

**QUALITY ASSURANCE: CYCLICAL UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM REVIEW –
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS
(March 2013)**

Executive Summary

In accordance with the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) the Department of Economics submitted a Self-Study (October 2011) to initiate the cyclical program review of their undergraduate programs. Volume 1 presented program descriptions, outcomes, and analyses, institutional information and statistical data. Volume 2 and 3 provided a collection of the program course outlines and the CVs for each full-time member in the Department.

Two external reviewers and one internal reviewer, selected from a set of proposed reviewers, examined the materials and completed a day and a half site visit April 2012. The visit included interviews with the Provost and Vice-President (Academic), Deputy Provost, Dean of the Faculty of Science and Environmental Studies (SES), the Chair of the Department of Economics, the Librarian, and meetings with full-time teaching faculty, contract lecturers, graduate assistants, and support staff. The Review Team also had an opportunity to meet with a group of undergraduate students, and to visit the Departments' computer lab, lecture and seminar rooms, and the library commons.

In their report, submitted May 2012, the Review Team provided feedback that describes how the Economics programs meet the Quality Assurance Framework evaluation criteria and are consistent with the University's mission and academic priorities. They reported that the program requirements and learning outcomes set out in the self-study are clear, appropriate and in alignment with the institution's statement of undergraduate degree level expectations. The admission standards, curriculum structure and delivery, and teaching and assessment methods are consistent with those of other undergraduate Economics programs in Canada and are effective in preparing graduates to meet defined outcomes and the degree level expectations. The faculty members are active in research and publish in top journals. Based on the teaching evaluation data, student surveys, and the positive attitudes displayed by the group of students who were interviewed, the Review Team identified the quality of teaching and student engagement as a strength of the programs.

The Review Team provided feedback related to faculty resources and noted that the Department was severely stretched in terms of their ability to offer sufficient breadth and choice of undergraduate courses. They provided a number of comments and recommendations that linked initiatives to increase enrolments and the number of economics majors with opportunities for Department expansion. They emphasized the importance of promoting the new and innovative HBSc Resource and Environmental Economics program. The Review Team provided twenty-three recommendations with supporting rationale for future consideration.

The Chair of the Department of Economics, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty, submitted a response to the Reviewers' Report (October 2012). Recommendations were grouped into themes, and clarifications and corrections presented. A Final Assessment

Report was prepared to provide a synthesis of the external evaluation and internal response and assessments of the undergraduate programs delivered by the Department of Economics. The report identifies the significant strengths of the program, the opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, and sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation. The report includes an Implementation Plan that identifies who will be responsible for approving the recommendations set out in the Final Assessment Report; who will be responsible for providing any resources made necessary by those recommendations; any changes in organization, policy or governance that will be necessary to meet the recommendations; who will be responsible for acting on those recommendations; and timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations.