

**A review of the Group I/II course classification system:  
Proposed changes and implementation timeline**

This review is presented in response to the Academic Plan aim to Achieve Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Research. Action Item 5.4 of the High Quality Undergraduate and Graduate Programs section requested that the Senate Undergraduate Studies Committee:

*Review and revise the requirements of the Social Sciences and Humanities Groups 1 and 2, along with the various "Science" and "Arts" course groupings to ensure consistency in application, as well as to explore opportunities for course delivery efficiencies.*

The review is in three parts. Part 1 outlines the structure of the review that a sub-committee of SUSC undertook to understand the current system, the issues that have arisen over time and the options for revising the system. Part 2 outlines a proposal for both campuses for a new grouping system based on discipline funding. Part 3 provides an implementation timeline for the new system based on discussions with the Registrars Office.

SUSC would like to thank the members of the sub-committee who undertook this work: Dr. Richard Maundrell, Dr. Andrew J. Dean, Dr. Nandakumar Kanavillil, Ms. Brenda Winter and Dr. Gillian Siddall. The Committee would also like to thank the representatives of the Registrars Office for their work on the implementation of the proposal: Andrea Huillery, Cathie O'Connor, Margaret Anderson and Ashley Beda.

### **Part 1: Review of existing system**

As part of the University's academic planning process, the Senate Undergraduate Studies Committee has undertaken a review of the Group I/II course classification system, which, according to the former Registrar, has been a fixture in the LU calendar since 1964.

These groupings, and the program requirements based upon them were intended to provide breadth to undergraduate degree programs. At its inception, the system would have applied to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, which would have constituted a substantial majority of students at the time. As the University has evolved, the reorganization of faculty divisions has limited the Group I/II system to the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities and, to a lesser extent, the Faculty of Science and Environmental Studies.

#### **Group I Listing – Humanities (2012-13):**

Computer Science

English (exceptions below)

History

Indigenous Learning

Languages

Mathematical Sciences

Music

Philosophy

Religious Studies (exceptions below)

Visual Arts

Women's Studies 1100, 2317, 2711 and 3010

(Women's Studies 1100 counts for purposes of fulfilling both Group I and Group II requirements and Women's Studies courses cross-calendared with Group I.)

The following courses do not count for purposes of fulfilling Group I requirements:

(a) English as a Second Language (ESL);

(b) English 1074, 1807, 2038;

I Religious Studies courses that are cross-calendared with Group II courses;

(d) Women's Studies courses that are cross-calendared with Group II courses.

**Group II Listing – Social Sciences (2012-13):**

Anthropology  
Economics  
Geography  
Gerontology  
Political Science  
Psychology  
Social Work  
Sociology  
Women's Studies 1100, 3030

The following courses do not count for purposes of fulfilling Group II requirements:

- (a) Music, Visual Arts;
- (b) Religious Studies courses other than those cross-calendared with Group II courses;
- I Library and Information Studies with the exception of LIS 2030 and 2050
- (d) Women's Studies courses that are cross-calendared with Group I courses.

As an exception to the above list, note the use of Indigenous Learning 2805 to fulfill the Group II requirement in concurrent Education programs with a major in Indigenous Learning.

LIS 2030 and 2050 may be used as Group II requirements.

While the original groupings would have been based largely on the division between social sciences and humanities, that classificatory boundary has been eroded over the years by the reorganization of faculty structures at Lakehead. Some academic units that would traditionally have been categorized as social science have migrated to Science or Health Sciences, and some that remain do not readily lend themselves to classification as either social science or humanities. Given the current disposition of the groupings, their continued relevance and utility is very much in question.

A further complication is the adoption by the Orillia campus of a separate system of classification using Area I, II and III. In reviewing the Group I/II system, the committee considered a number of possibilities:

1. Do away with it.
2. Retain but revise and rationalize.
3. Replace with a more general breadth requirement such as “2 FCE’s from within the Faculty and 1 FCE from any other Faculty” or “3 FCE’s outside major (or faculty).”
4. Take Orillia’s “Area” system and modify it in such a way that it replaces the Group I/II system.
5. Devise a new system of classification.

