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| REPORT: TECHNICAL APPAREL DESIGN EXTERNAL REVIEW | DATE: October 9, 2020 |

## EXTERNAL REVIEW TEAM MEMBERS (THE “ERT”)

List the names and affiliations of the External Review Team. Identify the Chair.

Laura Appleton, Senior Manager, People & Culture, Arc’teryx Equipment

Chase W. Anderson, Outdoor Product Design and Development Program Coordinator, Utah State University

Heather Clark, Fashion Design & Technology Program Coordinator, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

## OVERALL ASSESSMENT

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| SELF-STUDY REPORT***Criteria:*** *The Self-Study Report provides a data-supported analysis of the program’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges.*Standard for Assessing this Report:The programmatic strengths and weaknesses identified in this report are supported by data and on-site findings;The Report has appropriate scope, as articulated by the Self-Study Guide;Recommendations are supported by data, a clear rationale and on-site findings. |

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| The External Reviewers:  |  |  | | --- | --- | | Validate the Self-Study Report’s findings and recommendations | Do not validate the Self-Study Report’s findings and recommendations |   **Rationale for this Determination:** Recommendations throughout the report were generally supported by the various stakeholder groups that were met with. With this program being newer there is a sense of it still finding its way, what students are attracted to the program, where alumni fit within industry, and the content to cover in curriculum. As this is the first time that the program has gone through the program review process the recommendations highlight some ideal shifts that will serve to strengthen the program.Two of the main points that were highlighted throughout conversations were:Lengthen the program only for the inclusion of a work experience/practicum component. This was highlighted as a main piece that is currently missing in the program to prepare students to enter the industry upon graduation.Integrate content into the program that teaches students how to utilize their past experiences and education into industry roles. This is supported by the recommendation for a capstone strategy course that explores how to leverage the capstone project.Based on the self-study report and the interviews we recommend that the Technical Apparel Design program choose from one three possible directions to have the strongest program possible.Continue to work in a post-bac format, increasing the program length to include a work experience practicum placement, the ideal is 3-6 months in length, in a full-time role. With this option we strongly recommendation that the program implement additional portfolio requirements to ensure students are entering the program with a strong foundational skill set.Move the current post-bac programming into a masters pathway. For this option further research may be needed to discuss industry expectations around program outcomes, value vs cost and rigor of learning activities. Portfolio process for this pathway may include increased expectations of foundational skills and knowledge of incoming students.Create a pathway for students to gain the foundational technical skills that is felt they are currently missing prior to their entry into the Technical Apparel Design Program. These foundational technical skill courses may present opportunities for learning that overlap with Fashion and Technology, and Product Design program content.Shift the program to combine with the Fashion and Technology program so that it becomes a pathway. With this option students might complete two years general, foundational skills and learning. Upon successful completion of their first two years, students then can apply to a pathway, one of which is Technical Apparel in direction, the other which is more fashion as a way to continue to support the diversity of our local industry. |

