

Final Assessment Report Academic Review

Kinesiology

A. Summary

1. The Department's Self Study was considered and approved by the Academic Review Committee of Senate on February 2, 2012.
2. The Review Committee consisted of two external reviewers: Michael Khan (University of Windsor) and Earl Noble (University of Western Ontario), and an internal reviewer, Zopito Marini (Child and Youth Studies).
3. The site visit occurred on March 4-6, 2012.
4. The Reviewers' Report was received on April 5, 2012.
5. The Department's response was received on May 5, 2012.
6. The Dean of Applied Health Sciences' response from Neil McCartney was received on May 4, 2012.

The academic programs offered by the Department which were examined as part of the review included:

Bachelor of Physical Education (BPhEd)
Bachelor of Kinesiology (BKin)
Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology (BScKin)
Concurrent BPhEd/BEEd (Junior/Intermediate [JI])
Concurrent BPhEd/BEEd (Intermediate/Senior [IS])

This review was conducted under the terms and conditions of the IQAP approved by Senate on June 6, 2011.

The reviewers assigned the programs: Outcome Category 2, "Good Quality".

B. Strengths of the Program

The reviewers stated that “the Department of Kinesiology clearly offers academic programs of high quality.” They went on to state:

Application and enrolment numbers are strong and retention rates are high. Programs are diverse in course offerings with subjects from the biosciences, social sciences and humanities. There is a good blend of foundational discipline specific material, research and experiential learning opportunities. Consistent with the University mission to foster teaching and research of the highest quality, there is a growing research culture in the Department with a healthy proportion of Faculty demonstrating a high degree of research productivity and grant capture success.

Students perceive their program to be challenging and that their experiences prepared them well for their chosen careers. Content of courses and quality of instruction are rated very highly with exceptional ratings for instructor enthusiasm and knowledge. From our meeting with students, it was quite clear that they appreciated the learning atmosphere in the Department. There was overwhelming appreciation for the open door policy of Faculty members, the attention and support given to individual students and the friendly nature of Faculty and staff.

C. Opportunities for Improvement and Enhancement

The reviewers provided 11 discrete recommendations grouped into three categories: Curriculum, Staff and Departmental Structure.

1. (Curriculum) More resources are needed to address rapid growth in enrolment.

In its response, the Department stated that this recommendation, along with #2 and #3 “concern issues that, although they are having definite impacts on curriculum, are beyond the control of the Department.”

The Dean noted that recommendations 1,2, and 3 “are budget issues beyond the control of the Department, and indeed the Faculty” .

During the meeting of the Academic Review Committee (ARC) on June 21, 2012, discussions with the Dean addressed this recommendation. In response to the discussion, the Provost informed ARC that Brock has a compelling need for an institutional Enrolment Management Plan and that steps are being taken to proceed with such an initiative. It was suggested that procedures for setting enrolment targets be reviewed, including making the process more transparent and improving communication with the Faculties and departments around setting targets in relation to the resources available.

The Dean informed the Committee that the Faculty has invested, and will continue to invest, significant budgetary resources in Kinesiology equipment and labs since the review occurred.

Therefore, ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted at this time. The Committee identifies and supports the need for the development of an Enrolment Management Plan under the auspices of the Provost.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation NOT accepted at this time.

2. (Curriculum) Protect the part-time budget which provides graduate student support.

Neither the Department nor the Dean discussed this recommendation directly in their responses. During discussion at the ARC meeting on June 21, 2012, the Dean confirmed that the lack of part-time budget resources affects, among other things, the Department's ability to recruit high-quality students for graduate programs.

It was suggested that the recent budget cuts have raised serious concerns regarding academic sustainability, which have been brought to the attention of the Senate Budget Advisory Committee and the University Budget Committee. While budget stressors associated with the four-year budget rescission exercise are predicted to abate in the near future, it is not possible to implement this recommendation in the current circumstances.

Therefore, ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted at this time. The Committee recognized the need to bring the issue of the impact of budget cuts to the attention of Senate, and will include it in a semi-annual report from ARC to Senate.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation NOT accepted at this time.

3. (Curriculum) Class sizes, especially in 4th year are a significant concern.

Neither the Department nor the Dean discussed this recommendation directly in their responses. During discussion at the ARC meeting on June 21, 2012, the Dean confirmed that this is a concern.

While it was generally acknowledged that additional space or budget will not be forthcoming in the present circumstances, the Dean suggested that efficiencies might be found through reform of the curriculum which might serve to free up resources. The curriculum review being undertaken (see recommendation #4 below) should take into consideration the budgetary implications of any changes. To the extent possible, resources could be re-deployed to address the issue of class sizes, especially in Year Four.

In its response, the Undergraduate Program Committee (UPC) stated that:

cycling or rotating fourth year courses to manage course numbers [is] a possible scenario, but one that would require significant internal curricular planning and timetable strategizing before submission of such a sequence to UPC for calendar entry.

On the basis of the various responses and while acknowledging the difficulty of addressing the issue, ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted, in that a curricular review (as suggested in recommendation #4) will address this concern.

Implementation Plan (First Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean to report by end of academic year 2012/13

4. (Curriculum) Undertake a curricular review.

