UPER Project – Final Report

Report Completion Date: 2022/06/25

1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

1.1 General Information

Faculty/Department:	Arts / AMNE
Degree Program:	BA
Project Title:	Antiquity for Modernity
Principal Investigator/ Department Head:	Leanne Bablitz
Other Applicants:	Matthew McCarty
Report Submitted By:	Matthew McCarty
Project Initiation Date:	2018	**Project Completion Date:**	6/2022

2. GOALS, UNANTICIPATED OUTCOMES and NEXT STEPS

2.1 Goals – *With reference to the goals you originally identified in your project proposal, please list the goals of this project that were met, partially met, not met or removed. If not met or removed, please briefly mention the reason(s) for this. Please feel free to use a format other than the table provided.*

Ultimately, we transformed our entire BA through the UPER process: formulating new Major/Minor/Honours degrees; moving from five defined BA streams to a self-directed model that fosters curiosity and exploration; providing a more coherent framework to scaffold interdisciplinary enquiry; and a greater sense of learning community to students in our program. The new program appears in the 2022/23 Calendar, and coincides with the re-imagining of our departmental identity and brand.

	Goal	Met	Partially met	Not met or removed	Reason (if "not met or removed")
1	Articulate a departmental teaching vision/identity statement	X			
2	Define program-level learning outcomes based on that statement	X			

3	Map current courses against these outcomes	X			
4	Create a range of program design options based on that map for re-imagining our BA	X			
5	Conduct consultations with student, faculty, and industry stakeholders to further refine program-level goals and the proposed structures	X			
6	Adopt a new program structure that meets program outcomes and stems from teaching vision/identity; design new courses necessary; shepherd through university/ministerial approval	X			
7	Create new advising tools to support student success in new program structure	X			

2.2 Unanticipated Outcomes

We stayed close to our work plan, and focused on our major goals; however, the teaching identity statement became the springboard for wider discussions and articulation of a departmental identity through our process of department/program re-branding (from Classical, Near Eastern & Religious Studies to Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies).

In addition, we are undertaken a renewal of our graduate programs, using the work done on the undergraduate program as a guide both for direction and for process.

2.3 Next Steps

Our new undergraduate program has been fully designed and adopted; it appears in the 2022 Calendar. Our next steps relate primarily to feedback and iteration:

1) Observe student, faculty experience over the next 3 years, including following lived student pathways through the new, student-led program and gathering outcome data on graduating students
2) Conduct consultations and solicit feedback from stakeholders
3) Evaluate whether outcomes are being met in practice, and consider tweaks to program design if necessary or desirable

2.4 Future Support – *How might the CTLT or other support units help you achieve your next steps? If you are unsure, please consult with the CTLT staff member who worked with you on this project.*

We would appreciate continued support in designing tools and surveys to obtain useful feedback on the program in practice.

3. **IMPACT**

3.1 Predicting and Confirming the Impact of the Project – *Considering the achievements to date and your expected next steps, please describe:*

- *Who will your UPER project impact? (e.g. students, instructors, TAs or community members) If possible, quantify the size and scope of the impact (e.g. number of students who will be impacted).*
- *How will they be impacted? (e.g. improved graduate outcomes, increased employability, etc.)*
- *What plans do you have for confirming, measuring or evaluating impact?*

Predicted Impacts		
Who (include size/scope)	**How**	**Plan for confirming, measuring or evaluating**
Undergraduate students (~80 per year)	More self-directed (with guidance) learning; more coherent and shared experience with peers/greater community; active engagement with how the ancient world matters today; greater	Observing student pathways over next years; soliciting survey feedback; tracking post-graduation outcomes

	range of graduate/employment options through enhanced multidisciplinarity	
Faculty (~20)	More collaboration in curriculum design and adaptation, as well as through team-taught AMNE 200; more engagement across disciplines and periods in sole-taught classes thanks to this reflective process	Ongoing discussions and small-group feedback sessions, led by curriculum committee Evaluation of AMNE 200 after first year; modifying as necessary
Graduate students (~10 new students per year)	More cross-disciplinarity through TA-ships of modified courses and engagement with curriculum and peer-/undergraduate advising (through GA-ships and revitalized Student Association); we are currently reviewing the graduate program in light of the undergraduate program renewal	Revisiting the graduate program; soliciting feedback from graduate students

3.2 Dissemination – *Please provide a list of any past or upcoming activities (e.g. presentations, publications, etc.) through which you or anyone from your team have shared or expect to share information regarding this project.*

We have consulted with Music on their program redesign, providing support and perspectives particularly on achieving buy-in from stakeholders and the tools for effective consultation with faculty.

We have also offered support to a peer program at the University of Minnesota; they are looking to conduct program evaluation and renewal along similar lines. We held several meetings, presented to the department chair and curriculum committee chair, and provided all of our working materials.

For internal audiences, we have redesigned our department website to provide information about the program changes and newly articulated vision.

4. **REFLECTION:**

What do you know now that you wish you knew before embarking upon your UPER project? What recommendations would you have for any future programs starting their own program renewal? The information you share will help us design better support resources and guidelines for future applicants.

Our main recommendation is to use a variety of consultative methods—both for gathering information and as a kind of motivational interviewing. We found small-group consultations, to allow all stakeholders a chance to share their perspectives, ideas, and concerns, to be most effective for obtaining qualitative feedback. These take a considerable amount of time, energy, and both intellectual and emotional labour from the program leads and facilitators.

We also cannot speak highly enough of PJ Rayner; their support and perspectives really made this project effective. PJ offered an external voice which was crucial for building buy-in from faculty, and was able to negotiate factionalism while encouraging all voices to speak up. Their orientation towards process helped chart the path. I would encourage all programs undertaking renewal to consult with PJ… or at least a recent renewal project on which they collaborated.