## REVIEWERS’ VALIDATION OF THE SELF-STUDY REPORT

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| CHAPTER 2: Program Currency and Connections***Criteria:*** *This chapter adequately assesses program competitiveness and its connections to the discipline/sector. The assessment is supported by appropriate evidence and conclusions.*Standard for Assessing this Chapter:The programmatic strengths and weaknesses identified in this chapter are supported by data and on-site findings;The chapter has appropriate scope, as articulated by the Self-Study Guide;Recommendations are supported by data, a clear rationale and on-site findings.­­­­­­­­­­­­­ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Additional Recommendations Identified by the ERT—include a rationale for the recommendation:With the Product Design program and Fashion and Technology programs within the Wilson School of Design also going through the program review process there may be overlap courses and content within these three programs that may be streamlined for students and industry partners (such as practicum preparation and practicum placement courses). Further conversations in this direction may support strengthening connections with the programs.Develop articulation agreements with educational institutions so that should students wish, they may be able to continue with their education to obtain a masters upon their completion of the Technical Apparel Design program.Revisit conversations with Heriot Watt University, inquire why previous agreement was not formalizedInquire if there are other existing Masters programs that Technical Apparel Design program students could step into as a way to achieve a masters if desiredIncrease program awareness further by drawing connections between the program and industry-based companies, and student success stories.Regularly track data of where students are finding out about the program, and what is the deciding factor in enrolling to best guide future marketing effortsFurther create connections for students between the outdoors and products involved, and content being learned to ensure students have appropriate context for learning activitiesUtilize social media and other marketing tools including creating meaningful content to generate interest in prospective students and potential industry partners.Adding an internship program (as discussed in the Self Study Report) could be a great way to ensure new connections with industry are developed and student skills are developed further through industry experiences. Highlighting these successes makes for great content as well that will further drive interest from prospective students and potential industry partners.Continue to invite back Alumni and industry talent to speak to their experiences and raise the education and awareness of the industry. |
| Increasing the program to two years or pursuing any of the recommended pathways referenced in Chapter 1 should be done very carefully, with consideration and student, alumni, and industry inputIt was highlighted that if the program is lengthened it needs to provide an increase in value to students and having a practicum was identified as an ideal fit for thisAlong with the addition of a practicum, there should be further education in professional development (resume & portfolio building, industry practices & input) from industry professionalsFurther conversations around shifting the program into a masters should be done with advisory board and industry partners to ensure that local industry is ready for this shift, and that the program is fulfilling the expectations that industry might have for those graduating from a Masters programStudents and alumni, in both interviews and the Self Study report mentioned the need for technical design courses including a focus on sketching, digital design, and 3D apparel design (CLO 3D / Browzwear). As cited above, adding courses would need to be weighed against the potential need to lengthen the program or turn it into a Masters program.There was also potential discussion around providing emphasis areas as well as educating students on the various career paths that exist in Technical Apparel including design, development and product line management. Some students expressed interest in the opportunity to choose an emphasis. This also calls into question the need to change the name of the program in a move away from Technical Apparel Design to Technical Apparel with the option for a student to graduate with an emphasis in Design, Development, or Product Line Management. |
| The External Reviewers:  |  |  | | --- | --- | | Validate the Chapter’s findings and recommendations | Do not validate the Chapter’s findings and recommendations |   **Rationale for this Determination:** It was cited that it was a positive that a very limited portfolio was requested as this removed barriers for applicants with previous limited design experience. However, it was cited to ensure applicants have a suitable understanding of technical apparel products as a way to bring context to their learning and industry ready. |

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| CHAPTER 3: Quality of Curriculum Design***Criteria:*** *This chapter adequately examines the quality of the program’s curriculum* *and its current relevance to the discipline/sector. The assessment is supported by appropriate evidence and conclusions.*Standard for Assessing this Chapter:The programmatic strengths and weaknesses identified in this chapter are supported by data and on-site findings;The chapter has appropriate scope, as articulated by the Self-Study Guide;Recommendations are supported by data, a clear rationale and on-site findings­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Additional Recommendations Identified by the ERT—include a rationale for the recommendation:The small and diverse faculty team of the program has a wealth of skills to share with studentsStudents cited having Jimmy Choi join the faculty team in the middle of the Spring 2020 semester brought additional perspective that was very much appreciatedCloser connection between students and advisory panel & Industry: Include industry led taught micro-courses within the curriculum as a way for students to create further industry connections, ensure relevance to industry at times of quick change and innovationAdvisory committee members voiced the desire to maintain the mentorship program that was recently established, and to continue to offer the international travel components. These thoughts were echoed by students, and are supported by the conversations that took place in the external review conversationsKnowledge gaps were identified in aiding students to see avenues through which they might utilize past experiences (education and work) with industry work. These connections could be further built on in a professional practices course.If lengthening the program to including more professional development, sketching, digital and 3D design classes is not possible, micro courses with industry could potentially be used to fill in any gaps that were represented in the Self Study Report.Additional micro courses could focus on portfolio building, another area that current students mentioned was an area they could potentially receive more guidance.Recommendation for including a micro course to bring the perspective of how to leverage the capstone projectBased on student directions what topics would best fit their career goalsWhere might the capstone project fit within the industryWho are the appropriate industry contacts and references for capstone projectsCreate learning milestones (additional due dates or breaking the course up into multiple courses) that are part the capstone processThe External Reviewers:  |  |  | | --- | --- | | Validate the Chapter’s findings and recommendations | Do not validate the Chapter’s findings and recommendations |   **Rationale for this Determination:** Through interviews with two (2) current students in their last semester of the program and two (2) of the current faculty members (Stephanie Phillips was unable to attend the meeting as she was teaching) it was cited that current program content was practical, industry focused and applicable to current industry practices. Identified learning gaps and areas to build on have been cited in the chapter recommendations |

