



Executive Summary and Implementation Plan

Quality Assurance Cyclical Program Review

Department of Geology

September 2014

In accordance with the Lakehead University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) the Department of Geology submitted a self-study (November 2012). Volume 1 presented the program descriptions and outcomes, an analytical assessment of their programs and program metrics including results from a student survey along with institutional information and statistical data. Volumes 2 and 3, respectively, 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 by the Senate Academic Quality Assurance Sub-committee (SAC-QA) from a set of proposed reviewers, examined the materials and completed a two-day site visit in March 2013. The visit included interviews with the Provost and Vice-President (Academic), Deputy Provost, Vice President (Research), Dean of the Faculty of Science and Environmental Studies, Dean of Graduate Studies, Manager of Graduate Studies, Department Chair and Acting Chair, Graduate Coordinator (Geology), as well as faculty and technicians. The Review Team also had an opportunity to visit university (i.e. LU Instrumentation) and departmental labs and meet with undergraduate and graduate students and alumni.

In their report, submitted July 2013, the Review Team provided feedback that describes how the Geology programs meet the Quality Assurance Framework evaluation criteria and are consistent with the University's mission and academic priorities. They reported that the admission standards, curriculum structure and delivery, and teaching and assessment methods are appropriate, reflect the current state of the discipline, and are effective in preparing graduates to meet defined outcomes and the University's undergraduate and graduate Degree Level Expectations (DLE's). The Review Team noted the following strengths of the Department - BSc/HBSc Water Resource Science program is unique and meets the requirements of professional registration as a geoscientist in Ontario (and other provinces); excellent availability of field sites for teaching/research "provides a distinctly improved learning experience"; LU Geology graduates have an excellent reputation across Canada and alumni support is strong. Graduate students, in particular, benefit from faculty research funding and opportunities to work with industry. The Review Team praised the Centre for Excellence for Sustainable Mining and Exploration initiative as an example of the Department's forward looking approach to teaching, research and service to community.

The Review Team provided feedback and recommendations for the Department of Geology including consideration of slightly different course mixes (e.g. electives and required courses) in the undergraduate programs, continued enhancement of existing laboratory facilities and services, expansion of research and teaching capacity through strategic hires and development of an interdisciplinary PhD program and closer alignment with the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

The Chair of the Department, in consultation with the Dean of Science and Environmental Studies, submitted a response to the Reviewers' Report (October 2013). Clarifications and corrections were presented followed by a response to each of the recommendations made by the Review Team.

A Final Assessment Report has been prepared to provide a synthesis of the external evaluation and internal response to the recommendations. This report identifies the significant strengths of the programs, the opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, and sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

The Implementation Plan 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.

Programs covered by this Cyclical Review:

- Bachelor of Science (Geology)
- Honours Bachelor of Science (Geology)
- Bachelor of Science (Water Resource Science)
- Honours Bachelor of Science (Water Resource Science)
- Bachelor of Science (Earth Science)
- Master of Science (Geology)

Implementation Plan: Part A – Follow-up responsibilities for the Department of Geology

Suggestion/Recommendation	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility*	Timeline
General			
Enhance/upgrade existing facilities and services (e.g.) laboratory infrastructure/sample handling opportunities for department fundraising student lounge space	Existing departmental committee to explore requirements and opportunities	Geology Chair; in collaboration with the DEAN SES and VP - External Relations (regarding fundraising)	Initial Actions 2014-2015; Follow-up ongoing
Enhance research capacity (e.g.) support new faculty w.r.t. research develop an Interdisciplinary PhD program seek opportunities for a CRC or IRC	Establish committee to explore opportunities; work with VP REDI re Research Chair; contact other departments with complementary PhD programs	Geology Chair; in consultation with Dean SES and VP REDI	Initial Actions 2014-2015; Follow-up ongoing
Undergraduate			
Review program delivery and support (e.g.) alternate year delivery of senior level courses additional non-geology elective courses support for undergraduate thesis projects	Task existing curriculum review process to review options and identify next steps	Geology Chair; Water Resource Science Coordinator	2014-2015
Graduate Program			
Review program elements for graduate students (e.g.) incorporate electronic copies for thesis review develop information/orientation package regarding Graduate Studies information review committee structure	Task existing curriculum review process to review options and identify next steps	Geology Graduate Student Coordinator in consultation with Dean Graduate Studies	2014-2015

Implementation Plan: Part B - Decanal and Administration Follow-up Responsibilities

Suggestion/Recommendation	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility*	Timeline
Explore potential for additional faculty and staff hires (i.e., new CRC or IRC, laboratory instructor respectively)	Submit strategic hiring proposal as part of annual budget planning process	Geology Chair in consultation with Dean SES	Ongoing

* The Dean of the Faculty, in consultation with the Department Chair, shall be responsible for monitoring the Implementation Plan. The details of progress made will be presented in the Deans' Annual Reports and filed in the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic).