



Executive Summary and Implementation Plan

Quality Assurance Cyclical Program Review

Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

March 2016

In accordance with the Lakehead University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), the Department of Sociology submitted a self-study (September 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 November 2013. The visit included interviews with the Provost and Vice-President (Academic), Deputy Provost, Dean of the Faculty, Dean of Graduate Studies, Associate Vice-President Research and Innovation, Program Chair, tenured faculty, contract lecturers, support staff, University Librarian and several alumni. The Review Team also had an opportunity to visit University facilities (e.g. the Library) and meet with undergraduate and graduate students.

In their report, submitted January 2014, the Review Team provided feedback that describes how the Sociology 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 stated that the "quality of the programs delivered through the Sociology department is consistently high. The mission statements for the undergraduate and graduate programs are clearly stated, well-aligned with both the University's mission and the expectation within the discipline and supported with sets of clearly articulated learner outcomes that are appropriate for each program." In addition, there are opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in research and for graduate students to "get their hands dirty" by working with local organizations; and there is evidence of the consistent and supportive mentoring provided by faculty for students

leading to success of Lakehead students upon graduation and entering graduate programs elsewhere. Furthermore, the Review Team noted the quality of the scholarship of the full-time faculty, their success in competing for research funding and their strong ties to the community.

The Review Team also expressed concern about the resources available to the Department and their deployment, ensuring that undergraduates entering the MA program(s) are sufficiently prepared with respect to theory and research methods, and the availability of senior level and graduate courses as electives.

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 (February 2014 and November 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:

Undergraduate:

- Honours Bachelor of Arts (Sociology)
- Bachelor of Arts (Sociology)
- Honours Bachelor of Arts (Sociology and Women's Studies) double major
- Honours Bachelor of Arts (Sociology) with a concentration in Gerontology

Graduate:

- Masters of Arts (Sociology)
- Masters of Arts (Sociology) with a specialization in Gerontology
- Masters of Arts (Sociology) with a specialization in Women's Studies

Implementation Plan (Part A): Departmental Responsibilities - Department of Sociology

Recommendation	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility*	Timeline
Review admission criteria for undergraduate students entering the MA.	Consider as part of ongoing Graduate curriculum review	Graduate Coordinator, members of Faculty	Sept 2016
Review curriculum including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • best use of faculty expertise • inclusion of experiential learning opportunities • alignment of learning outcomes to job-ready skills 	Consider as part of ongoing curriculum review	Chair, members of Faculty	2014-15
Develop an exit survey for undergraduate and graduate students	Both already exist at the University level and are administered through Institutional Planning and Analysis (IPA). Work collaboratively to encourage students to complete the surveys so that data is more helpful to the Department. A department specific survey may also be useful but must comply with University policies (see IPA).	Chair, Graduate Coordinator, Director Institutional Planning and Analysis	2016
Consider space available for graduate students	Consider as part of ongoing Graduate discussion with the Dean about resources.	Graduate Coordinator, Chair, Dean	Ongoing
Offer both quantitative and qualitative statistics Graduate courses each year	Consider as part of ongoing Graduate curriculum review.	Graduate Coordinator, Chair, members of Faculty	2016

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).