFA would be interested in a two year MA prior to a four to five year PhD.

Recommendation 10: The SCA Graduate Committee engages in dialogues with the Graduate Dean and Dean of the FCAT to determine the funding for additional graduate students.

Recommendation 11: The SCA Graduate Committee review other similar programs across Canada to determine if they are duplicating similar programs and consider revising the direction of the program to either limit it to one year or revise to incorporate professional component to focus students towards areas of professional arts practice such as producing, curatorial practice, community arts practice and arts education.

G. Evaluate the School's planning processes and plans. Comment on the degree of cohesiveness and the integration of these processes and plans.

A comparison of the 2003 Review with the state of the SCA nine years later demonstrates a clear commitment to the creation of action items that are ultimately accomplished. Examples from previous review include the new building to house the SCA, the reorganization of undergraduate curriculum and attention to the expansion of the graduate program. The organization of the three day site visit of the review team is also an example. The visit was framed from the general to the specific, from the research of the faculty to its incorporation of this research into the undergraduate and graduate curriculum. The areas of increased planning suggested by the review committee related to the new spaces and associated programs are a natural extension of discovery and problem solving that is part of inhabiting any new space.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Put in place either through coordination in the Dean's office or through the administrative staff in the SCA the necessary support for the creation and dissemination of information regarding the SCA.

Recommendation 2: As the arts provide the narrative and related images that become the expressive context for a community, they are distinct from other knowledge areas of a university that have specific communities, as in biologists who speak primarily to other scientists or engineers who speak primarily to other engineers. For this reason, the arts interact more broadly with a social/political/cultural life of a community. A centre such as the one proposed would therefore act as a means to integrate knowledge developed across SFU with projects that would relate directly to Vancouver and therefore expand the community engagement of the campus. For this reason, the review team recommends that the Simon Fraser move forward with the Arts Research Centre and its potential for fulfilling the advanced research and community engagement goals of the University.

Recommendation 3: Share with external groups the specific curricular organizations which can further develop the current methodology regarding 'performance' and/or 'practice as research'.

Recommendation 4: Develop curricular offerings in the areas of sustainability either as separate courses or integrated into current courses specifically in the areas of design.

Recommendation 5: Initiate a process of consultation which brings representatives from all four groups together to create a vision/mission that intersects the goals of each. The new vision/mission statement would be the basis for a review of current staff descriptions to determine whether or not it would be better to create a joint staff or two separate staff but with clearly delineated job descriptions and lines of responsibility and reporting. The latter includes whether it is better to continue current practice of one person heading both areas or if it is better to have two separate people responsible. Beyond this, consider focusing events associated with MECS on those organizations specifically related to the arts in order to enhance the positioning of the Woodward's building as a centre for community arts engagement.

Recommendation 6: One solution would be to relocate members of the IT team to Woodward's building. Another solution would be to hire a half-time person to supplement support for Woodward's. Another solution would be to hire a technical director who over sees all the technical needs for the facility and directs the support necessary for all areas. Yet another recommendation would be to hold summer

intensive and train graduate students (and interested faculty and staff) in how to use the equipment needed for classroom and related projects.

Recommendation 7: Create a formal Faculty-wide approach between SIAT and SCA to develop and maintain technology of their individual laboratories; and the potential collaboration on specific research projects and/or industry partnerships.

Recommendation 8: The SCA creates a graduated enrolment plan for the next five years that would incorporate additional students and combine it with an outline of which programs are likely to have retirements. These plans would be tied to the strategic directions of the SCA. With the successful development of this planning, the request to the Dean would be for a full replacement of funds at an assistant professor level be made available to the SCA instead of the 2/3rds normally returned to the school.

Recommendation 9: Review each of the courses within the SCA to determine the appropriate number of students for the course's content. For example, a technique class in dance can accommodate 20 to 25 students, but a dance composition class can only accommodate 12. In the enrolment planning exercise consider the intake of students in relationship to individual class size and schedule classes accordingly. The other suggestion is to create an integrated curricular/sabbatical plan in which the courses are organized so that courses can be rotated or taught by a sessional. A related suggestion is that they incorporate in grant planning a method for covering their courses.

Recommendation 10: The SCA Graduate Committee engages in dialogues with the Graduate Dean and Dean of the FCAT to determine the funding for additional graduate students.

Recommendation 11: The SCA Graduate Committee review other similar programs across Canada to determine if they are duplicating similar programs and consider revising the direction of the program to either limit it to one year or revise to incorporate professional component to focus students towards areas of professional arts practice such as producing, curatorial practice, community arts practice and arts education.

