



## Executive Summary and Implementation Plan

### Quality Assurance Cyclical Program Review

#### Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

December 2015

In accordance with the Lakehead University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), the Department of Philosophy submitted a self-study (June 2013). 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 CV's 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 February 2014. The visit included interviews with the Deputy Provost, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Department Chair, tenured faculty, contract lecturers and support staff and the University Librarian. The Review Team also had an opportunity to visit University facilities (e.g. the Library) and meet with undergraduate students and an alumni.

In their report, submitted March 2014, the Review Team provided feedback that describes how the Philosophy 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 Degree level Expectations (DLE's). The Review Team deemed the undergraduate Philosophy programs of high quality due in part to the alignment of program and course learning outcomes, identification of the history of philosophy as the core of the program, evidence of innovation and creativity in developing new courses, and, in particular, the "individual attention full-time faculty members are able to give students" leading to success of Lakehead students entering graduate programs elsewhere. Furthermore, the Review Team noted the quality of the scholarship of the full-time faculty and the excellent qualifications of the contract lecturers. Students in the program also have access to excellent library, computer and coaching (i.e. research and writing support) resources. The use of video-conferencing between the two campuses contributes to the effective delivery of the program.

The Review Team also expressed concern about the impending retirement of one of the faculty complement, the unrecognized workload associated with the Department's ad hoc approach to offering special courses at senior year level and the ambitious suite of courses required for the major.

The Chair(s) of the Department (past and current), in consultation with the Dean of Social Sciences and Humanities, submitted a response to the Reviewer's Report (June 2014 and October 2015). Clarifications and corrections were presented followed by a response to each of the recommendations made by the Review Team.

A Final Assessment Report (FAR) 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 FAR; 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:

- Honours Bachelor of Arts (Philosophy)
- Bachelor of Arts (Philosophy)
- Minor in Philosophy

## Implementation Plan (Part A): Departmental Responsibilities Department of Philosophy

Recommendation	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility*	Timeline
Redesign the Major program	Completed; Proposal in Senate review process	Chair, members of Faculty	Sept 2015
Notify students as early as possible of course offerings	Post lists of all course offerings to facilitate student choice and program planning	Chair, staff	Sept 2015
Provide consistent student advising	Appoint a full-time faculty member as a student advisor	Chair, members of Faculty	Sept 2014
Consider the advantages of identifying "service courses" as required courses in other programs	Consider as part of Curriculum review	Chair, members of Faculty, Dean SSH	Sept 2015
Limit number of additional service or special interest courses being taught until the program is redesigned	Consider as part of Curriculum review	Chair, members of Faculty, Dean SSH	Ongoing
Find ways to promote closer physical proximity of Department members	Work with Dean SSH and other Departments to investigate feasibility	Chair, Dean SSH, Physical Plant	June 2015

## Implementation Plan (Part B): Decanal & Administration Responsibilities

Recommendation	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility*	Timeline
Consider hire of one full-time member of Faculty	Department to Develop Strategic Hiring initiative proposal as part of regular budget cycle	Dean	Sept 2016

\*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)