The Department stated that “the observations of the [review] committee with respect to curriculum are accurate and reflect significant issues.” The Dean confirmed that a curriculum review is underway and expected to be completed by December 2012.

The Dean noted that:

the process of curricular review for all departments within the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences will be ongoing, with a view to realizing this recommendation by the reviewers, and other objectives.

UPC stated that it “supported processes that would reduce redundancies and excessive required courses in the existing programs.”

ARC wishes to underscore the need for the Department to maintain a collective perspective on the programs throughout the curricular review. Therefore, ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

Implementation Plan (First Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean to report by end of academic year 2012/13

5. (Curriculum) Strike a committee to evaluate course outlines on a regular basis to account for overlap and “curriculum creep”.

In its response, the Department stated that the department “has a curriculum committee, composed of 6 individuals, which is appointed on an annual basis.” This committee has taken steps to monitor program coherence by establishing a voluntary electronic dropbox system for professors to deposit their syllabi, and thus enable them to review the content of similar courses and prerequisites. The Department suggested that there might be ways to build on these initial efforts.

The Dean stated that he “will recommend to the Chair that the Department discuss whether the Curriculum Committee should have a more active role in the monitoring of course syllabi.”

Therefore, ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. It is ARC’s view that a curricular review as suggested in recommendation #4 will also address this issue.

Implementation Plan (Second Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean to report by end of academic year 2013/14

6. (Curriculum) Given the reality of the imminent arrival of the College of Kinesiology in Ontario, strike a committee to examine the possibility of instituting a one year post-graduate certificate in Professional Kinesiology.

The Department stated that they have “already struck an ad-hoc committee for planning a one year post-graduate diploma preparing students for professional kinesiology certification.”

The Dean confirmed that the Committee presented him with a plan on April 12, 2012, identifying:

how current course offerings may satisfy the competency requirements of the College. We will now work to create a definitive academic and business plan for the proposed certificate and I am confident we will begin to take students in September, 2014.

UPC noted that this certificate would need “more definite parameters regarding its status as a further undergraduate level certificate or a graduate level certificate.”

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

Implementation Plan (First Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Dean, Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean to report by end of academic year 2012/13

7. (Curriculum) Institute a voluntary student donation fee which could be employed to enhance laboratory experiences.

The Department responded that this recommendation “does not seem practical or fair in the current economic situation in which students find themselves”, but that it would support fund-raising activities by students associated with the department, which might be targeted to support lab experiences.

The Dean did not agree with this recommendation for the reasons outlined in the Department response.

UPC expressed concern that the proposed donation “would constitute an additional ancillary fee and would not be passed.”

ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted, as it violates the spirit of Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities guidelines on fees.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation NOT accepted.

8. (Staff) Consider having an on-line system to report and get reimbursement for travel expenses.

In its response, the Department stated that it would “welcome the use of an on-line system” but had “no control over the budget required” for the recommendation to be implemented.

The Dean noted that the “Faculty has only had a Budget Officer since January of this year, but she has already streamlined many financial practices, and assumed a significant role in all financial matters.”

Thus ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

Implementation Plan (First Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Dean
Responsible for resources:	Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Dean
Timeline:	Dean to report by end of academic year 2012/13

9. (Staff) Move some financial matters to the Faculty Financial Officer.

The Department confirmed that it “has already begun to utilize the role of Faculty Financial Officer for financial matters such as travel reimbursement.”

As with his response to recommendation #8, the Dean has indicated that this particular recommendation is in the process of being implemented.

Therefore, ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

Implementation Plan (First Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Dean
Responsible for resources:	Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Dean
Timeline:	Dean to report by end of academic year 2012/13

10. (Staff) Consider hiring part-time assistance for peak administrative and advisory periods.

In its response, the Department stated that it would “welcome the use of...part time administrative help”, but had “no control over the budget required” for the implementation of this recommendation.

The Dean suggested that he “would need convincing that this is necessary, but would be prepared to consider it if a request came from the Department Chair.”

Therefore, ARC considers the recommendation to consider hiring part-time assistance to be accepted.

Implementation Plan (Third Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Dean
Responsible for resources:	Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Dean
Timeline:	Dean to report by end of academic year 2014/15

11. (Departmental Structure) In light of recent changes in the Department, hold a facilitated exercise in strategic planning and review administrative structure.

The Department held an annual retreat on May 16, 2012 at which issues of administrative structure and the future direction of the Department were predominant. The retreat was considered beneficial and another one is planned for the fall of 2012.

The Dean stated that while “there are profound differences of opinion” in the Department, such differences are “common among Kinesiology departments throughout the Province, and indeed the country.” The Dean and the Department both acknowledged that it will require some effort to resolve these issues.

On that basis, ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

Implementation Plan (First Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department, Dean
Responsible for resources:	Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Dean
Timeline:	Dean to report by end of academic year 2012/13

D. Recommendations to be Implemented

The IQAP requires that ARC “set out and prioritize the recommendations that are selected for implementation.” Using the specific ARC proposals enunciated above, the following priorities are proposed:

First Priority:

Recommendations 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11

Second Priority

Recommendation 5

Third Priority

Recommendation 10

E. Recommendations that Will Not be Implemented

Recommendations 1, 2, 7