EXTERNAL REVIEW – ACTION PLAN

Section 1 – To be completed by the Responsible Unit Person e.g. Chair or Director			
Unit under review School for the Contemporary Arts (SCA)	Date of Review Site visit March 7, 8 & 9, 2012	Responsible Unit person, Owen Underhill, Director SCA	Faculty Dean Cheryl Geisler
<i>Note: It is <u>not</u> expected that every recommendation made by the Review Team be covered by this Action Plan. The major thrusts of the Report should be identified and some consolidation of the recommendations may be possible while other recommendations of lesser importance may be excluded.</i> <i>Should an additional response from be warranted it should be attached as a separate document.</i>			
1. PROGRAMMING			
1.1 Action/s (description what is going to be done): 1.1.1 Undergraduate: • Comprehensive Review and New and Emerging Areas The School is currently in the midst of a comprehensive review of its undergraduate curriculum with the aim of streamlining and integrating the BFA/BA structure, growing graduate programming, and positioning our curriculum distinctively for the future. Two significant changes are the introduction of a new BA in Cinema Studies which will begin September 2012, and a fundamental shift of our current BA in Art and Culture Studies to a more broadly based BA in Visual and Performance Studies. These changes are coordinated and supportive of the new MA in Comparative Media Arts being introduced (see below). The terms of reference of the review included consideration of new and emerging areas of teaching and research that could be pursued by the School. With reference to the recommendations, the School is developing new models for community engagement through partnerships focused on interdisciplinary collaboration, practice based research and contemporary performance and aesthetics. Am Johal, in the Community Engagement Office, has been developing community-based workshops, lectures and seminars that include projects involving our students and faculty. With the help of a career advisor, we will build on our unique location in the inner city, creating a new model for community engagement for the artists, scholars and students in the SCA. A new internship at the fourth year has already been introduced to support this initiative. We are also investigating a community engagement course that would be distinctive to the School for the Contemporary Arts and our Vancouver Inner City location. • Graduated Enrolment Plan The School supports the recommendation that a five-year graduated enrolment plan be developed with the help of the Dean. Initial steps towards this plan are already underway. With such an enrolment plan in place, and with the continued development of our new SCA Academic Renewal Plan linked to curricular reform at the undergraduate and graduate level, it is expected that the School can have reasonable assurances of support for new hires coinciding with retirements. It should also be noted that, in addition to the new BA, changes to our recruitment process, admittance policy and academic continuance policy are being introduced which will increase our			

enrolment and rate of acceptances into major programs. This will help towards meeting the graduated enrolment plan

1.1.2 Graduate:

• **Current MFA degree**

We were encouraged by the committee's strong confirmation of the uniqueness of our interdisciplinary MFA and the strength of our students. We will continue to fortify the reputation of the program by greater promotional efforts. The committee encouraged us to keep the total of students in the two years to 28 maximum. It is our plan to continue with those numbers as they do represent a very significant increase from a few years ago.

• **New MA degree**

The SCA graduate chair and representatives from the MA working group and FCAT will meet with the Dean of Graduate Studies in relation to the proposed MA. The review committee recommended that our MA in progress, a MA in Comparative Media Arts be shortened, and we have accepted that recommendation and shortened the degree from taking place over a five semester period, to taking place over a four semester period. We have also, as suggested, deemphasized students already holding MFA's as central to recruitment. The degree is better aimed at students holding BA's and BFA's in a range of appropriate topics. Research is underway to insure that the program is distinctive in the national context.

• **Funding for graduate students**

On the table for discussion will be funding possibilities for our current MFA as well as the new MA students. Discussion with the FCAT Advancement Officer has targeted graduate scholarships as one of the School's priorities. The School is also positioning itself to offer more teaching assistantships and graduate assistantships.

1.2 Resource implications ((if any):

The Academic Renewal Plan will be financed from the salaries of departing SCA faculty members.

1.3 Expected completion date/s:

The first phase of a comprehensive review of the undergraduate curriculum will be finished by the School by the end of calendar year 2012.

It is recommended that a three to five year coordinated enrolment plan and academic renewal plan be completed and supported by the Dean in principle by the end of June 2013.

The MA in Comparative Media Arts will be introduced as a Cohort Special Arrangement with the first intake of students planned for the Fall of 2013. The introduction of the MA is therefore in step with the changes happening in undergraduate curriculum, including those which free up faculty resources for teaching in the MA program.