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| CHAPTER 4: Quality of Instructional Design***Criteria:*** *This chapter adequately examines the quality of the program’s instructional design and its current relevance to the discipline/sector. The assessment is supported by appropriate evidence and conclusions.*Standard for Assessing this Chapter:The programmatic strengths and weaknesses identified in this chapter are supported by data and on-site findings;The chapter has appropriate scope, as articulated by the Self-Study Guide;Recommendations are supported by data, a clear rationale and on-site findings |
| Additional Recommendations Identified by the ERT—include a rationale for the recommendation:Additional portfolio ready work for studentsStudents mentioned having 4+ projects prior to graduation from their classes but feeling like of those projects half were not suitable to put in their portfolios. Some expressed the design to have more visual projects that they could leave the program with included in their portfolios to support their future employment opportunities.Additional content coverage and guidance is needed in how students might be strategic with their capstone projectIncorporate opportunities for guest lecturers from companies to teach courses, lectures, and workshops.The Self Study Report recommended reducing any redundancies in the curriculum. This was a complaint among students in a program some already feel is short.Adding additional technical knowledge and course content should be done with industry feedback to ensure students are gaining the skills that meet the current and future talent shortages in Vancouver, and beyond in the apparel industry.For students to gain foundational skills knowledge are there ways for them to enroll in fashion and technology or product design courses so that they might build on this knowledge in the Technical Apparel program?Share clear recommendations with students regarding working while enrolled in the programIt was highlighted that while the program is part time, the demands are significant, and students should be advised to continue in their roles at a part time basis at most. |
| The External Reviewers:  |  |  | | --- | --- | | Validate the Chapter’s findings and recommendations | Do not validate the Chapter’s findings and recommendations |   **Rationale for this Determination:**  Potential of tuition increases are supported by students, alumni and industry for the inclusion of international travel (when possible) for the learning and networking opportunities these provide. Students had positive comments in regards to faculty skill set and knowledge. It was cited the quality and engagement level from faculty. Industry experience merited academic instruction to support learning experiences. |

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| CHAPTER 5: Quality of Services, Resources and Facilities*Criteria: This chapter adequately assesses program resources, equipment, software, and facilities from both the student and instructor perspective. The assessment is supported by appropriate evidence and conclusions.*Standard for Assessing this Chapter:The programmatic strengths and weaknesses identified in this chapter are supported by data and on-site findings;The chapter has appropriate scope, as articulated by the Self-Study Guide;Recommendations are supported by data, a clear rationale and on-site findings |
| Additional Recommendations Identified by the ERT—include a rationale for the recommendation:We support the recommendation for longer lab hours (when the current global pandemic resolves and students are able to have regular onsite campus and lab access)Work with the new lab coordinator and lab technicians to determine if there are any further areas of support that are lackingInquire into the possibility of lab assistants to support students in their open lab work, and use of machineryOne student mentioned the labs as being a primary reason they decided to enroll in the program. Marketing not only program successes utilizing current students and faculty, but continuing to show the incredible lab capabilities seems to be a significant point for prospective students. It was cited that the lab was more modern and technical than the student had seen at local companies.Regarding software, it was mentioned throughout conversations with faculty and alumni, the need to introduce and make available 3D apparel design software including CLO3D or Browzwear. |
| The External Reviewers:  |  |  | | --- | --- | | Validate the Chapter’s findings and recommendations | Do not validate the Chapter’s findings and recommendations |   **Rationale for this Determination:** On the whole students and alumni were very satisfied with the facilities on campus including the lab spaces, machinery available, and donated resources from industry including fabric and notions which students can work with. Library services were also robust and offered a variety of resources and industry / consumer insights for use by students and resources. From those that were talked to during the review panel conversations no concerns or additional suggestions were mentioned regarding student services. Program advisor supplied clear and in depth overview of student services which sufficed impact. |

## CONCLUDING COMMENTS

## It is recommended throughout the planning and implementation stage of the recommendations that the Technical Apparel Design faculty have focused conversations with stakeholder groups (students, industry, alumni) to ensure that changes are made in the most effective way.

## With the need to build enrolment it is strongly suggested that faculty revisit marketing initiatives on an annual basis as a way to assess what is effective in attracting students and having them apply and enroll.

## Marketing might focus on alumni success stories and partnerships with local companies

## Create consistent content via social media, web, and through video. Dedicated KPU Technical Apparel social media accounts could be very beneficial for this purpose.

## Create further understanding of roles available for alumni including technical scope

## Provide opportunities early in the curriculum to help students understand roles in the industry including the role of Technical Apparel Designers, Developers, and Product Line Managers.

