

Quality Assurance Cyclical Program Review  
Bachelor of Arts (General), Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities  
and  
Bachelor of Science (General), Faculty of Science and Environmental  
Studies  
November 2014

In accordance with the Lakehead University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) the Deans of the two Faculties submitted a self-study for the Bachelor of Arts (General) and the Bachelor of Science (General) programs in May 2013. Volume 1 presented the program descriptions and outcomes, an analytical assessment of the program and the program descriptors including results from a student survey along with institutional information and statistical data. Volume 2 and 3, respectively, would normally provide a collection of the program course outlines and the CVs for each full-time and adjunct faculty member involved in the programs. However, given the nature of these two programs and the wide range of courses that students can take, these volumes were not required.

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 site visit on 10-11 June 2013. The visit included interviews with the Deputy Provost, Deans of the Faculties of SES and SSH, University Librarian, Director of Continuing Education and Distributed Learning, Director of the Student Success Centre, Director of Admission and Recruitment and Registrar, Directors of the Writing and Mathematics Assistance Centres and students in both programs.

In their report, submitted November 2013, the Review Team provided feedback that describes how the two 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 and are effective in preparing graduates to meet defined outcomes and the University's Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (DLE's).

The Review Team noted the following program strengths:

- The flexibility of the programs is an important feature and is enhanced by a wide range of online courses. Faculty members have been extraordinarily active in developing these online courses.
- The pathway to a university degree fills an important need for College graduates; this is particularly important for the BA General. The transition to a BSc program for College students is more challenging, primarily due to the lack of foundational quantitative courses (e.g. in mathematics) in College programs.

- The “fallback” purpose of both programs fills a need in providing a pathway for students who originally enrolled in other Lakehead programs and who would not otherwise graduate.
- The Deans are keen to enhance the quality of the programs and also to think creatively about the ways in which the programs could be reimaged and possibly expanded by repackaging some of the courses (e.g. certificates) and recruiting from a wider audience.
- Staff in the Writing and Math Assistance Centres, Library and CEDL are continually working to improve the services available to students and are very open to considering ways to better support BA and BSc General program students in particular.
- Lakehead has a welcoming culture and is not as overwhelmingly complex and intimidating as some universities. Students seem to find the support they need informally, often within their departments.

The Review Team provided feedback and recommendations for the Deans identifying the following opportunities for improvement:

- Enhanced coordination between the Orillia and Thunder Bay campuses and CEDL could improve program delivery.
  - Student advising at upper year levels is not centralized (except through the Offices of the Deans); enhanced advising capacity (e.g. thru the Assistant Deans) especially for “fallback” students could assist with retention and graduation.
- Drs. Dean and Siddall, Deans of the two Faculties (SES and SSH, respectively), submitted a response to the Reviewers’ Report (August 2014). Specific recommendations were discussed, and clarifications and corrections presented.

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 program, 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 Arts (General)
- Bachelor of Science (General)

## Implementation Plan: Part A/B – Decanal (SES and SSH) Follow-up responsibilities

Suggestion/ Recommendation	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility*	Timeline
Offer more courses using online delivery	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop an inventory that identifies targets for numbers and types of courses available online</li> <li>2. Take advantage of funding opportunities that arise for establishing online courses (e.g. Shared Online Course Funding, MTCU)</li> </ol>	Deans (or designates) responsible for the General program(s), Chairs of participating departments, Director - CEDL, Director - IDC	December 2015
Encourage faculty to use standardized course outline formats and post online	Work with existing services (e.g. IDC) to encourage widespread adoption of Best Practices for course information	Director – IDC, Director – CEDL.	Ongoing
Better coordination of courses offered through the two campuses	Determine if coordination has been improved by new Faculty structure.	Deans (or designates) responsible for the General program(s), Chairs of participating departments, Vice Provost Orillia, Associate Vice-Provost – Enrolment Services.	2014-15
Enhance services (academic advising, registration) available to General students	Develop plan to better coordinate and, if necessary, support available services (e.g. Writing Centre, Math centre, Student Success Centre, Enrolment services, Library resources) and identify the need for specific new services/workshops (e.g. recognizing plagiarism)	Deans (or designates) responsible for the General program(s), Vice-Provost Student Affairs, Directors – SSC, MAC, Associate Vice-Provost – Enrolment Services.	2014-15
Consider strategies to attract new students	Develop list of available and possible certificates, etc. that could add value to the	Deans (or designates) responsible for the General	2014-15

offer certificates within the program design appropriate transfer pathway(s)	basic degree; Identify existing transfer options and develop new ones, if appropriate. Utilize external funding (e.g. ONCAT) to establish new pathways.	program(s), Chairs of participating programs, Deputy Provost (QA).	
Establish retention strategies	Consider development of an early warning system and/or peer buddy system to identify students at risk and encourage those in the program	Deans (or designates) responsible for the General program(s), Vice-Provost Student Affairs, Associate Vice-Provost – Enrolment Services, Director – SSC.	August 2015
Create a new position tasked with Retention and Recruitment	Complete cost/benefit analysis of such a position; if appropriate, Submit strategic hiring proposal as part of annual budget planning process	Deans (or designates) responsible for the General program(s), Vice-Provost Student Affairs, Associate Vice-Provost – Enrolment Services.	August 2015

\*The Deans of the Faculties (SES and SSH), in consultation with the appropriate Department Chair(s) 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).