2. RESEARCH

2.1 Action/s (what is going to be done):

- **Research Centre**

The External Review Committee supported the initiative to develop an Arts Research Centre. The School has set up a committee to further develop the Research Centre proposal initiated by Dr. Henry Daniel. The latest research centre proposal has a working title of PERFORMANCE RESEARCH CENTRE. It is proposed that the Research Centre specialize in arts and practice-based research, and research/creation, facilitating knowledge exchange and transfer between the humanities, health sciences, applied sciences, and technology, via the medium of performance as applied across a range of fine arts disciplines. This Centre is also under discussion in FCAT with discussions to date with Dean Geisler and Professor Thecla Schiphorst in the School of Interactive Art and Technology. Development of the proposal so that it can be used for fund raising is underway with FCAT Advancement Officer Nancy Cardozo.

- **Research Profile of the SCA**

The proposed performance research centre represents only a portion of the research profile of the faculty of the School for the Contemporary Arts. The committee was very supportive of the professional profiles of the faculty and the "high rate of success" of its faculty with respect to arts council grants. Other actions that would support the research agenda of the School include improving technical support for faculty research projects (the proposed SCA Technical Director would go a long way to improving this situation).

2.2 Resource implications ((if any):

The Performance Research Centre would require additional space and other support. A budget is being prepared. It is understood that additional funding will have to be raised to support the Research Centre. Once established, it is believed the Performance Research Centre will be able to leverage new resources through grants and donations.

2.3 Expected completion date/s:

Preparatory work at the School and FCAT level is underway in developing the Performance Research Centre. The academic process of support for the research centre will begin in the fall of 2013.

3. ADMINISTRATION

3.1 Action/s(what is going to be done) :

- **Public Profile and Recruitment**

The reviewers recommend that the necessary support for the creation and dissemination of information regarding the SCA be put in place. In making this recommendation, the external reviewers commented on the deeply collaborative and interdisciplinary pedagogical approach to the arts that they thought to be unique. By focusing on publicity and recruitment the School for the Contemporary Arts will be positioned to recruit locally, nationally, and internationally. Given the distinctness of our program it is strategic that this be coordinated within the School. Conventional publicity generated for the University at large and for FCAT does not serve us well. Our market is specific and the publicity must be targeted for students interested in the arts.

A first phase of this work is already underway. In January 2011 we received a full-time Recruitment and Retention position followed in December 2011 with a .5 Web Clerk. Since June 2011 we have been working with *PUBLIC Architecture + Communication* on a major redesign of the School website which will be launched this May.

The second phase (i.e. actions that now need to be undertaken) includes development of a publicity strategy campaign. The School believes this can be most effectively accomplished by building on the relationship we have established with *PUBLIC Architecture + Communication*. They understand our unique collaborative and interdisciplinary approach to the arts and are well suited to produce a template that can be used to generate material for publicity.

3.2 Resource implications(if any):

Competition for fine arts students is increasing through new programs at colleges, new universities and in private institutions. Other schools that target the same student pool draw upon larger resources than we currently have based on review of their materials and publicity campaigns. We recommend surveying material from other institutions and costing out what is needed to successfully raise the profile of the School within potential students in the local, national and international jurisdictions. There will need to be a proper costing out of what would be required to maintain public exposure and successful recruiting on an annual basis.

3.3 Expected completion date/s:

We expect to complete Phase Two by January 2013. We would then plan to roll out the designed recruitment/public profile program for the School in the recruitment campaign in early 2013, and in successive years.

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4. TECHNICAL SUPPORT DEFICIENCIES

4.1 Action/s(what is going to be done) :

- **Proposal to improve Technical Support**

The review committee identified technological support in the new building as a situation that needs urgent attention. With respect to their recommendation, the School strongly feels that the best approach to improving technical support for SCA faculty and students is to institute an SCA Technical Director position and a half-time CUPE assistant that would report to the .7 Computer/Media Support APSA position. It is quite clear to all within the School that the complexity of the building and the special purpose needs of our more than 100 productions, exhibitions and showings require internal SCA staff to be effective. In order to address this problem as soon as possible, it is proposed that these two positions be initiated as temporary one-year positions beginning September 1, 2012. The Dean and VPA Jon Driver are working to help make this proposal operational.

- **Technical Director position**

Job Description: The Technical Director (TD) School for the Contemporary Arts (SCA) coordinates and facilitates technical support for SCA productions (public performances in a variety of disciplines, exhibitions, and film showings) produced by the undergraduate and graduate degree programs. They will work closely with faculty members in the SCA who teach production and design students, and as required with the faculty of the SCA requiring technical support for teaching and research. They will coordinate support for individual graduate students of the MFA program preparing productions. They will provide additional mentorship and training to undergraduate and graduate students working on productions or using production equipment, insuring students understand and follow safe operating procedure and are properly prepared to utilize a variety of technical equipment.