In keeping with the broad thrust of the Academic Plan to ‘*ensure consistency in application, as well as to explore opportunities for course delivery efficiencies*’, the Committee was unanimous in deciding that Lakehead was best served by a new classification system that applied across both campuses.

#### **PART 2: A PROPOSAL FOR CHANGE**

Recent discussions held within the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities suggest that there continues to be support for a breadth requirement of some kind, but not necessarily the Group I/II system. What the committee proposes is the “A.J. Dean Plan” whereby every undergraduate course calendared at Lakehead would be categorized according to a generally accepted system:

Type A: Humanities (i.e. SSHRC funded disciplines)

Type B: Social Sciences (i.e. SSHRC funded disciplines)

Type C: Engineering, Mathematical and Natural Sciences (i.e. NSERC funded disciplines)

Type D: Health and Behavioral Sciences (i.e. CIHR funded disciplines)

All undergraduate courses, with the exception of not for credit courses, will be categorized according to this system. Given the nature of their programs, both the Faculty of Law and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine are exempt from these categorizations.

The over-riding rationale for categorizing all courses is to ensure that as students transfer between programs that they are able to determine how their previous courses may fit within their new program.

Letter designations on the Calendar will make it easy for students to use the classification system

and it would be straightforward enough that it would lend itself to an automated degree auditing process, thereby freeing up student counseling resources for more substantive academic/career counseling.

The use of the funding bodies provides a guideline for the classification system - the funding body will not appear in the Calendar. The system is by no means fixed, with the categorization decision to be made primarily by the home academic unit. If appropriate, a unit may decide that a course belongs in more than one Type. If required, SAC would adjudicate disputes about the categorization of courses. Any courses (for example Inquiry courses) that defy classification can also be referred to SAC for consultation. All breadth requirements would continue to be defined at the departmental and/or Faculty level.

### **PART 3: IMPLEMENTATION**

On October 22, 2013, a meeting was held with representatives of the Office of the Registrar to discuss the course grouping proposal and the feasibility for implementation. Specifically, the discussion included how these changes could be reflected within the student information system and then within the degree audit. It was agreed that the proposed changes could be implemented. The proposed implementation structure is for SAC to appoint a Sub-committee consisting of the Chair of SAC, the Registrar, the Chair of SUSC, and a member of the SUSC Subcommittee that developed the system. This Sub-committee would be accountable directly to SAC.

Given the significant amount of work involved in making these changes, a potential start date of Fall 2015 for the 2015-2016 academic cycle is recommended. In order to implement this proposal, the following implementation timeline is offered:

<b>Timing</b>	<b>Related Activities</b>
27 March, 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAC recommendation to Senate</li> </ul>
14 April, 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senate approval</li> </ul>
Spring 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAC directive to academic units to assign course categories for all courses belonging to that unit</li> <li>• SAC compiles and reviews information, settles disputes, and shares with academic units</li> <li>• Revise Curriculum Navigator course fields to include new course categories</li> </ul>

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	<p>on all forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create new Course Type codes in the student information system</li> </ul>
Fall 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty Councils revise faculty Regulations regarding breadth requirements (grouping)</li> <li>• Academic Units make program revisions for all programs using grouping language (i.e. Group I and Group I requirements) and include transition plans (where necessary)</li> <li>• Submission of course designations for Senate approval</li> <li>• Add Course Type codes in the student information system (for 2015-2016 timetable preparation)</li> </ul>
January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Last Senate meeting for submission of: faculty Regulations, Additional Course designations, Program revisions</li> </ul>
Winter / Spring 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of curriculum changes by Senate subcommittees</li> <li>• Senate approval of curriculum changes</li> <li>• Approved regulations, course designations, and program revisions are calendared, update University Regulations definitions page</li> <li>• Degree audit is modified for each program to reflect the changes</li> </ul>
Fall 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All new students are bound by new grouping regulations</li> </ul>

Dr. Wayne Melville

Chair

Senate Undergraduate Studies Committee

27 November 2013

Revised 10 March 2014