## Integration of 3D modelling components using industry relevant software

## Potential for this to be a joint initiative with the Fashion and Technology Program and the Product Design Program

## CLO3D / Browzwear are becoming industry standards. Integration in the formal curriculum or in micro courses should be a high priority. Opportunity to ask local companies to demonstrate/host sessions to accommodate added cost.

## Technical Skill Development

## Could content be covered in micro courses, or foundational technical courses open to students in other programs?

## Students needing technical skills development should be notified of what this pathway of additional learning is prior to them accepting their seat – further clarity needed around the time commitment for this additional learning

## In such a large industry, creating areas of emphasis and focus will be helpful in growing the program. There was a concern that Design in the name of the program is a double-edged sword. Removing “Design”, but providing emphasis areas will increase the opportunity for program growth, and provide a variety of career paths for students to pursue (design, development, product line management).

## To add to students understanding, knowledge and breadth of education industry taught components might be further included in program content.

## Some courses might be broken into micro courses to facilitate industry partner’s work and teaching schedules

## Incorporate guest lecture series each semester to provide consistent opportunities for industry to participate in the program. (These consistent opportunities then provide great stories and content that can fuel your marketing efforts as well on the website and social.)

## Caution against lengthening program purely with the goal to attract international applicants. Program should only be lengthened if integrating a workplace experience-practicum course and content.

## Challenge with industry partnerships has been KPU short comings in structure and support

## Might support be provided through the newly formed WSD Research committee?

## Assess how students are conducting research utilizing KPU library resources

## What additional resources might they need to be successful in their research?

## Is access to any additional data bases needed?

## Assess interest and feasibility in a Wilson School of Design co-op option

## Could this co-op be available to Fashion & Technology and Product Design students as well?

## It has been noted that this is a lengthy process, will industry be ready to support paid co-op placements when it is implemented?

## Further explore the ways that student’s diverse background (previous education and experiences) might be built on within content and learning activities

## Begin surveying companies where students have done a work experience with, worked full-time, or done a project of some kind to begin gathering economic impact data that can be then be taken to BC / Canadian government when seeking out additional programmatic support and investment. Leverage BC Apparel & Gear Association to co-design approach.

## With the student comments about content that is currently missing in the program (Self Study Report Appendix p. 39-40), would this program be better situated as an area of specialization of the Fashion & Technology Program?

## Are students who are lacking in technical skills (sewing, pattern drafting, adobe illustrator, TECH pack introduction) asked/suggested to do a foundational year?

## Could there be a foundational year which all students going into the Fashion & Technology, Technical Apparel and Product Design (?) program are required to do before moving to an area of specialization?

## This or requiring a portfolio for entry could improve the rigor of the program and help the program teach down to the level of a student that may not have technical design skills.

## In either case, additional integration with the Fashion & Technology program seems like a huge opportunity in many areas.

## Student & Alumni Feedback included suggestions for more focus on design and hard skill development (sewing, pattern drafting, adobe illustrator) as opposed to theory p.70

## What is the programs focus and goals for students/alumni?

## A faculty survey comment (p. 117) stated “The curriculum is still very under grad type; we want these people to get involved into management roles”

## Industry needs for alumni p. 132, p. 133

## Industry recommendations p. 146

## APPENDIX 1:

## SITE VISIT AGENDA

Provide the agenda for the Site Visit (e.g. the stakeholder groups with whom the ERT met)

**Kwantlen Polytechnic University**

**Post-Baccalaureate in Technical Apparel Design**

**External Review Remote Site Visit Agenda**

September 24 & September 25, 2020

Via Microsoft Teams

Thanks to External Reviewers:

Laura Appleton

Chase W. Anderson

Heather Clark

Day 1: September 24, 2020

9:00 - 9:50: Introductions and Interview with Program Chair

9:50 - 10:00: Break

10:00 - 11:00: Meet with Program Faculty

11:00 - 11:10: Break

11:10 - 12:00: Meet with University Services Panel (Library Services/Central and/or Faculty Advising)

12:00 - 12:10: Break

12:10 - 1:10: Meet with Dean

Day 2: September 25, 2020

9:00 - 9:50: Meet with Program Advisory Board / Alumni

9:50 - 10:00: Break

10:00 - 11:00: Meet with Students

11:10 - 11:20:         Break

11:20 - 12:00:         Final Meeting with Program Chair

12:00 - 12:30: External Review Team meets to discuss findings and coordinate their review.