.5 Computer/Media Assistant

The Computer/New Media Support Administrator Stefan Smulovitz is a .7 APSA position. Since moving into the building, he has been overrun with work, and it has become clear that this position on its own is insufficient to deal with the computer/media support workload in SCA. After careful consideration, we have concluded that the proposed CUPE .5 assistant will be the most effective solution.

4.2 Resource implications(if any):

Both the Technical Director and .5 Computer/Media Assistant are new positions. As mentioned, in order to address the technical support deficiency as soon as possible, we would like to proceed with temporary one-year positions beginning September 1, 2012. The need for increased technical support in SCA must be seen as a new need related to the move into a complex new multi-use building with multiple artistic venues and advanced technical equipment, and the increased numbers of students especially graduate students. As a result, the positions proposed should be funded as a partnership involving VPA and FCAT.

4.3 Expected completion date/s:

We are working in combination with the Dean and VPA to secure funding for the temporary positions so that they can begin September

1, 2012.

5. MISSION/VISION OF THE GOLDCORP CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

5.1 Action/s:

- **Mixed Use Interaction in the Goldcorp Centre for the Arts**

As the external review was focused on the academic unit, the self-study and site visit did not permit a full briefing on the vision/mission of the Goldcorp Centre for the Arts with attention to the processes in place related to the multi-use functions of the building. That being said, the School agrees with the reviewers that the timing is right to review especially the links between the SCA and the Woodward's Cultural Unit (WCU). It is proposed that a joint working group (of SCA and WCU) be established chaired by Owen Underhill that can review the operation as it has started up since the opening of the building in September 2010, and look at improvements and clarifications in operation as well as confirm the mandate and vision of the building as a whole and the two units in particular. Please note that other groups are in place (e.g. GCA Planning Group) that address the integration of SCA, WCU, MECS and SFU Vancouver Operations. In addition, the Simon Fraser Community Presentation Society (SFCPS) has not yet presented any events. The timing and booking of these events when they begin to take place will be coordinated through the Cultural Unit as the Director of Cultural Programs Michael Boucher is also the Artistic Director of SFCPS.

We see as an outcome of such a review strengthening links between the SCA pedagogy and Cultural Unit artistic production. The mandate of the WCU artistic program is in fact already compatible with the focus of the School for the Contemporary Arts and it is felt that we can further develop and improve the aesthetic and operational linkages. The Audain Gallery and its Visiting Artists program is a good model for bringing international visiting artists into direct contact with SCA students.

An additional outcome will be to insure that the best possible succession plan is developed for September 2013 when Owen Underhill will complete his joint term as Director of the Cultural Unit and Director of the School for the Contemporary Arts.

5.2 Resource implications(if any):

It is not expected that there are resource implications with respect to the School for the Contemporary Arts.

5.3 Expected completion date/s:

It is proposed that Recommendations from this working group could be reported to Dean Geisler and VP External Relations Philip Steenkamp (to whom the Cultural Unit reports) by November/December 2012.

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The above action plan has been considered by the Unit under review and has been discussed and agreed to by the Dean.

Unit Leader (signed)		Date
Name <u>Raven Underhill</u>	Title <u>Director, SCA</u>	<u>May 11, 2012</u>

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Section 2 - Dean's comments and endorsement of the Action Plan :

I endorse the action plan put forward by the School of Contemporary Arts and provide my more specific comments below:

1.1.1 I strongly support the school's efforts to integrate community outreach into its mission and programs.

I have supported and encouraged the school's efforts to increase enrolment and look forward to discussing their plans for faculty renewal.

1.1.2 A new MA will be of intellectual benefit to the school and I will work with them to insure that it offers a distinctive program and is viable in the context of no increases in overall graduate funding to the faculty. Starting with a Cohort Special Arrangement will give us the time to make any necessary adjustments.

2 I have encouraged the development of the Performance Research Centre under the assumption that it will be funded with outside resources.

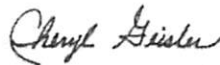
3 As the action plan notes, considerable resources have already been allocated to publicity and recruitment for the school, which are just starting to bear fruit. We next anticipate developing and acting on a targeted recruitment plan in fine and performing arts high schools.

4 I have been in discussion with the VPA about jointly funding a Technical Director for 1 year. I have asked SCA to consider ways to fund the .5 CUPE assistant internally.

5 I will work with the VPA and the VP External to consider the Mission/Vision for the Goldcorp Centre and to work with the school to put in place an effective transition plan for the SCA directorship

Faculty Dean

Cheryl Geisler



Date

May 10, 2012